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Defining Harmony in Southeast Asia: Competing discourses, challenges and interpretations

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FIRST PLENARY SESSION

Chairperson: Dr. Peter Smith

1. Transboundary Haze: The Role of Malaysia and ASEAN.
   - *Sharifah Mastura Syed Abdullah*

Defining Harmony in Southeast Asia: Competing discourses, challenges and interpretations

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies
Organised by Mahidol University International College, Thailand and Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia
29 November 2005

Assistant Prof.Dr.Parichart Suwanbubbha

I am very honored by the joint organizers, both the Dean, Professor Dr.Sharifah Mastura Syed Abdulla from Universiti Kebangsaan, Malaysia and Prof.Dr.Chariya Brockelman from Mahidol University, Thailand. I appreciate very much the cooperation by both Universities in organizing this important international conference to bring good understanding, harmony and peace to our regional community. May I share with you that the scope of my work interest is concerned with religion, dialogue for peace making and transformative learning? Therefore my talk today more or less will be focused on such mentioned areas.

Abstract

Defining harmony is a vital challenging task at the present time since some communities in Southeast Asia are more or less under the unstable political situation. Others are struggling with violence in their countries. Moreover, the influential impact of globalization affects immensely on morality and human dignity among people especially the young generation. Therefore, it is necessary to rethink of the understanding about 'harmony' and how to translate the good spiritual teachings which support the essence of harmony into action. In this consideration, one may realize the concept of 'diversity,' 'interconnectedness,' 'justice and full participation,' 'the acceptance of any miserable guilt and consequences' including the proper attitude to deal with any situations. These concepts are composed of the authentic essence of harmony which is the challenging interpretation needed to be applied in Southeast Asian contexts. In order to secure inner value and to promote the idea of harmony, one may need to reconsider the concrete methods in terms of transformative learning. At the same time, the process of dialogue especially inter-religious dialogue should be encouraged locally and globally to enhance the understanding about the practices of harmony and should be considered as the tool for harmony in order to increase the good sake of the whole.

What is harmony?

As far as I can recall my understanding about harmony, I think of Buddhist teaching on 'the six directions' of the proper roles and mutual relationship between a group of people such as parents and children, teachers and students, husband and wife, friends and friends, employers and employees, monks and lay people. (D.III 189-192) We believe that if each person of these 6 pairs fulfills his or her roles, duty and responsibility gracefully, 'harmony' in society will be present definitely. However, it seems to me that harmony is *relative*. It depends on the context of each individual. It may vary in accordance with each individual experience.

> *For some, it means order and rules, for others it means living peacefully, without insecurity or strife, yet for others it represents the serenity of being, safely enscounced in the one with no individual desires or thoughts... It may be a 'Symphony of Beingness' which is an accord of vibrations, of sounds, of colours, of feelings, it is Beauty in the most absolute sense. It is a putting together of everything and the creation of a wonderful adventure.*
>
> (Veziau, http://www.peacefromharmony.org)

Furthermore, it is more interesting to learn about other definitions of 'harmony' according to 'Global Harmony Day Founder' as follows:

> *Harmony is a method of connection and organizational order of the relations between people including all constructive feelings, processes, phenomenon and qualities. Harmony is the most effective organization and most desired order of universal relations between humans in a society and in all its spheres: economical, political, cultural and social, including family. Harmony excludes violent struggle and unity of diversity in mutual destructive struggle.*
>
> (Semashko, http://www.peacefromharmony.org)

From these above definitions, one may notice the implication of common concepts of 'order', 'relationship,' interconnectedness,' 'peace,' within the meaningful word harmony.

For our Southeast Asian context, it is challenging how to relate harmony to be present in the surrounding of unstable political situation, worsening economic crisis, various forms of violence, terror and natural disasters.

The Challenging Interpretation of Harmony

Generally speaking, one may need to revisit the hidden implication of harmony for the suitable social context. In other words, it seems that 'harmony' reflects some other important concepts, that is, (1) the courage to deal with diversity such as being willing to accept the autonomy of any different cultures and diverse identities. (2) The mindful and proper attitudes towards what happens, such as the positive and negative sides of globalization without being too extreme to respond. This is also important factor to experience 'harmony'. (3) Besides, the effort of maintaining 'justice' and 'full participation' are also the basic requirement for harmony and development of peace. Above all, (4) the respect of human dignity and promoting human security of people are the vital ingredient for 'harmony'.

It is noted that the essence of harmony seems to be close to the concept of 'peace' and non-violence. It may be both a competing discourse and complimentary of each other. As I have mentioned earlier, I believe in the supportive roles of any religions and spirituality on the promoting of harmonious community. In my case, Buddhism is my

spiritual practices. Then I would like to share with you some of its teachings which go well for harmony.

Interconnectedness for Supporting a Concept of Harmony in Diversity

One of important teachings which is useful for consideration is the teaching of *interconnectedness.* Everything depends on each other. Especially, Buddhists believe in the concept of rebirth. Therefore, each individual may be born as relatives, brothers, sisters in the great numbers of their reborn time. This teaching suggests us to think that everyone may be related in some ways or other ways. For example, the disabled may be our parents or members in our family in some of the previous life. Their lives are also valuable and should not be considered as 'burden' of society. Other people could depend on them in terms of good example of life survival. This *interconnectedness* teaching also implies to a concept of *diversity.* When each unit in this universe moves, it affects on others as well. ***Therefore each unit in society should be responsible to maintain the balanced harmony and order of this universe.*** Although each unit may possess different kinds of identity and autonomy, each still depends on each other and should be able to live together peacefully. If I am not wrong, being created in the *image of God* may mean that each person is not only valuable individual but also vital part of the community as well. Each person's action will affect more or less on others in one way or other ways. Therefore the crisis such as ecological destruction, structural and domestic violence including terrorism should not be considered as personal responsibility of any houses or any communities but people should identify themselves as parts of the problems to reduce them together. The same as the serious problems of all kinds of violence which threaten national security of Thailand or Mynmar or the Philippines should be considered as the threat and crisis of the neighboring countries in Southeast Asian as well. By being aware of the interconnectedness and diversity, social harmony will take place.

Translation of the Teaching into Action for the Authentic Harmony

Being aware of the problems in the universe and identify oneself to those problems then take action to reduce them are the characters of *socially engaged religion.* Both laity and ordained ones who belong to this group will support global justice, human rights, disarmament, environmental protection, gender balance and inter-religious dialogue. They usually reinterpret the teaching into action. Cooperating in a community and networking is much more powerful in dealing with problem-solving. Again, talking about engaged Buddhism, it reminds me of *ethic of stewardship* in Christianity and the teaching of 'brotherhood' in Islam that everyone has responsible to take care of other creature together with God as well. For example, as Wilber's statement, 'getting actively involved in respect for nature, in any number of ways (recycling, environmental protection, nature celebration) not only honors nature, it promotes our own capacity to care.' (Wilber 2001, 138) By such doing, Christian friends could be involved in reducing the environmental crisis and doing socially engaged Christianity as well. The same as Muslim sisters and brothers do. Therefore the example of an expression of faith to God by 'carrying the Cross and emptying oneself' has been transformed into action. The teaching in Islam that 'no one of you is a believer until he desires for his brother that which he desires for himself' (Nawawi's collection of Forty Hadiths) is another authentic example for translation into action..

The same as Buddhists who care for the healthy and balanced quality of the Lake of Songkla they join in walking in *Dhamma (Dhamma Yatra)*. They talk and share with the villagers how to preserve the environmental balance in order that the nature will not harm them in various forms of natural disasters. These socially engaged religions will be able to give hope for harmony responding to the cry of global ecological victims.

The Proper Attitude in Encountering Everything in order to gain Harmony

One fundamental teaching in Buddhism is ***seeing everything as it is***. It suggests us to look over all situations holistically. That is, everything may be composed of both the negative and positive, wide and deep aspects. Talking about negative aspects such as suffering in life, death and all disasters is not pessimistic but it is the encouragement to remind people of the truth of natural law: arising, maintaining and disappearing. It means that suffering (including everything) is not permanent It happens, then maintains and finally disappears due to its coexisted conditions. Whenever people realize this reality and the whole picture of each thing, they will be able to control them. For example, globalization provides both pleasant and unpleasant effects to humankind. We may have more leisure and comfort from the progress of technology and communication but we may suffer from its threat of the possibility to judge each other from the material without considering the human value. In this sense, money and power of the rich would also be more important than the dignity of each individual especially the poor and the marginalized. In fact, power and money are not bad by themselves. It depends on how people use them. Wealth is acceptable in Buddhist society as long as it is derived from the right livelihood. 'Worthy of blame also is the one who, having earned wealth, becomes enslaved through clinging and attachment to it and incurs suffering because of it.' (Phra Rajavaramuni 1992, 43) At the same time, poverty is a suffering in the world for a laity. 'Woeful in the world is poverty and debt.' (A.III, p.350-2) However, Buddhism proposes another teaching *not to cling to anything and not to be too extreme both in the luxurious and suffering sides*. In our case, both wealth and poverty are the ordinary phenomena. Money and material goods are neutral, it depends on how people use them whether to belittle the dignity of others or not. Furthermore, globalization may be used as the instrument of power by some groups of people and some powerful countries that can be accessible to all resources. It is important to note that this negative impact of globalization will cause the social and economic injustice to most people lacking opportunity. To repeat, both globalization and power, by themselves are acceptable as long as people realize them holistically and do not be slave of them. If ones realize such holistic aspects of these concepts, ones could turn the crisis into opportunity and could control the situations by preventing humankind from loosing hope.. Harmony will not go so far by the proper attitude towards all things.

A Proposal from Religion to promote Harmony as a tool for Combination of Retribution and Restitution

In order to promote the proper attitude in encountering with the 'whatever' situations, one needs to have a proper method to transform people. In case of any miserable things happen, religions may provide the justice and offer chances for everyone.
That is, 'no harmony can exist unless there is admission of guilt, retribution and restitution.' (Galtlover, http://www.peacefromharmony.org) Most religions provide

the refuge for people to cope with guilt and any consequences. It means that ourselves as human beings should be brave to turn our faces to accept the failure and rise up again through the channel of religions and spirituality. In additions, such courageous practices will cover the confidence in *the concept of justice* which is very important virtue and goodness to bring peace and harmony to the whole.

Up to this point, it is important to encourage people to identify their belief system clearly. They may be able to show how their belief could impact their relationship to the world around them. By this approach, it should be a good sign to show that religion could give hope for the hopeless situations. In other words, we as religious persons who involve with spiritual education should also aim at introducing transformative learning to our people. There are various definitions of it but we may consider one. We may realize that proper approach in teaching religion and spiritual development could give light of harmony for the world.

> *This is learning that includes reflection as well as analysis, focus on personal growth as well as skill mastery, developing tolerance for ambiguity, openness to reframing, imagination as a way of understanding as important as rational argument. It focuses on spiritual realities as a significant force in personal and cultural habits and methods of judgment and action.*
>
> Marilyn McEntyre, Professor of English
> Westmont College, Santa Barbara, CA

Inter-religious Dialogue as an Harmonious Method

The above content of transformative learning more or less goes hand in hand with the inter-religious dialogue which Wilber describes beautifully. '*Mutually respectful dialogue is indeed the time-honored method of linking self and other in a dance of understanding, a dance which is deeply conducive to integral embrace.*' (Wilber 2001, 138) As we know, Dialogue focuses on '*deep listening*' (Bohm: http://www. Thedialoguegrouponline.com/whatsdialogue.html) Roughly speaking, deep listening is not only hearing but understanding the standpoints of others. As Swidler (Swidler 1987, 6) explains more that we would do dialogue in order to *learn* about *different* reasons, positions, needs and stories of others, then *grow* the understanding, loving-kindness and sympathy to others. We may *change* the misunderstanding, bias, suspicion, prejudices and prejudgment towards others, after dialogue we can cooperate to join hand, head and heart to reduce the problems of humanity. Such kind of deep listening could take place when people have 'mindfulness' and intend to hear and listen to other people's stories. In the real situation, Mahidol University Research Center for Peace Building has organized the process of Dialogue for Buddhist and Muslim military, officers, student leaders, religious leaders and local people in the deep South of Thailand where violence takes place daily. We let them listen carefully each time while other people share their stories. The important point is we let them 'stay still' and 'being with themselves' as a kind of contemplative moment for a while then each person starts sharing and listening to each other,

Before people are ready for doing dialogue, we let them participate in various activities and games and let them share the feeling and lessons or essence they get

after each activity. By this experiential approach of learning, they have a chance to hear, to feel, to think, to reflect and to analyze from what they heard.

During the process of dialogue, any tension may take place, it is a good time to challenge them about various virtues. Once in our work, we conduct dialogue to solve the problem of garbage disposal between Buddhist government officers and Muslim local villagers. For sure, it is not the problem of different religious belief but it is the claim to support their position and actions that each side is right. What I like to high light is the social status between these two groups is not the same. The former is governmental officers such as Mayor of the district and his followers, the latter is local Muslim people. One of the ground rules of dialogue is realization of ***'full equality and participation'*** of both sides. The former asked for the right to explain first in order to win over in doing Dialogue. The facilitator did not allow any privilege without following the ground rules. The officers then were not pleased at all. In addition, we would like to remind them of understanding a concept of 'power' by letting them participate in the game of power. This game is: having a pair of partner in dialogue to take turn sitting on the floor and stand in front of his or her partner. Each one has different identity such as a man or a woman, an officer or a local villager, junior or senior, a Muslim religious leader or a Muslim young lady etc. They took turn to sit and stood and they described how they felt sincerely. Each person experienced both pleasant and unpleasant feeling. It seemed that they could sympathize the position of the others. Then we added more body of religious knowledge what is the criteria to judge people in accordance with Buddhist and Islamic teachings. By this way, we think that they have more or less a chance to cultivate personal growth and tolerance. We added more teaching to support the concept of human dignity and security. We then realize that process of dialogue did work more effectively when we related their doing dialogue with religious dimension.

Inter-religious Dialogue and Transformative Learning

To repeat, Buddhist teaching and practices have a tendency to support the nature of Dialogue in the sense of 'deep listening' through the practice of 'mindfulness' in meditation both in 'traditional meditation' and 'meditation in action.'. Moreover, ground rules to be taken during the process of dialogue could be done better if that person becomes the authentic Buddhists or even other followers in every religion. For example, the practice of tolerance, honesty, treating others humanly, no hidden agenda, open-minded to hear the difference and being patient and welcome both self – criticism and letting others criticize one's belief respectfully. These qualifications can be found in the moral teaching of each religion. Therefore we may say that dialogue and inter-religious dialogue are more or less a kind of a transformative learning to challenge the spiritual development and growth of the partners of both sides. ***It may be thought positively that this practical way of dialogue would be an harmonious and peaceful method to reduce the suspicion, conflict, and prevent any forms of violence.*** We have tried this process of dialogue in the South. Although it cannot stop the daily violence immediately, it is welcome and get 'heart' from a group of local people.

Challenging Tasks of Creating Harmonious Communities through Action

As we mentioned earlier that ones should be in the reality and look at 'everything as it is' or 'all things as they are' It implies a sense of *living our life in the present moment* as well. Although Buddhism talks about the result of previous *kamma* (action) which affects on the life of the underprivileged, the poor, the Buddha also emphasizes *kamma*, actions performed in every single moment of the present. The results of the actions done in the present may affect on next hour, next month, next year or next life. This kind of belief should encourage us to make a difference to create the harmonious communities. For example, women who have been suffering by the domestic violence should realize her human dignity and potentiality to resist such injustice. By this realization and the awareness of performing 'new action' in the present, they may have a chance to change the suffering situation.

Certainly it sounds impossible for the suffering to help themselves. But through the belief of no grace from outside power, human beings need to depend on themselves and other human -made supporters. Therefore, suffering and transformation should be included and considered as 'communal *kamma'*, their neighbors and other networkings need to perform the new action in the present to help them whether the advices, moral supports including other practical help. By these new and skilful *kamma* in the present moment, will be the way to change the unbearable situations. Therefore, according to Buddhist perspective, the better harmonious world could be happen by the good conditions of both individual and communities at the present moment. Only we have trust, confidence, encouragement, patience and hope in this natural law, we will realize the consequence eventually.

In conclusion, while our people in Southeast Asian countries have been facing any undesirable situations, we still have hope to be aware of and have proper attitudes to cope with such problems. The important things are just begin with each individual to translate our hope and thinking into action. Through the proper way of practices and the process of dialogue, we will be able to reduce chaos and maintain harmony. This is a real challenging for each individual and Southeast Asian communities to make a difference.

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PLENARY PAPER

Transboundary Haze: The Role of Malaysia and ASEAN

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Abstract

This paper provides a review of transboundary haze pollution. It defines its issues traces the history of the episodic haze occurrences since late 1980's and discusses the management responses to the challenges both for Malaysia and Indonesia and for all other affected ASEAN member countries. At present, Malaysia and other ASEAN countries are increasingly faced with air quality deterioration due to internal air pollution problems as well as transboundary haze pollution from neighbouring countries. The main cause of the internal pollution is the process of economic development while the transboundary one i.e. haze is intentional land clearing attributed to commercial oil palm and timber plantations, forest fires, illegal logging practices and activities of local small holders. The haze pollution is episodic in nature. The level of pollution is measured by Air Pollution Index (API) which is derived based on five pollutant contents of SO2, O3, CO, NO2 and PM10. The 1997 haze episode has affected Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei and Indonesia (Southern Sumatra and Southwest Borneo). All these countries expressed unhealthy conditions for more than 50% of the time while Kuala Lumpur and most part of Southern Sumatra recorded hazardous level where API reading exceeded 301. Other haze episodes are recorded in April 1983, August 1990, September 1997, August 2005 and mid July 2006. Management responses on these episodes include setting up of various ASEAN initiatives such as: the implementation of regional haze action plan; the Asean agreement on transboundary haze pollution; the Asean peatland management initiative; the zero-burning and controlled burning guidelines; and the activation of the panel of ASEAN experts on fire and haze assessment and coordination. It is estimated that 6 million acres of forest were burned while 70 million people were directly affected by the pollution. The economic cost of the 1997 haze episode is almost USD1.4 billion. Indonesia's losses were attributed to short term health cost while cost to Malaysia exceeded USD300 million mainly from the industrial production losses and lost revenues from big drop in tourism. Singapore lost USD60 million mainly from drop in tourist visits. Long term cost such as damage to health is not taken into account. Transboundary pollution is a multi faceted problem affecting several ASEAN member countries. An integrated approach is needed to alleviate the problem, including the role of civil societies and the support of the NGOs. The effectiveness of ASEAN cooperation depends not only on full commitment of each member country but also their capacity to meet their respective obligations as stipulated in these agreements and regional plans.

INTRODUCTION

In many megacities of Asia, the challenge is to manage air pollution which they themselves created through increased use of motor vehicles, industries and infrastructural development. In Malaysia, for more than two decades now, we are faced not only with our own internal air pollution problem which we ourselves created in the process of economic development but also air quality deterioration in the form of transboundary haze pollution from neighbouring Sumatera and Kalimantan, Indonesia during the dry months of June - September/ October and February - March.

The main cause of this transboundary air pollution, a phenomenon which is referred to locally as the 'haze', is intentional land clearing variously attributed to commercial oil palm and timber plantations, forest fires, illegal logging practices and local small holders. The haze itself is 'episodic' in nature. It is characterized by high level particulate matter concentrations and other gaseous pollutants. The haze itself is a health hazard, disrupts air and sea transport and affects millions of people in Sumatera, Kalimantan, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam and, of course, Malaysia. Conditions can become worse and prolonged when such months with the haze episodes coincide with the occurrence of the well known El Nino.

This report provides a review of this transboundary haze pollution. It defines the issues, traces the history of the episodic haze occurrences since the late 1980s, and discusses the management response and the challenges both for Malaysia and Indonesia and for all the other affected ASEAN member countries, especially Singapore and Brunei Darussalam.

THE ISSUE: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO THE 1997 HAZE

The haze phenomenon was first realized in the early 1960s (Sham et al. 1991). Unfortunately available records were scanty during these early years although the haze even then had become almost a regular feature of our Malaysian environment, notably during the dry months of February to April and June to September/October. Perhaps the haze of September 1982 and April 1983, which coincided with the occurrence of widespread bush fires and agricultural waste burning in Indonesia, were among the first to hit the headline. It attracted a great deal of public attention and created intense debates in the local media. Since then, there has been a number of haze 'episodes' of different magnitudes and intensities in Malaysia with varying socio-economic and health-related consequences.

Perhaps the longest and the worst episode and the one which received the most attention occurred during September to November 1997. It was caused not only by external sources that exacerbated the contribution from internal sources but also coincided with the El Nino, which prolonged the dry season until the middle of the following year, thus setting a conducive environment for the haze formation.

During the September to November 1997 haze episode, Indonesia, Singapore, Brunei Darussalam and Malaysia were severely affected. The main cause of the haze was mainly intentional land-clearing in Sumatera, Indonesia attributed to land clearing by commercial oil palm and timber plantations, government-sponsored transmigration

projects, and local small-holders. Internal sources such as open burning and pollutant discharges from motor vehicles were also contributory factors. Azman (1997) argued that in the 1997 haze, only about 20% of the haze composition in Kuala Lumpur was attributed to local pollution largely from motor vehicles and industries; the rest originated from outside the national boundary.

An estimated 70 million people were affected by the haze, with the worst-hit areas being in southern Sumatera and southwestern Borneo. Conservative estimates by World Wildlife Fund (WWF) put the total amount of burned forest at 6,000,000 acres. The fires were further enhanced by the meteorological conditions prevailing at the time. In the latter case, the southwest monsoon winds bearing pollutants from the forest fires blew across Kalimantan, Sumatera, Singapore, Southern Thailand, Brunei Darussalam and almost all parts of Malaysia. The episode was further exacerbated by the fact that it also coincided with the El Nino phenomenon, which affected Indonesia and most of Southeast Asia at the same time prolonging the dry season and intensifying forest fire risks.

Samples of air pollution levels, as indicated by the air pollution index (API)' taken during the haze period in September and October of 1997 for urban centres in the Klang Valley Malaysia are shown in Table 1.1. The air pollution index (API) is derived based on 5 pollutants — SO_2, O_3, CO, NO2 and PM10. For PM_{10} and SO_2, the mean concentration is averaged for an hour after 24 hours exposure. For CO, the one-hour reading is taken after 8 hours of exposure and for O_3 and NO_2; the readings are taken after one hour of exposure each. Indices for each of the pollutants are then computed; the highest index recorded is taken as the API reading.

Table 1.1. Percentage frequency of occurrence (days) with specific API categories for urban centres in the Klang Valley during the haze period, September to October 1997.

API Category	Kuala Lumpur	Petaling Jaya	Klang	Kajang
Good (0 - 50)	0.0	8.2	4.2	20.0
Moderate (51 - 100)	30.6	34.6	32.0	26.0
Unhealthy (101 - 200)	49.0	49.0	59.6	50.0
Very Unhealthy (201 - 300)	18.4	8.2	4.2	4.2
Hazardous (301 and above)	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

[Source: Calculated based on data from DOE]

It is observed that all centres experienced 'Unhealthy' condition for more than 50% of the time; Kuala Lumpur had 69.4%, Petaling Jaya 57.2%, Klang 63.8% and Kajang 54.0%. For 'Very Unhealthy' days Kuala Lumpur had the highest share with 20.4%, Petaling Jaya 8.2%, Klang 4.2% and Kajang 4.0%. Kuala Lumpur also recorded 2.0% of days with 'Hazardous' API readings. Meanwhile API readings for Kuching indicated four months of moderate to unhealthy conditions. The El Nino which lasted until mid-1998 prolonged the dry season in many parts of Malaysia, Indonesia and other Southeast Asian countries. In Malaysia, the prolonged dry season

severely affected water supply in the Kuala Lumpur and the Klang Valley area. The situation became so critical that water rationing was imposed on the Klang Valley beginning the second half of April 1998.

The haze from forest fires that ravaged Indonesia and much of Southeast Asia during 1997 cost the region almost USD 1.4 billion. More than 90% of Indonesia's losses were attributable to short-term health costs (WWF, 1999). Costs to Malaysia exceeded USD 300 million, mainly from industrial production losses and lost revenues from a big drop in tourism. Singapore lost more than USD 60 million, mainly from a drop in tourist visits. Indonesia also lost nearly USD 90 million from foregone tourist revenues, airline cancellations and airport shutdowns, while Malaysia and Singapore together suffered almost USD 12 million in health costs. The study did not take into account such costs as long-term damage to health and losses directly attributable to fire, which are believed to be considerable, possibly equaling, if not exceeding, those of the haze alone.

SELECTED MAJOR HAZE EPISODES: 1980 - 2006

Since about 1980, there have been several reports of haze episodes affecting Malaysia. The 1997 haze, the worst to hit Malaysia so far, was discussed earlier in the previous section. This section provides a brief description of some selected major haze episodes that have affected Malaysia during the 1980 to 2006 period. A large part of this section has been heavily based on newspaper reports and the electronic media.

Haze 1983

One of the earliest reports on the haze episodes was documented in April 1983 (The New Straits Times, 1983a). According to this report, two Malaysia Airlines (MAS) flights between Ipoh and Penang were cancelled on the 4th April 1983 due to severe haze. Visibility was down to 1,000 meters. The Meteorological Department said the intense haze prominent in the northern states was mainly caused by suspended dust particles due to the dry spell. The haze was also aggravated by the occurrence of thermal inversion which prevented atmospheric mixing and enhanced the suspension of dust particles in the air.

The hazy conditions with varying severity persisted until the end of April. It was severe on 20th April whereby three MAS flights scheduled to depart from Sandakan Airport were cancelled. Visibility was down to 100 m at 8:00 am (The New Straits Times, 1983b).

Haze 1990

The hazy condition which was widely reported in the local media in August 1990 occurred during the period from 15th till 30th August, with the worst haze condition recorded from 20th till the 30th August. Complaints of increased asthma cases, poor visibility and a general feeling of depression were reported in the local papers (The New Straits Times, 1990a; 1990b).

The August haze also caused several transport disruptions. The fighter jet fly-past and parachuting display scheduled for the National Day celebration on 31st August were cancelled and light aircraft banned from flying until further notice. In Port Klang, poor visibility caused at least one ship to run aground and delayed the arrival and departure of 30 vessels. According to reports (The New Strait Times, 1990b), Subang Airport was closed to incoming flights for nearly two hours following the two incidents involving the Royal Malaysian Airforce (RMAF) fighter jets. Several incoming MAS flights during the period were diverted to Penang or Singapore while outgoing flights were delayed.

Based on available records at Petaling Jaya during 1977 to 1989, the mean total suspended particulate (TSP) values for August and September were normally between 80 to 95 μgm^{-3}. However, during the first week of August 1990, TSP levels were consistently above 100 μgm^{-3}. The values were lower in the following week due to scattered rain in Selangor. This break however was short-lived. From 16th August, the TSP levels rapidly increased reaching an unprecedented value of 516 μgm^{-3} over a 12-hour period on 27th August 1990. A more detailed account of the 1990 haze was documented in Sham et al (1991).

Haze 2005

The haze episode in 2005 which occurred during August to September was the worst since the 1997 haze. It began around 3rd August when almost 600 hotspots detected in Riau and North Sumatera, including a forest fire incident in Cyberjaya, Wilayah Persekutuan caused a sudden thick haze in the affected areas. In Sepang and Petaling Jaya on this occasion, ground visibility was as low as 1.0 km, while in Seremban ground visibility was down to 500 m. The hazy condition with varying intensities continued until past mid-September of 2005 (The New Straits Times, 2005a).

On 10th August, eight locations (Ipoh, Sri Manjung, Tanjung Malim, Petaling Jaya, Kuala Lumpur, Kuala Selangor, Nilai and Seremban) experienced 'unhealthy air' with API values ranging between 101 and 200. Visibility in Subang was about 3.0 km in the morning but dropped to 0.8 km by 2 pm, and 100 m by 5 pm. In Petaling Jaya, visibility dropped from 6 to 7 km in the morning to 1.0 km by 5 pm. Ships plying the Straits of Malacca were warned of the reduced visibility to about 1.0 km in the middle and southern parts of the Straits (The New Straits Times, 2005b). By 11th August 2005, two areas in Selangor (Port Klang and Kuala Selangor) were declared as haze emergency zones with API rising above 500. In Port Klang and Kuala Selangor the API readings were 529 and 531 respectively. Many schools were closed as air quality deteriorated. The hazy conditions persisted until well after mid-September of 2005.

Haze 2006

In 2006, Malaysia experienced three short-term slight to moderate haze episodes due to transboundary haze pollution, namely in mid July, mid August and late September to October 2006.

In the July episode, three air monitoring stations located in the west coast of Peninsular Malaysia i.e. Seberang Perai in Penang, Port Klang in Selangor and Sri Manjung in Perak recorded unhealthy status for the period of 17, 18 and 19 July 2006. In mid August 2006, air quality monitoring stations in Sarawak i.e. Kuching, Sibu, Sarikei, Samarahan, Sri Aman, Petra Jaya and Bintulu recorded unhealthy levels.

The haze was more intense in late September and early October 2006. The worst hit was Sri Aman in Sarawak, which registered the highest Air Pollutant Index (API) of 221 (very unhealthy level) on 6 October 2006. Hazy condition was also experienced in Peninsular Malaysia, where twenty stations recorded unhealthy air quality levels on 7 October 2006.

In this connection, the Minister for Environment and Natural Resources reiterated that it was important for Indonesia to ratify the ASEAN Transboundary Haze Agreement before member countries can contribute to alleviate the problem. In the meantime, the Deputy Prime Minister of Malaysia was reported to have said that the haze problem would plague the region for many years to come unless ASEAN member countries were willing to pool their resources to combat the menace (New Straits Times, 2006; The Star, 2006)

To summarise, it is noted that generally the duration of a particular haze episode varies according to prevailing weather conditions or whether the haze coincides with the occurrence of El Nino. The latter has the effect of prolonging the dry weather, resulting in the extended duration of the haze episode such as in 1997. The magnitude of the haze, on the other hand, depends on the intensity of the internal and external sources of pollution. In many cases, external sources from Kalimantan and Sumatera determine the severity of the haze. In this instance, the southwest monsoon, this generally blows over Kalimantan and Sumatera during May to September/October transports the pollutants from forest and peat fires and burning of agro-wastes across to Singapore, Brunei Darussalam and Sabah, Sarawak and Peninsular Malaysia. It is the transboundary nature of the pollution that has now become the concern of not only Indonesia but also her affected neighbours.

MANAGEMENT RESPONSE

For many years, and especially since the early 1990s, ASEAN member nations have worked together on regional plans to reduce open burning and control air pollution. However, the 1997 haze episode provided ASEAN with a sense of increased urgency to address the issue.

Since the severe land and forest fires and transboundary haze pollution in 1997, ASEAN member nations have taken many initiatives including actions on the ground to address land and forest fires and the resulting transboundary haze pollution. These initiatives include:

1. the implementation of the Regional Haze Action Plan (RHAP);
2. the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution;
3. the ASEAN Peatland Management Initiative (APMI);
4. the zero-burning and controlled-burning guidelines; and

5. the activation of the Panel of ASEAN Experts on Fire and Haze Assessment and Coordination.

The Regional Haze Action Plan (RHAP)

In June 1995 ASEAN Environment Ministers had agreed on an ASEAN Cooperation Plan to address haze pollution. The Cooperation Plan contains broad policies and strategies to deal with transboundary haze pollution. Three main objectives were identified as follows:

a) to prevent land and forest fires through better management policies and enforcement;
b) to establish operational mechanism to monitor land and forest fires; and
c) to strengthen regional land and forest fire-fighting capability and the mitigating measures.

In order to meet these objectives, three strategies were proposed and agreed on, i.e. Preventive Measure, Regional Monitoring Mechanism, and Fire Fighting Capability.

Preventive Measures

Under the RHAP strategy ASEAN countries fully recognize the need to strengthen national policies and strategies to prevent land and forest fires. It also recognizes that while some member countries have already developed their policies and strategies, others are still in the process of improving them based on their own particular development needs, priorities and constraints. Nevertheless, ASEAN countries generally agreed to develop their National Plans taking cognizance of the need to address land and forest fires in their policies and strategies. The following common elements were agreed upon and included in the National Plans of each member countries:

a) Policies to curb activities that may lead to land and forest fires, and control emission from mobile and stationary sources, including the prohibition of open burning and the strict control of land clearing practices during the dry period.
b) Strategies to curb activities that may lead to land and forest fires, and control emission from mobile and stationary sources, including formulation of air quality management legislation to prohibit open burning; strict enforcement of laws and legislation; implementation of air quality monitoring and reporting regimes. The setting up inventory of sources of emission, both mobile and stationary; establishment of national task force committee to develop strategies and response plans to deal with fires and smoke haze is also part of the strategy, including utilization of information technology to provide haze-related information to relevant agencies to prevent and control spread of fire, and to enhance public awareness on the haze situation.
c) Guidelines and support services to discourage activities that can lead to land and forest fires;
d) Operating procedures for the early mobilization of resources to prevent the spread of fires;

e) Development of markets for the economic recovery and utilization of biomass and appropriate methods for the disposal of agriculture wastes.

Regional Monitoring Mechanisms

Under this strategy the RHAP will strengthen the mechanism to provide an alert of the first outbreak of land and forest fires, an assessment of meteorological conditions, a prediction and systematic tracking of the spread of fires and haze, and the necessary data to support enforcement action. As part of this effort, the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC) would be further streamlined and strengthened. The ASMC shall serve as a regional information centre for compiling, analyzing and disseminating information derived from satellite imagery and meteorological data necessary to detect and monitor land and forest fires and the occurrence of smoke haze.

The ASEAN ASMC located in Singapore has been streamlined and strengthened to serve as a regional information centre for compiling, analyzing and disseminating information derived from satellite imagery and meteorological data necessary to detect and monitor land and forest fires, and the occurrence of smoke haze.

It also includes the region's early warning system to provide an alert of the first outbreak of land and forest fires, an assessment of meteorological conditions, a prediction of the spread of fires and haze, and the necessary data to support enforcement action.

An intranet among the relevant ASEAN meteorological service and environment agencies were also established to improve communications and enhance the effectiveness of existing early warning and monitoring mechanisms. Since late 2003, the coverage of ASMC has been extended to the whole region.

Fire Fighting Capability

National and regional land and forest fire-fighting capability will be strengthened through the following measures:

a) The inventory of land and forest fire-fighting capabilities of each country and identification of resources that can be made available for regional fire-fighting efforts (completed by March 1998);
b) A programme to strengthen the fire-fighting capability of individual countries and the region, and compilation list of equipment and technical expertise needed at the regional level to tackle land and forest fires (completed by March 1998);
c) The sources of technical assistance for (b) within and outside ASEAN, and, if required, an assistance programme by each donor country. Technical assistance may include forest fire-fighting equipment, aircraft such as water bombers, high-tech equipment and experts for command post operations (completed by March 1998);

d) An operating procedure to activate the development of the fire-fighting resources in each country for regional fire-fighting operations (established by June 1998); and
e) A mechanism in each country to provide, in the event of an outbreak of land or forest fires, regular updates to the Haze Technical Task Force (HTTF) on progress made in the efforts to fight the fires. The updates would include the number of hotspots and their locations, analysis of fire types, problems encountered, adequacy of deployed resources, and effectiveness of enforcement and ground operations (established by June 1998);

The RHAP was adopted at the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Haze in December 1997. Three ASEAN member countries (Indonesia, Singapore and Malaysia) agreed in December 1997 to collectively take measures to prevent future forest and peat fires and haze. According to the Plan, Malaysia takes the lead in prevention, Singapore in monitoring and Indonesia in fire-fighting (Figure 1.1).

The ASEAN Environment Ministers Meeting on Haze (AMMH) is held regularly. Its aim is to review the region's approaches in preventing a recurrence of the haze and monitoring matters related. Reporting to the AMMH is an ASEAN Haze Technical Task Force (HTTF) involving environmental officials. The HTTF, chaired by Indonesia, oversees efforts in prevention, monitoring and combating the haze both at the national and regional levels.

The Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution 2002

In 1999, ASEAN took a step further by adopting the policy on zero-burning. In October 2000, the Environment Ministers agreed to forge ahead with the formulation of an ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution (ATHP) and an intergovernmental committee (INC) was formed to draft the Agreement. The Agreement aims to further operationalize and institutionalize existing arrangements in addressing transboundary haze pollution. It calls for parties of the Agreement to undertake:

a) Legislative and administrative measures to prevent and control activities related to land and forest fires that may result in transboundary haze pollution; and
b) National and joint actions to intensify regional and international cooperation to address transboundary haze pollution.

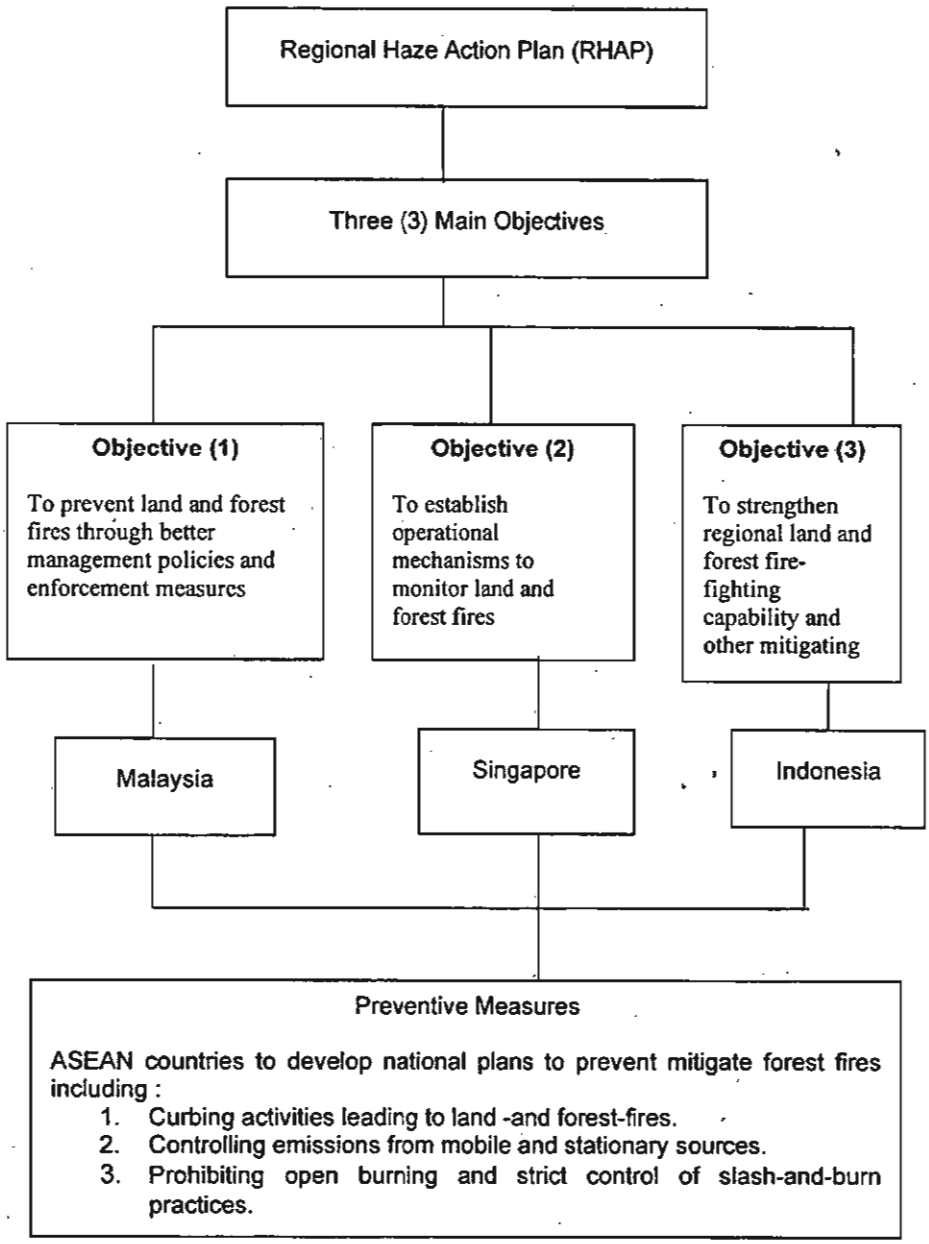


Figure 1.1. ASEAN regional haze action plan.

The Agreements also seeks to formalise mechanism for (a) communication and sharing of information on land forest fires and the resulting transboundary haze pollution, through the establishment of an ASEAN Centre for Transboundary Haze Pollution Control.

The ASEAN ATHP was signed by 10 member countries of ASEAN on 10 June 2002 in Kuala Lumpur during the World Conference and Exhibition on Land and Forest Fire Hazards. The Agreement is one of the first such regional arrangements in the world that binds a group of contiguous states to tackle transboundary haze pollution resulting from land and forest fires.

The ASEAN ATHP contains a preamble and six major parts with a total of 32 Articles as follows:

Part I : General Provisions (4 Articles: Articles 1 to 4)
Part II : Monitoring, Assessment, Prevention and Response (11 Articles: Articles 5 to 15)
PartIII : Technical Cooperation and Scientific Research (2 Articles: Articles 16 to 17)
PartIV : Institutional Arrangements (3 Articles: Articles 18 to 20)
Part V : Procedures (7 Articles: Articles 21 to 27)
Part VI : Final Clauses (5 Articles: Articles 28 to 32)

Basically the objective of the Agreement is to 'prevent and monitor transboundary haze pollution as a result of land and/or forest fires which should be mitigated, through concerted national efforts and intensified regional and international cooperation'. It should be 'pursued in the overall context of sustainable development and in accordance with the provision of this Agreement' (Article 2).

The Agreement itself focuses on matters regarding monitoring, assessment, and prevention of transboundary haze and the kind of technical cooperation, R&D and institutional agreement required in order to meet the objectives of the Agreement.

Some of the basic infrastructures have already been put in place, largely in response to the Regional Haze Action Plan (RHAP) which was agreed to earlier by ASEAN. Some of these include the establishment of the ASEAN Specialised Meteorological Centre (ASMC) and the ASEAN Haze Technical Task Force (HTTF).

The ASEAN Ministers responsible for environment agreed to work towards ratifying the ASEAN ATHP as soon as possible to ensure that regional efforts are further enhanced through the legal mechanisms provided for in the Agreement. The Agreement requires at least six ratifications to enter into force. The ASEAN ATHP finally came into force on the 25 November 2003 following the deposit of the sixth instrument of ratification by the Government of Thailand with the Secretary General of ASEAN on the 26 September 2003. The Agreement provides for its entry into force 60 days after the deposit of the sixth instrument of ratification. Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, and Vietnam had earlier deposited their instrument of ratification/ approval. It is interesting to note that at the time of writing Indonesia has still not ratified the Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution 2002.

Following the haze episode in October 2006, a Sub-regional Ministerial Meeting on Transboundary Haze Pollution was held in Pekanbaru on 13 October 2006. The Meeting was attended by the Ministers and other high ranking officials responsible for the environment from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. Nine province Governors from Indonesia, ten regents of the Riau Province as well as representatives of ASEAN Secretariat were also present in the Meeting as observers.

According to the joint press statement issued by the ASEAN Secretariat, the Meeting discussed urgent measures to jointly tackle the common problem caused by transboundary haze pollution. The Meeting assessed the sub-regional efforts to manage the problems caused by transboundary haze pollution and noted the efforts taken by countries in the region while acknowledging that the haze problem has not been adequately addressed. The Meeting appreciated the Indonesian efforts to tackle

land and forest fires that resulted in transboundary haze pollution and was committed to support Indonesia in its endeavour.

The Meeting seriously discussed many important topics including an update of regional transboundary haze situation and weather forecast, progress update by Indonesia of its measures adopted to prevent and mitigate land and forest fires in Sumatera and Kalimantan. At the same time the Meeting highly appreciated Malaysia's initiative in the funding and operationalization of the ASEAN transboundary haze pollution control. The Meeting also respectfully urged Indonesia to urgently finalize the ratification of the ASEAN Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution in accordance with its national law.

The Meeting further agreed to set up a Ministerial Steering Committee to oversee the implementation of short and long-term plans to effectively tackle the haze problem. The Committee comprises the Environment Ministers from Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand.

NATIONAL POLICIES IN ASEAN COUNTRIES

While not all ASEAN member countries have implemented pollution control policies effectively as yet, they all have begun developing and implementing the various national action plans to address problems of air pollution caused by internal sources and those exacerbated by the transboundary haze.

Apart from the respective policies and legislation to control air pollution caused by internal sources, the most common policy objective is to 'to prevent and control fire and haze'. The policies and effectiveness of implementation of such legislation, of course, vary from one member nation to another. Such variations are, in part, related to the nature and severity of the problems faced by each nation. Differences may also depend on the level of economic development of a particular nation.

Indonesia, for example, is the largest ASEAN nation with nearly 10% of the Earth's rainforests. It places a high priority on both conservation and effective utilization of its forest resources. It specifically establishes target levels for land conversion and at the same time ensures the protection and conservation of its remaining rainforests. It allows controlled expansion of its productive plantation agriculture, partly to eradicate poverty and partly to redistribute its population so that it does not concentrate too heavily on Java Island. It restricts the amount of land that can be cleared and burned for plantation agriculture in areas that are invaluable in terms of ecological biodiversity. In this regard, Indonesia puts restriction, but not a total ban, on the burning of agricultural wastes for domestic fires and the burning of household and industrial wastes. Indonesia's haze plan is silent on the timing of such practices. Rightly, the latter should be banned especially during the dry period, which typically extends from July through October (Abu Bakar Jaafar, 2006). The Indonesian authorities have been cited in the press for inaction against slash-and-burn clearing, an unhealthy practice by many contractors and subcontractors involved in large plantation development and management. If 'business-as-usual' prevails in the next few years when the economy picks up again after the 1997 crisis, haze due to

such policies may again blanket the region unless, of course, Indonesia can ensure that the management of such plantation and agricultural activities is based on best practice and zero-burning.

Brunei Darussalam and Singapore have one of the most stringent policies on air quality. They both recognize the importance of monitoring and assessment in the management of air quality including transboundary haze and open burning. Most legislation pertaining to air quality and their implementation are already in place; and in the case of Singapore, the public transport is exemplary.

Malaysia, Thailand and the Philippines are, of course, a lot bigger than either Brunei Darussalam or Singapore and are faced with different kinds of problems that cause air quality to deteriorate. In addition to urban mobile sources and industries, for example, these ASEAN member countries are faced with issues like land and forest fires and open burning.

Hitherto, only Brunei Darussalam, Malaysia, Singapore, the Philippines and Thailand have established and enforced emission standards for motor vehicles and industries. The other ASEAN member nations are still working on it and/or are in the process of implementing such standards.

MALAYSIA'S RESPONSE

a) Legislation

In Malaysia, efforts to control sources of air pollution, open burning and haze started in the 1970s when the Motor Vehicle (Control of Smoke and Gas Emissions) Rules 1997 (made under the Road Traffic Ordinance, 1954) and the Clean Air Regulations 1978 were enacted. In addition, the Control of Lead Concentrations in Motor Gasoline Regulations 1985 also contributed to air pollution control management.

Under the Motor Vehicle Rules 1977, it is an offence for motor vehicles to emit dark smoke in excess of 50 Hartridge units. This is especially relevant with respect to diesel-powered vehicles such as buses, lorries and taxis which operated in concentrated numbers in urban centres. Standards for gas emissions for petrol-driven vehicles are also being enforced by the Department of Environment (DOE).

The Environmental Quality (Clean Air) Regulations 1978 provide for detailed specifications on waste burning, dark smoke emissions by factory chimneys, and the emission of air impurities generally. Under the Clean Air Regulations, certain potentially polluting industries are not allowed to be anywhere within 1000 m of a residential area without prior written approval from the Director-General of DOE. It is also stipulated that (1) burning of industrial and trade wastes must be done in an approved incinerator; (2) the installation, resiting and alteration of fuel burning equipment should first obtain the prior written approval of the Director-General of DOE, and (3) open burning of industrial wastes or refuse is prohibited. With effect from October 1978 it was also mandatory for new industrial and trade premises to ensure that smoke emissions are not darker than shade no.1 on the Ringelmann Chart

for burning equipment using liquid fuel, and shade no.2 for those using solid fuel. For trade premises which were in operation before October 1978, the smoke emissions should not be darker than shade no.2 of the Ringelmann Chart with effect from March 1979.

The Environmental Quality (Control of Lead Concentration in Motor Gasoline) Regulations 1985, requires that lead content in motor gasoline be reduced to 0.15 gm/liter on and after 1 January 1990. Indeed, the response from motor gasoline companies was so good that now virtually all patrol pumps are selling unleaded petrol.

Controls of air pollution through legislation such as those described above are mostly short-term and remedial in nature. As a complementary strategy to minimize pollution, *Guidelines for the Siting and Zoning of Industries* (DOE, 1976) were introduced. The main feature of this Guideline is the incorporation of environmental component as an integral element in the medium-term development planning process with a view of bringing about an ecologically balanced relationship between development and environment. Under this guideline, the use of 'buffer zones' is encouraged between industries and residential areas or even between different industrial areas. The guidelines also allow for light industries to be located near housing or in built-up areas. However, as the potential for pollution increases, the distance from the residential areas needs to be increased accordingly from 500 to 1000 meters for general industries to 1500 to 3000 meters for 'special industries'.

Apart from *Guidelines for the Siting and Zoning of Industries* (DOE, 1976), there are other guidelines which directly attempt to control air pollution. These include *EIA Guidelines for Municipal Solid Wastes and Sewage Treatment and Disposal Projects* (DOE, 1995a) and *EIA Guidelines for Mines and Quarries* (DOE, 1995b).

During the haze period, all legislations pertaining to air pollution including open burning and earthworks were enforced more strictly. Indeed, many of the litigations and prosecutions of non-compliance took place during the haze period (The New Straits Times, 1997). Several construction activities were advised to be put on hold and as a precaution, several schools in Sarawak were closed when the API were exceedingly high, in excess of 500.

More recently in the midst of the 1997 haze, the EQA 1974 was amended to reemphasize Malaysia's concern regarding open burning. The amendment, EQA (Amendment) 1998, was officially passed by Parliament on May 13, 1998 and accepted by the Senate on the 4th June 1998. It was gazetted as Act A 1030 on 1st July, 1998 following the Royal sanction on 25 June, 1998. The amendment must have been one of the fastest amendments to be approved by Parliament, the Senate, and the Yang Dipertuan Agong signifying its urgency.

In the Amendment, two new provisions (Section 29A and 29B) were introduced. Section 29A prohibits any form of 'open burning' with a penalty of RM 500,000 or five years jail or both for non-compliance. Section 29B states that the owner(s) or the occupier(s) of a premise will be held responsible for open burning occurring in that premise.

PUBLIC AWARENESS AND SUPPORT

What has been described so far are the management responses and initiatives at the regional, international and national levels. However, while legislation and institutions in the administration of policies and programmes of environmental management are important, public support is equally crucial in order to ensure the success of such programmes. The bottom line is no conservation programme, however good it may be designed, can be completely successful without public support, which can only come from well informed citizens who are aware and fully committed. This must include all sections of the communities, from administrators, politicians and the private sector right down to the ordinary man in the street and school children. At both the regional, national and local levels, efforts to educate the public and disseminate environmental information must be intensified. Since environmental education is basically aimed at a community actions, efforts to reach different target groups must be varied and involve not only governmental institutions but also a wide variety of professional groups, the private sector and non-governmental organizations (NGOs).

The role of NGOs in environmental education has long been accepted. Their activities are aimed at both effecting changes and shaping attitudes, and so, directly or indirectly, they are involved in environmental education. Of great significance is the role of the NGOs in providing a mechanism for feedback to the government and its regulatory agencies and negative side-effects of programme implementation. In many respects, they perform a watch-dog function on behalf of the public on the use and abuse of natural resources, conservation, professional practices and other activities that adversely impinge upon the environment. The government, for its part, should be willing to listen to alternative views without prejudice. In some cases, this can be difficult as environment and development are closely linked, and environmental NGOs may easily be dismissed as being anti-development and trouble makers.

Apart from creating awareness, enhancing commitment to conservation through environmental education, and hence public support for environmental programmes, economic instrument as management tools in environmental conservation should also be applied whenever the situation warrants it, although these may not be too popular with certain quarters. Experiences have shown that preventive measures tend to become more effective when they are packaged in terms of dollars and cents. Indeed, several of these economic instruments are already in place, mainly in the form of economic incentives, and should be expanded further if there are objections from certain groups (Table 1.2). In this respect, the gradual acceptance of ISO 14000 by Malaysia is a move in the right direction. The ISO 14000 is an effort by the International Organization for Standard (ISO) to 'standardize' environmental management system internationally covering environmental management systems, environmental auditing and related environmental investigations, environmental labeling, environmental performance evaluation and life cycle assessment.

A system of this kind enables an organization to establish, and assess the effectiveness of procedures to set an environmental policy and objectives, achieve conformance with them, and demonstrate such performance to others. For many years, this initiative has been dominated by developed countries like the U.S., Canada, the U.K., France, Norway, Australia, Germany and the Netherlands. Indeed, some

influential business houses have already begun or are planning to apply specific environmental standards to their trading partners. Once ISO 14000 is in place, there is every reason to believe that it will become commercial standard for environmental management. An organization which is unable or unwilling to play the game and meet such standard will lose trading partners and limit its strategic alliance capability. Malaysia is fully aware of ISO 14000, its advantages, consequences and possible trade implications both at an organizational level and as a trading nation operating in highly competitive international environment. A number of trade organizations in Malaysia are already implementing the ISO/DIS 14001 Environmental Management Systems - Specification with Guidance for use on a voluntary basis.

Table 1.2. Examples of incentives for the protection and conservation of the environment.

1.	Pioneer status investment tax allowance (ITA) for companies undertaking a forest plantation project.
2.	Pioneer status ITA for companies undertaking reprocessing of certain waste such as agricultural and chemical wastes.
3.	Pioneer status ITA for companies storing, treat and disposing of dangerous toxic wastes.
4.	Special capital allowance for companies providing facilities for storing, treating and disposing dangerous toxic waste produced by its own factory.
5.	Exemption of import duty, sales tax and excise duty on machinery equipment to manufacturing companies for the control of population.
6.	Exemption of import duty, sales tax and excise duty on machinery equipment and raw material required for undertaking activity listed in (2) and (4).
7.	A price differential of 3 cents/liter between leaded and unleaded petrol through a price reduction on unleaded petrol effective from January 1, 1994.
8.	Import and sales tax exemption for catalytic converters.
9.	Import duty for new diesel powered passenger cars reduced to 120%. Motor vehicle license fees on road tax reduced for new generation diesel-powered motor vehicles that half of the existing rate.
10.	Donations to an improved organization established exclusively for the protection and conservation on the environment are allowed as deductions in the computation of income tax purposes.
11.	A forest plantation project is recognized as a strategic project of

national interest and is eligible for the special incentives:
(a) Pioneer status with 100% tax exemption for 10 years; or
(b) Investment tax allowance at the rate of 100% for 5 years,

(Source: The 1994 and 1995 Budget Speeches by the Minister of Finance Malaysia)

An equally important point to remind ourselves of is the need to realize that environmental management and conservation are a shared responsibility. While the environment is a common concern, its intensity and extent of usage vary from one group of the community to another. Some use it more than others and, in the process, destroy it; some benefit excessively from it. In view of the different contributions to environmental degradation and benefits derived from environmental resources, the 'shared responsibility' should somehow be differentiated, in line with the spirit embodied in Principle 7 of the Rio Declaration in 1992. This is important in that it lays the basis for the equitable sharing of responsibilities. While every member of the community is expected to assist, the more endowed section of the community, especially the corporate sector will need to shoulder greater responsibility and contribute more substantially to environmental cause.

THE CHALLENGES

From the foregoing discussion it will be observed that ASEAN nations have already formulated an overall response mechanism for the region. The Haze Action Plan and the Agreement on Transboundary Haze for example, are already in place and they are continually being refined, perfected and gradually implemented. This system will provide the means for early fire detection through satellite monitoring, aerial and ground surveillance weather forecasting, and surface-based atmospheric modeling. In addition, its fire fighting forces will be coordinated at the national level with fire fighting teams from other nations that can come to the assistance of local fire fighters. This network in turn, will be linked through communication channels via the internet, a regional intranet emergency response service, telephone and telefax capabilities, and radio channels dedicated to emergency response communications. Regional plans are also being developed, refined and perfected to increase the capacity for enforcement of regulations, promote public education and awareness, provide regional air quality monitoring capabilities, commission studies to assess health and socioeconomic impacts, design and implement a fire danger rating system, and enforce effective land use planning to promote sustainable development on a regional basis.

The Regional Haze Action Plan (RHAP) and the Agreement on Transboundary Haze (ATH) signed by member nations of ASEAN notwithstanding, the effectiveness of such efforts will depend not only on full commitment of each of the members but also the capacity to meet their respective obligations. In this regard, it is worth noting that the Agreement on Transboundary Haze contains no explicit provisions about what to do in case of noncompliance of Parties to the Agreement. This is important as the entire success or failure of the Agreement hinges on compliance. Article 27 of the Agreement states that 'any dispute between Parties as to the interpretation or application of, or compliance with, this Agreement or any Protocol thereto, shall be settled amicably by consultation or negotiation'. No sanction was explicitly mentioned in the Agreement *per se* although this could be taken up

again (if need be) in the Protocol. However, even if the Protocol is agreed upon the dispute should only be settled amicably by consultation or negotiation. As for now, it appears that negotiation and consultation are the only final recourse to settle matters regarding compliance, interpretation and application of the Agreement. To what extent this approach is effective is difficult to say. Only time can tell. So far the result has not been too encouraging.

The strength of an organization such as ASEAN and in particular the RHAP and the subsequent ATH is as strong as 'the weakest link' among the member nations involved. In this regard, the Indonesian authorities, for example, have been identified by the press for inaction against slash-and-burn clearing and unhealthy practice by contractors and subcontractors involved in some large plantations. The Panel of ASEAN Experts on Fire and Haze Assessment from Brunei Darussalam, Singapore and Malaysia observed that ASEAN as a block would be unable to successfully deal with the regional haze problem unless Indonesian authorities take firm measures to suppress slash-and-burn farming methods. The Panel also stressed the importance of Indonesian authorities to finance fire-fighting and prevention efforts. The problem, however, becomes increasingly complex because Indonesia lacks the fund to finance fire fighting and prevention efforts and hence, fails to meet her obligations as stipulated in the Agreement on Transboundary Haze.

This is where the proposal by Malaysia to establish a special haze fund is timely. The objective of the fund is to assist affected members of ASEAN and should be jointly managed by the nations involved. However, while the special fund is generally helpful, the root cause of the problem is still not addressed, i.e. bad practice in managing agricultural wastes, be it from large plantations or any land clearing activities. Overcoming and treating the fires (both open burning and fires resulting from land and forest clearing) after they have already taken place is certainly not the right way to address the root cause of the problem.

The Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution itself, while providing a good framework for better cooperation among ASEAN member countries, is only a first step in a long process towards the creation of an effective legal instrument to cope with the regional haze problem. More efforts are needed to refine it and fill the gaps. The question of how best to deal with errant party (parties) to the Agreement, for example, has not been explicitly addressed in the Agreement. This is a delicate issue that needs to be resolved first before legal instrument can hope to be effective. Traditionally, in ASEAN it may not be too easy and neither is it so desirable to apply sanction even if provisions on sanctions have been addressed in the Agreement or as part of the Protocol. Sanctions have never been an approach in resolving a problem or dispute among ASEAN member countries. In the case of transboundary haze from Indonesia, it may perhaps be more desirable to look for solutions other than legal. Socioeconomic approaches may probably be a better alternative to alleviate the haze problem in the long term.

Transboundary haze pollution is a major regional problem. It cannot be contained by any single member nation of ASEAN without the cooperation from other neighbouring nations. Indeed, no government, however committed, is able to control effectively many such environmental problems alone without the support and cooperation from the public. Support from the latter, however, can only come from a

public who is aware of the problem and is sufficiently committed to contribute in the control, mitigation and management of the problem. It is in this regard that the Secretary-General of ASEAN emphasized the point that it was all very well for ASEAN to have agreements and action plans to tackle the haze problem, but their implementation needed the support of civil society groups (Jakarta Post, 2002).

One immediate challenge which is shared by almost all ASEAN member nations concerns the effective enforcement of the existing environmental and environment-related legislations. Many observers feel that while some ASEAN nations have some of the best sets of environmental legislations the effective implementation of such legislation is far from impressive. A good piece of legislation is only effective if it can be enforced such that it meets the objectives for which it was enacted in the first place. This requires support facilities. It requires manpower and resources, the cooperation of the various government agencies and the support of the state and local governments. Likewise, the support from the public is equally crucial.

No legislation and no conservation programme, however good it may be designed, could be successful without public support. This could only come from well-informed citizens who are aware of their right to quality environment. This includes all sections of the community from politicians, administrators and the private sector right down to school children and ordinary public. There is thus a need for a concerted effort to educate the public and disseminate environmental information involving government institutions, the media, the private sector and the NGOs to reach the different target groups.

CONCLUSION

This section of the report has been concerned with transboundary haze pollution in Southeast Asia. It provides a review of the haze problem by first defining the issue followed by a brief description of some of the haze episodes since about the 1980s. It then discusses the management response and the challenges both for Indonesia, the affected member countries of ASEAN (Malaysia, Singapore, and Brunei Darussalam) and ASEAN as a region. This report argues that transboundary haze is a multi-faceted problem affecting several ASEAN member countries. A holistic approach is needed to alleviate the problem, including the role of civil societies and the support of the NGOs. Although the RHAP and the ATH have been put in place, the effectiveness of such efforts will depend not only on the full commitment of each of the members but also their capacity to meet their respective obligations as stipulated in these Agreement and Regional Plan. In this connection, it is perhaps worthwhile as a last resort, to consider seriously the proposal by the Eminent Persons Group (EPG) to the ASEAN leaders in Cebu, Philippines on the 12th January 2007 to introduce sanctions against errant ASEAN members who are signatories to the ATH (New Straits Times, 2007). This is to ensure that the ATH is not just a mere treaty but a respectable and effective instrument. The implementation is critical. It needs a strong political will that transcends rhetorics and narrow sectional interests at every level of operation.

Parallel to the legal instruments discussed above, it may be helpful for ASEAN to also consider an alternative approach to alleviate the haze problem, i.e. the socioeconomic option. The objective of this option shall be to improve the economic position of the people in Sumatera and Kalimantan and to instill good housekeeping practice among those involved in oil palm and timber plantations, and other agricultural activities. The rule which prohibits 'open burning' must also be strictly enforced with stiff penalties.

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SECOND PLENARY SESSION

Chairperson: Dr.Peter Smith

1. The Complexities of Language Concerns in a Multi-Ethnic Nation. – *Saran Kaur Gill*

PLENARY PAPER 2

The Complexities of Language Concerns in a Multi-Ethnic Nation

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Abstract

This paper will highlight aspects of language complexities that concern both the majority and minority communities in Malaysia's multi-ethnic and multi-lingual landscape. These are challenges that resonate with the concerns of most citizenry in many other multi-lingual and multi-ethnic nations. These are linguistic complexities coloured by the needs of nation building at varying points in time and which can lead to both harmony and disharmony amongst varying ethnic groups.

In the Malaysian context, this begins with the post-independence period of the post-colonial shift in language policy from English to Bahasa Malaysia. This raises the need for developing a symbol of national identity and unity, which posed great challenges for the institution and modernization of Bahasa Malaysia as national language and language of education. In the wake of the 21st century, Malaysia has faced once again one of the greatest challenges in language policy and planning – this is the shift in language of education from Bahasa Malaysia to English for science and technology. The paper will unravel the macro-reasons that have led to this drastic situation and give voice to the former Prime Minister, Tun Dr Mahathir Mohamed, who was instrumental for this change. Against this backdrop arises one of the present challenges faced by many nations across the globe – this is the challenge of maintaining and sustaining both national collective and ethnic community linguistic identities in the face of both international and national linguistic dominance.

INTRODUCTION

The area on the complexities of language concerns in a multi-ethnic nation is often referred to as the 'sociology of language' of which language policy and planning is a major component and deals with language as a "social problem and resource." (Spolsky, 1998:7) Language, which is a rich means of communication between various communities, can end up being the instrument that causes social discord in those very circumstances. Therefore in this paper we examine the relevance and concerns of various languages, whether national, international or ethnic languages, from the perspective of varying members of society – what do the roles and functions of these languages mean to members of society, how and when do they use it? How are decisions made on the selection of languages for their national roles? What is the impact of decisions made on the status of dominant languages, on minority languages that may exist in society? This paper will journey along the following course:

1. Nationalistic Language Policies in Post-Independence Malaysia
2. Change in Language Policy in the 21st Century: Unraveling Reasons
3. The Maintenance of Ethnic Identity for a Minority Community in the Face of these Multiple Linguistic Challenges

NATIONALISTIC LANGUAGE POLICIES IN POST-INDEPENDENCE MALAYSIA

The Growth of Nationalism and the Selection and Institution of Bahasa Melayu as the National and Official Language

After Malaya obtained independence from the British in 1957, the dominant ethnic group was plagued with the following questions: to quote Crouch, "who are the owners of the country? What are the symbols of national identity? What is the meaning of the nation's history?" (Crouch, 1996: 155)

These feelings of anxiety coupled with enforced imperialism resulted in an acute need amongst the dominant ethnic group for "their own cultures and histories be restored to a place of honour." There was a strong need for the Malays to legitimize themselves in the land that they considered theirs – calling Malaya "Tanah Melayu" (Land of the Malays) and calling themselves "Bumiputera" (sons of the soil) were part of these efforts.

This was what Horowitz (1985: 185) in his extensive discussion of ethnic group relationships refers to as the need for groups, and especially dominant ethnic groups, to establish "relative group worth" and "relative group legitimacy" through political domination and the high symbolic content of politics of ethnic entitlement.

Therefore, one of the strong symbolic claims that was asserted during this period was that of the institution of Bahasa Malaysia as the national language and official language - the language of education and administration. After all, the establishment of a national language is "the most powerful symbolic vehicle of nationalism." (Coulmas, 1988: Preface)

There was a strong feeling that a national language was needed not only to affirm their legitimacy as the dominant group in this country but also as a tool to unify the multi-ethnic citizenry of the nation – to provide a strong sense of cultural identity at the national level.

The need for a common national language is highlighted through the words of our beloved first Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tunku Abdul Rahman, who says,

> "It is only right that as a developing nation we should want to have a language of our own. If the national language is not introduced our country will be devoid of a unified character and personality – as I could put it, a nation without a soul and without a life." (Cited in Francis Wong and Ee Tiang Hong, 1975: 75)

In the post-independence years, it was one thing to make Bahasa Malaysia official, but this status decision brought with it the need for corpus planning. The

Malay language had an agrarian and literary background. Therefore, for Bahasa Malaysia to be taken seriously as an intellectual language and to gain educational capital, it needed to be modernized and scholars had to be encouraged to write or translate specialized knowledge into the language. Modernization was then the first challenge.

The Modernisation of Malay

One of the more well-known activities was "The General Formula for the Coining of Scientific and Technological Terminology in Bahasa Malaysia." The government set up a team of Malaysian and Indonesian language planners and academicians, including scientists who held a total of 6 joint meetings over a period of 16 years from 1972 to 1988 to pursue this activity (Hassan Ahmad, 1988: 38). This development of terminology of about half a million new words was considered one of the most significant achievements in language planning in the region.

Where then did this place English?

The transition from English to Bahasa Melayu as the main medium of instruction began in 1969 in schools and reached university level in 1983.

The role of English then became that of the first second language – from being the medium of instruction in schools, it became a subject that was compulsory to take but not to pass for all students in the school system.

Having discussed the change in language policy from English language to Bahasa Malaysia, which spanned a period from the post-independence years to the 1980s, we move on to the 1990s. This period saw increasing signals for modification of language policy again, culminating in 2002 to a shift back to English for the field of science and technology as language of instruction.

CHANGE IN LANGUAGE POLICY IN THE 21st CENTURY: UNRAVELING REASONS

Approach to Language Policy and Planning

The use of the term "change in language policy" adopted in this paper is not based on legislation through formal written language policies, but rather refers to change in language practice and application. There are many aspects of the implementation process that are found wanting and irrespective of whether one agrees or disagrees with the change or whether the implementation processes could have been approached differently, it is essential for all members of society to understand the government's reasons for this decision.

There are many reasons for this change (which have been dealt with in an article published by Gill (2005) but for this paper I will focus on one. We will begin with an interview conducted with the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Mahathir, which was part of a two-year government funded research project "Language Policy and Planning in Higher Education in Malaysia: Responding to the Needs of the Knowledge Economy."

Tun was asked,

> With regards to the recent change in the MOI in schools which now have impacted higher education, what were the reasons that provided the impetus for this change in language policy for the fields of science and maths?

Our education system is like any other education system. It's meant to enable us to acquire knowledge. If we have the knowledge available in the national language, by all means, go ahead but the fact is that in science the research that is being done is moving at a very fast pace. Everyday literally thousands of papers on new research are being published and practically all of them are in English. To translate English into Bahasa, would require a person with 3 skills. Skill in the 2 languages and skill in the subject that is to be translated and we don't have very many people who are qualified to do that or who wish to do that. That is why it is easier if you learn English and the students can have direct access to all the knowledge that is available in English." (Interview conducted by Gill on the 16 June, 2005).

Unraveling Factors Impacting the Change in Language Policy

This leads us to one of the major reasons for this change – the need to access science and technology in English and this has raised the challenge of translation and indigenous writings in Bahasa Melayu. This then raises the next question, which is, why have all the efforts thus far not been sufficient for the nation to be able to access information and knowledge in the field of science and technology?

Crucial access to information in the field of science and technology: the slow pace of Publications/Translations in Bahasa

Shaharir, an established professor of maths, explicates cogently the various reasons for the slow rate of publications in Bahasa Melayu. These range from lack of recognition of publications in Bahasa Melayu in the promotion schemes of academics, to the lengthy process of publication which demoralises the efforts of the academic writers. (Shaharir, 2001: 107-119).

This is compounded by the fact that the translation process progressed at a slow pace. According to Hj. Hamidah Baba, executive director of the National Translation Agency (ITNM), a full time translator can only translate 5-8 pages a day, while a part-time translator can manage to translate a maximum of 3 pages a day (Hjh. Hamidah Baba, 2001: 7).

These reasons together with the knowledge explosion in English, concretely depicted by the fact that, "there are over 100,000 scientific journals in the world and this number is increasing at the rate of 5000 articles per day adding to the 30 million existing" (Bilan cited in Martel, 2001: 51) paint an increasingly challenging situation for access to knowledge and information in English.

It is in line with the need to develop a strong knowledge based society that provides credence to Tun Mahathir's redefinition of the concept of nationalism for Malaysia when he says,

> "We need to move from the extreme form of nationalism which concentrates on being a language nationalist only, not a knowledge nationalist, not a development oriented nationalist. I feel that we should be a development oriented nationalist. We want our people to succeed, to be able to stand tall, to be respected by the rest of the world. Not to be people with no knowledge of science and technology, very poor, very backwards, working as servants to other people. If we have no knowledge we will be servants to those with knowledge." (Interviewed by Gill, 16 June 2005)

FUTURE CHALLENGE FOR THE NATION: BALANCING NATION'S DEVELOPMENT AND THE SUSTENANCE OF NATIONAL AND ETHNIC LINGUISTIC IDENTITIES

The increasing dominance of the English language in educational systems has given rise to one of the most critical concerns amongst many nations in present times. There is a fear that nations will develop a generation who will forsake their cultural heritage in their pursuit of technological and economic power. This is similarly expressed by Tsui and Tollefson (2004: 7), who remind us that the change in the medium of instruction to English, "... may produce nationals who are ambivalent about their own identity, and nations that are stripped of their rich cultural heritage." Thus, many nations are facing the challenge of having to develop a balance between national languages and the increasing spread and functions of English. This is a concern of the Malaysian nation as well but time constraints do not permit a discussion of this very important issue.

Along parallel lines, in situations of similar linguistic complexities, minority communities in many nations have to work at creating a balance between their ethnic and the national and the international linguistic needs.

We move now to a contrasting scenario – to examine how a specific minority ethnic community, specifically the Punjabi community, has coped with the reinstitution of their ethnic language and identity in the face of these multiple linguistic challenges.

There are in addition to the significant minority groups of Chinese and Tamils, many other ethnic-based minority groups of lesser numbers. Of these, one lesser numbered minority group is that of the Punjabi-Sikh community, whose members number 46,800, making up 0.2% of the total population.

SUSTAINING ETHNIC IDENTITY FOR A MINORITY COMMUNITY IN THE FACE OF MULTIPLE LINGUISTIC CHALLENGES

Language, Ethnicity and Education Systems

To belong to an ethnic group means possessing a common descent, cultural heritage, religion, language and a distinctive history and destiny ..... (Smith, 1981: 66; Joseph, 2004: 162) Of these, the one integral distinctive characteristic is that of language, which is a strong determinant of one's identity, at both national and ethnic levels.

Reasons for Gradual Decline of the Functional Roles of the Punjabi Language

The working paper on the Historical Background of Punjabi Education in Malaysia (Randhawa, 2004) and the cover story of the Sikh Magazine (Jaspal S., 2003: 24) aptly and timely trace the challenges facing the development of Punjabi education in Malaysia and its gradual demise. There were many varied reasons for this gradual marginalisation of mother-tongue education and we will begin with the dominant political nationalistic reason.

As has been discussed earlier, during the post-independence period, Malaysia, focused, like a number of other countries, on the essential "educational agendas of nation-building, national identity and unity ...." (Tollefson and Tsui, 2004: viii) The authorities were very serious about 'the progressive development of an educational system in which the national language is the main medium of instruction," (para 3 of the Preamble of the Act, 1957). As a result, significant resources were channeled to enhancing the status and functional use of Bahasa Melayu in the education system. Consequently, there was a reduction in the budgets for the upkeep of schools that used the vernacular as the medium of education, particularly those schools of the lesser-numbered ethnic minorities.

In parallel with the above was the fact that for the Punjabis, as a minority ethnic group, of immigrant ancestry who moved to this nation during colonial times, the priority then for this group, like many other immigrant minority groups was to succeed educationally, economically and socially. This is further explicated by Skutnab-Kangas (1999: 56) who says, "For many ... minorities, ethnic identity was not initially seen as important. Rather they focused on school achievement, educational opportunity and equality." Mastering the dominant languages were seen "as possessing instrumental value which their own languages, cultures and ethnicities could not promise." This led to "the loss of their own linguistic resource, their own language or at least the chance of developing it to a high formal level."

A drastic consequence of the above situation was that religious and language studies began to deteriorate amongst the Punjabi community. They seemed to have lost a "cultural core value" of attachment to one's language or mother tongue. Once the language is lost in carrying out cultural practices, traditions and in practicing the religion, then these aspects of culture can only be conducted in a superficial, memorized manner without much meaning. To lose out on the meaning of aspects

integral to one's culture in one's ethnic group, is to lose out on an intrinsic part of one's inner identity.

This therefore raises the question of why and how should a minority community sustain and maintain their ethnic language? Should they not just ensure that their children are able to compete educationally and economically through the national language and English and not worry about their ethnic socio-cultural values and identity?

There is a school of thought that feels that mastery of the ethnic minority language leads to strengthening of ethnic boundaries and results in an inability to partake in a collective national identity. This then raises the following question: Are we not able to sustain identities at different levels serving different functions and needs – the ethnic, the national and the international linguistic needs? Stephen May, who has worked extensively on linguistic rights in New Zealand, reminds us that,

> "... it is clear that many of us can and do hold multiple and complementary identities – social, political and linguistic – at one and the same time .... Certainly, one can hold both a regional and national identity without these necessarily being conflictual. Why then should this not also be the case for ethnic and national identities? (Stepan, 1998; Taylor, 1998) (cited in May, 2001:106)

If one is sure of one's ethnic roots then one can have a strong sense of national collective identity. But if this is marginalized, then it will be difficult for the ethnic groups to reconcile to their loss of ethnic identity whilst at the same time face the challenges of working towards a collective national identity. After all, as stressed by Fishman (1991: 31), "... an accepting and unconflicted view of one's own culture may be a building block of and a pre-condition for accepting unconflicted views of other cultures. Security begets security."

Therefore it was crucial for the minority Punjabi-Sikh community to re-establish its ethnic identity through a reversal of the shift in the Punjabi language.

Community-Driven Reverse Language Shift (RLS) Measures

Out of this complex situation, came a strong realization that if anything was to be done it has to be initiated by the community, the heartland of where the language needs to be recaptured before looking outward for assistance from political and governmental institutions.

Therefore, as a base force to activate and energise the collective spirits, the Sikh elders comprising a four member team, led by Santokh Singh, who provided inspiring and determined leadership, decided to do something about the increasingly demoralizing situation.

Working hard and putting in their best efforts, the committee first developed the now established Punjabi Education Trust Malaysia (PETM). After many discussions, group dynamics and negotiations, the Punjabi Education Trust Malaysia, by November 2000, launched the new Punjabi education programme. There are now 20 Punjabi Education Centres nationwide with more than 3000 students and 220 teachers. (cited in Jaspal S. 2003, 26).

CONCLUSION

What needs to be worked on for the nation in this period of globalised forces is a blueprint of language planning and policy for our nation to plan and assist its multi-ethnic population in establishing ethnic, national and international identities – a blueprint that will work out the resources and plans for the continued enhancement and development of Bahasa Melayu as our national language as it faces the challenges of globalisation, the development of human resource equipped with English language competencies to be able to acquire international identities and a sense of security and concern that ethnic identities are being considered through planned provision of ethnic language teaching. Only through these crucial considerations can there be the pursuit of the integral balance needed between the collective national identity and the individual ethnic identity as well as international communicative needs for the multi-ethnic citizens of Malaysia.

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SESSION 1
EDUCATION AND COMMUNICATION

Chairperson: Dr.Peter Smith

1. Crisis Communication Plan: A Case of the Negative Events in Thailand and Effects on Tourism Businesses. – *Kaewta Muangasame & Naphawan Chantradoan*

2. Searching for Security through the Haze: An Examination of the Complexities of Intra-ASEAN Cooperation. – *Tang Siew Mun*

3. A Comparison of the Impact of the Home Literacy Environment on the L1 Reading Frequencies of Students from Two Different Universities: Implications for the Learning of an L2. – *Nicholas Ferriman*

4. Personal Epistemological Development during the Undergraduate Education: Beliefs about Knowledge and Knowledge Acquisition of Thai University Students. - *Takayoshi Fujiwara & Brian J.Phillips*

Paper 1 Crisis Communication Plan: A Case of the Negative Events in Thailand and Their Effects on Tourism Businesses

Kaewta Muangasame &Naphawan Chantradoan
Mahidol University International College

Abstract

Crisis management strategy has recently become a very critical business concern, particularly when the organizations need to cope with impulsive circumstances such as the natural disasters, the unstable economy, and the acts of terrorism, etc. It is clearly essential to apply the preparedness strategy which leads to effective solutions for the problems arose. This article is centred on how Crisis Communication upon negative events could harmonize the related organisation and generate the impacts to the tourism businesses in case of negative events in Thailand. The tourist purchasing decision was investigated and analysed to see how much media influences the behaviour of the customers in their decision making.

This paper has covered the tourist decision making behavior and its implication. Tourism is a demand-driven industry, and the crises and disasters determine strong fluctuations in the tourism demand. However when digging further into its root, demand was not only affected by the external determinants, the internal determinants also play a very important role. It was found that the number of tourists visiting Phuket after the Tsunami crisis has increased enormously, and this was because the personal determinants of the tourists. Numbers of the tourists who visit Phuket after the Tsunami said that they wanted to come back because they feel related, and connected to the destinations, hotels, and local people. They would like to help and maintain good relationship with people who helped them.

The focus of this research is upon the problems of communication planning and the implementation of the plan before, during, and after a crisis. It was found that large hotels and international chain hotels are well prepared with the Crisis Communication. It was integrated into the firm's marketing strategies using the basic instruments namely product (destination) policy, price policy and distribution policy. The thorough crisis communication plan is more systematic and very well functioned proven by the previous Tsunami Crisis in Phuket in the year 2004. The immediate internal and external crisis communication policies and plans are based on security management and risk management theories. The flow of information within the firm is a significant factor towards the successful of immediate crisis communication management. It could summarise that a good preparation such as training with any cries need to be developed and measured frequently.

Crisis management strategy has recently become a very critical business concern, particularly when organizations need to cope with unforseen circumstances such as natural disasters, unstable economy, acts of terrorism, etc. It is clearly essential to apply the preparedness strategy which leads to effective solutions for the problems they may arise. This article focuses on how Crisis Communication on negative events generates impacts on the hotel and airline businesses. The tourist purchasing decision will be investigated and analyzed to see how much media influences the behavior of customers in their decision-making.

This paper is intended to supply a general definition of crisis management and focuses on Crisis Communication instruments. Moreover it also aims to identify the essential nature of unpredictable situations and to use such negative events as a source of factual background materials in order to form the basis of theoretical discussions. The paper includes a review of the media theories, cases following negative events, the method for handling a crisis condition, crisis communication planning, and the ineffective Crisis Communication which shows obvious impacts on the tourist purchasing decision. Various aspects of the strategies for tackling crises are examined including preplanning, response, recovery and future planning.

It has been shown that most of the large hotels, such as international chain hotels and resorts are well-prepared in Crisis Communication. It has been integrated as a part of their marketing strategies where they apply all together the following instruments: product (destination) policy, price policy and distribution policy. They have adopted the immediate crisis communication policies and plans based on security management or risk management theories. Moreover, the communication channel has been found to be very significant in terms of enhancing positive images of the destination or the organizations after a crisis.

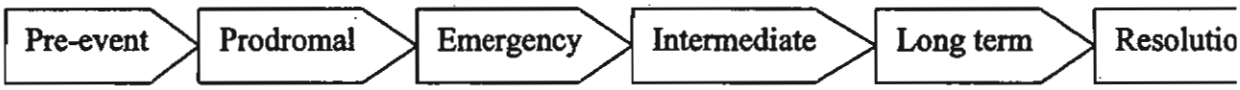
On the other hand, the small hotels and newbies in the hotel businesses seem to lack an understanding of effective crisis communication methods. They are also reluctant to channel funds for crisis planning although there is an interest in the concept. To collect the data, the primary research tool employed comprised in-depth interviews. Moreover the secondary researches which are normal practices on crisis management in tourism business, and the information about the effects of negative events towards destinations will be identified.

Crisis planning

Some authors use the life cycle concept from the marketing theory to identify the situation of the crisis. The most detailed crisis life cycle was explained by Faulkner (2001). This model was also used in the case of Katherine Floods in Australia and the Foot and Mouth Outbreak in UK.

The crisis life cycle below illustrates the various stages of crises. The very first point, the pre-event is where action can be taken to prevent disasters. The prodromal stage is where the crisis is notified. Emergency is when the people or firms have been affected and action has to be taken to help people and secure the property. The Intermediate phase is when the utilities are restored, while long term is

when damages are repaired or sometimes it is called the healing stage. The last phase is when new facilities are built and improved.



Source: Own, adapted from Faulkner (2001)

Figure 3: Crisis Life Cycle

Glaesser (2003) identifies that there are different activities in every phase of a crisis. The two main functions are crisis prevention and crisis coping. He illustrates the details of each function by using the following table to show the activities that firms can take into consideration.

Crisis prevention				Crisis coping
Crisis precautions		Crisis avoidance		Employment of instruments
Planning	Implementation	Early warning	Adjustment	

Source: Glaesser (2003)

Table 3: Phases of crisis management

Moreover, the crisis prevention's main purposes are to be used as tools for identifying at what stage the crisis really is, and to prepare for possible future devastation. On the other hand crisis coping is to bring the crisis to an end and to make sure that the negative consequences will not repeat in the future.

Ritchie *et al.* (2003) supported that the Crisis Life Cycle is very useful for the crisis management team. It can be used as a guideline to consider what strategies should be developed and implemented at the various stages of a crisis. By understanding the life cycle concept, more effective and efficient strategies can be further developed to reduce or even stop the negative impacts of such phenomena.

Primary research

The responses from hoteliers in Phuket and Khao Lak

The research was aimed at investigating the crisis communication plan: a case of the negative events in Thailand and the effects on tourism businesses. In order to gather information, the authors contacted seven resort hotels in Phuket and Khao Lak where they had the experience in dealing with negative events in Thailand. Of these, all seven agreed to be interviewed. These seven resort hotels have different operational strategies according to the sizes of the hotels. The respondents were asked to answer eight main questions in order to measure the crisis communication plan, the background of problems, and how they dealt with crises. The respondents were management staff who could point out the objectives, and analyze how the crisis

communication plan should be implemented. Cases of previous negative events in Thailand were discussed in more details.

Most of the hotels allowed the authors to conduct the interviews without considering anonymity issues. One of the hotels did not want its name to be listed in this research. Therefore in the following section, those large international-chain hotels will be addressed as Group 1 which consisted of Hotels A, B, C, and D. The small locally owned hotels will be addressed as Group 2 which consisted of three small hotels with the initials E, F, and G

Area One: Effects of crises and negative events in Thailand.

Hotel A: Thailand did not really pay any attention to crises. This includes both types of crisis which occurred by the acts of god and man-made type. The hotel itself concerns heavily on safety issues, particularly for the international-chain hotels which need to maintain the same international standard. Safety and hygiene have to be assessed and evaluated by external inspectors, agencies, organization and association where the hotel is a member. The quality standard will be assessed annually. Therefore, hotels need to improve themselves and bring it up to the international standard acceptance.

Natural disasters have fewer impacts to the hotel comparing to man-made disasters. In the year 2005 where the hotel got hit by the Tsunami, there were many negative effects right afterward. However, the hotel received supports from the loyal customers who wanted to come back and help the local community and people. From the middle of the year 2006 until now, there are more customers than before. The motivation factor that drives the tourist back to Phuket and the hotel is surely the hospitality of Thai people.

Hotel B: The tourism demand for this year seems to be splendid than before the Tsunami hit. The manager of hotel B also mentioned that the man-made crisis such as the Ground Zero- September 11 created more impacts when speaking about the hotel occupancy level. In general, hotel guests understand the logic of uncontrollable situation. The consequences can be easier accepted, and it would take shorter period to recover from the damages, and regain the trust from customers. The majority of hotel guests who have returned to Phuket supported that they wanted to visit a memorable place of their own experiences or relatives.

Hotel C: The hotel was physically affected only little by the Tsunami in the year of 2004, however; the consequences of the wide-spread bad news about the lost and deaths in Phuket due to the big wave had made it more psychologically serious. The hotel employees and guests were panic and the cancellation rate had increased dramatically in the first 6 months.

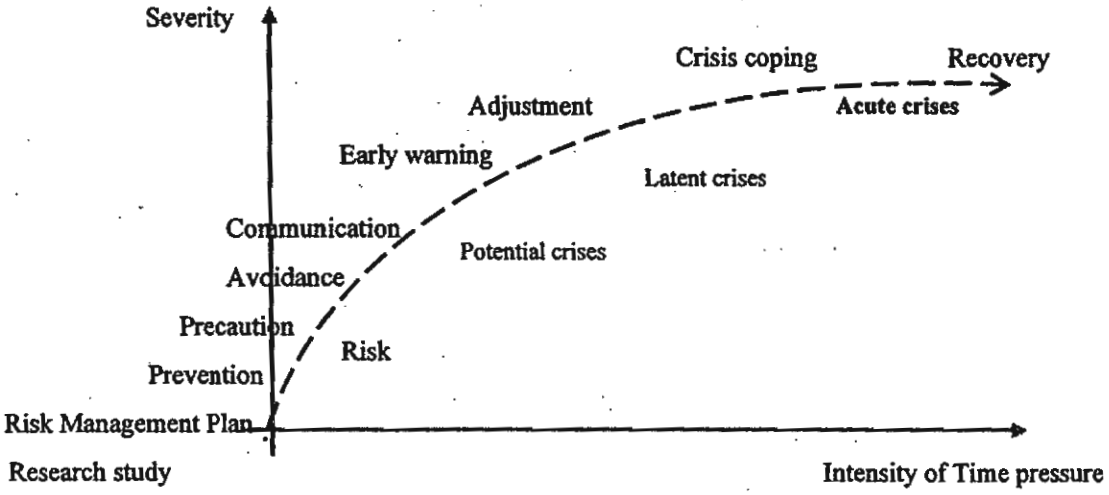
Hotel D was badly hit by the Tsunami in 2004. The effects from this natural crisis include many physical damages in the resort area, and it has to be heavily reconstructed. Hotel D has to spend almost 2 years to renovate the resort in the post Tsunami stage. The hotel just started to re-open again in November 2006 after a long term recovering phase. Many of the hotel employees have lost their lives and their relatives. The people who survived from the hit did not want to come back to work.

The hotel had to deal with staff emotion right after the crisis and provide them not only with financial support but also with psychological support. The manager of hotel D mentioned that they had very positive feedbacks afterward which could be seen from high level of occupancy. Major target customers are Scandinavian and European visitors. Most of them re-visit the hotel and the destination because they feel connected with the local people and the hotel. They want to come back and review their memories.

As most of the interviewees were working in Phuket at the time of the Tsunami occurred in 2004, they tended to talk more about the experiences they had during and after this big shocking natural crisis. Generally every hotel was affected by the Tsunami both directly and indirectly at certain degrees. But of cause the cancellation rate was suddenly rose in all hotels and resorts. Therefore every hotel since then realized the need for better preparation to meet future crises of all types. Some hotels have already gone beyond a simple fire evacuation plan and contingency plan to be more précised and efficient.

A very interesting fact found from the interviews was that all hotels were concerned about man-made crises more than they were about natural crises. This corresponds to the earlier studies on natural crises and human-induced crises. As stated in the previous chapter, the human-induced crises would generate much more loss and would take longer time to recover. Even thought the political instability in the southern provinces of Thailand now does not impact the tourism businesses in Phuket, yet from the point of view of some interviewees, it could be give a negative image for the country as a whole, and that will affect their businesses in the broader sense.

It has been proven that although Tsunami was highly devastating, , yet hotels in Phuket and Khao Lak recovered very quickly, and that their businesses have fared better than before. The Tsunami at last was not the a complete nightmare in the eyes of the hotel managers and local stakeholders since it did not only bring back normal businesses, but it also brought new businesses to the destinations.
According to Glaesser (2003), crisis planning should be implemented in the early period, this also includes the study and analysis of potential risks. For better understanding of risk and crisis phases and management strategies, the following graph illustrates in more details.



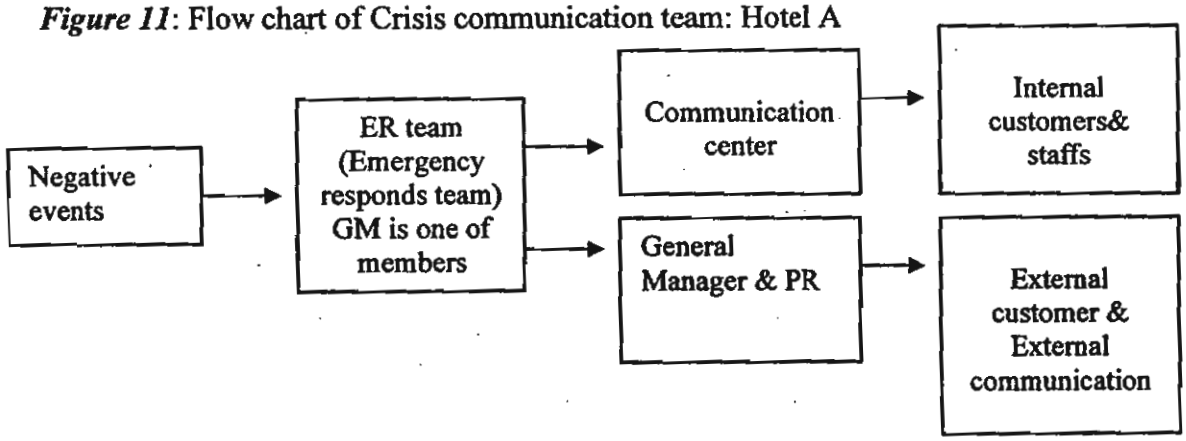
Own, adapted from Glaesser (2003)
Crisis Management Approaches

Figure 10: crisis management approaches

As shown in the figure 10, there are different management approaches throughout the life cycle of a crisis. The work starts with the research and analysis of potential threats and ends with the recovery strategy.

Area Two: Crisis management application, especially communication plan Hotel A has long practiced and implemented many emergency and evacuation plans,. alhough they never knew how to apply those plans should there be any unexpected and very sudden crisis. Nevertheless, the hotel was able to dealing where was a sudden crisis. When it was impacted by the Tsunami, the hotel adopted its emergency plan and applied it to the incident. The new communication plan was set, and it proved to be very significant for crisis management. The hotel also set up an emergency response team or the ER team to deal with the crisis. A flowchart of the crisis communication team can be seen in figure 11. The General Manager of the hotel is also part of the team. The process of crisis management does not rely on sungle one persont. It is the formula of wisdom of the crowed, which infers to the effectiveness of collaboration within the organization. However, the team should also be aware of language barriers between team members, and the efficiency in time.

Figure 11: Flow chart of Crisis communication team: Hotel A

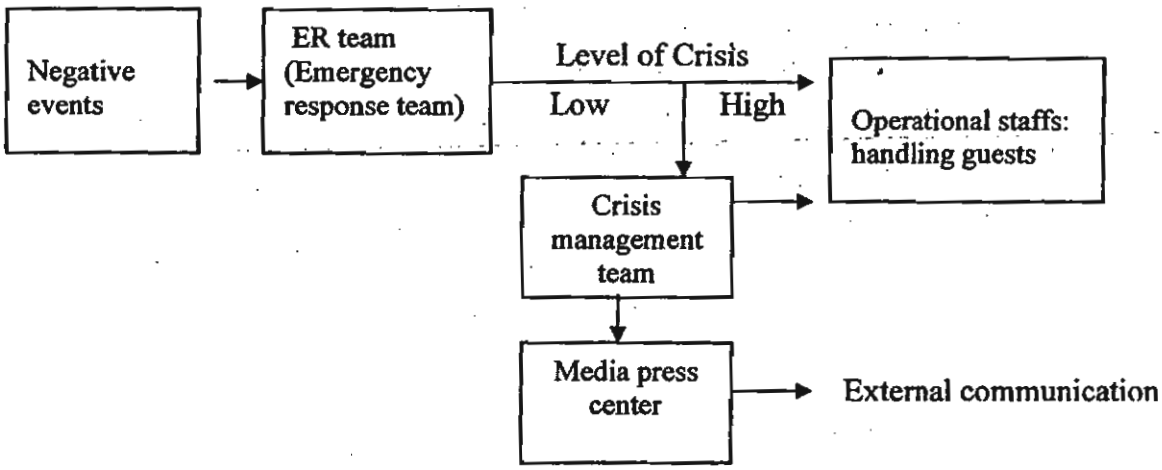


Hotel B set up a press centre for external communication. All messages would be only communicated by the GM.

In dealing with internal customer, the hotel implemented an emergency form for the Tsunami. The purpose of this emergency form was for the hotel customers to inform the hotel about their losses and other damages incurred. The hotel also offered free dinner in the ballroom for all crisis affected customers. The hotel management staff responded to the information and requests as quickly as possible to avoid dissatisfaction and miscommunication. Although the hotel already has a crisis management plan before, but it was not designed for the Tsunami. Hence when the hotel was impacted by the, Tsunami in the year 2004, they used the natural crisis management plan (fire and flooding response) to manage the crisis.

The staff of hotel B is currently aware of the crisis plan but still required more training. They know that they have to look after all guests, however they are not really sure of the order of actions to be taken with respect to the crisis management plan. The operational staff has regular training in handling hotel guests (providing physical and psychological support) during a crisis. The management team, on the other hand are aware of the crisis management procedures. The crisis training for management staff is conducted every six months to ensure that they will respond effectively. After the training, the operating staff will need to follow the management staff who have direct contact with the ER team (room, restaurant, security supervisors from the various departments, management staff the third level manager). This is to provide the right information and to ensure the procedure of handling the crisis as shown in the flow chart below. Moreover, the hotel also has the crisis management team (including GM, hotel manager, engineering manager, HR head, sales & marketing communication manager) in case the crisis is beyond the ER team's capability to handle. This means that if the negative events becomes bigger than expected, then both team will have to work together.

Figure 12: Flow chart of crisis communication team: Hotel B



ER team: The third level manager: supervisor (training every six month)

Crisis management team: Top level manager (GM, hotel manager, engineering manager, HR head, sales & marketing communication manager)

Hotel C: Crisis management planning was created and implemented after the impacts of SARs, Avian Flu and Tsunami. In addition, there are normal procedures of evaluation and communication that the hotel employees have to be trained on. The manager of the hotel mentioned that now every department head will have to carry the "walkie-talkies" so that when a crisis happens they will be informed immediately. They are now having workshops on crisis management but it seems like not every hotel employees are aware of its significance. The internal flow of information within the hotel is as following diagram:

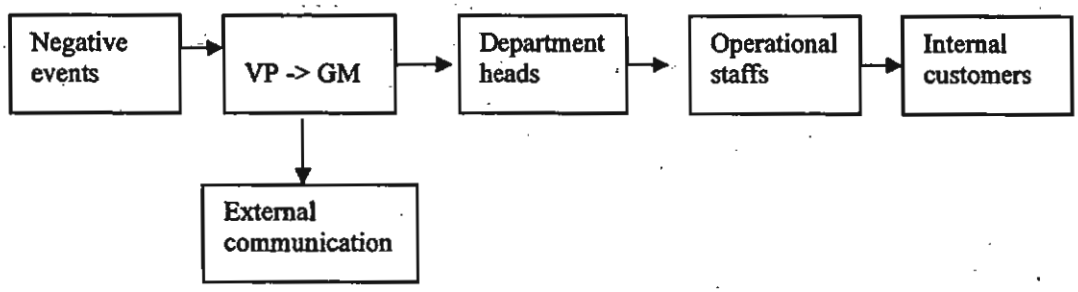


Figure 13: Flow chart of crisis communication team: Hotel C

After a crisis happens, the staff will first have to report to GM. No mater where the GM is, they have to inform him/ her immediately. Then the GM will tell who to do what, when, where, and how. Later every department head will be informed and lastly the operational staff will be informed.

The external communication plans of this hotel are:

1. Offer fam-trips but this is only to boost up the sales along with offering discounted promotional packages.
2. Only scripted information will be communicated to the media or external sources.

Hotel D had no plans to deal with Tsunami or any negative events like earthquake or flooding before. The hotel has been opened only a few months before the Tsunami and they had no plans to manage negative events. They actually had planned to conduct the emergency plan after the low season starts. However, they lost everything with the Tsunami. The manager explained that as the hotel has no plans, therefore they couldn't efficiently sort out many problems. Within the first 24 hours after the Tsunami, everyone, including hotel guests and the staff themselves, simply tried to survive. The unpredicted situation caused a lot of damage and death . The only thing hotel D could do to help the guests was to load the guest up to the hilltop by running as fast as they could. Therefore, the communication has been influenced and interfered by panic.

In the first 24 hours:

- The hotel had to contact the crisis center and loading guests to the hilltop
- They had to think about how to transfer surviving guests to safer areas.
- There was no electricity and telephone access, therefore the only way to communicate was to just walk to a safer area (hilltop) and to try get in contact with their relatives.

Dealing the crisis within 1-2 days

- Still no contact with external, medias, hotel, association
- The whole area of the hotel was closed for safety issue to prevent stealing and crimes.
- Everyone was helping to find the death bodies.
- Staff and guests were satisfied with help of Thai people and the way the hotel reacted.
- The only important issue was "safe comes first". Nothing about communication plan was emphasized (internal and external communication).

Dealing with the crisis 1 month later

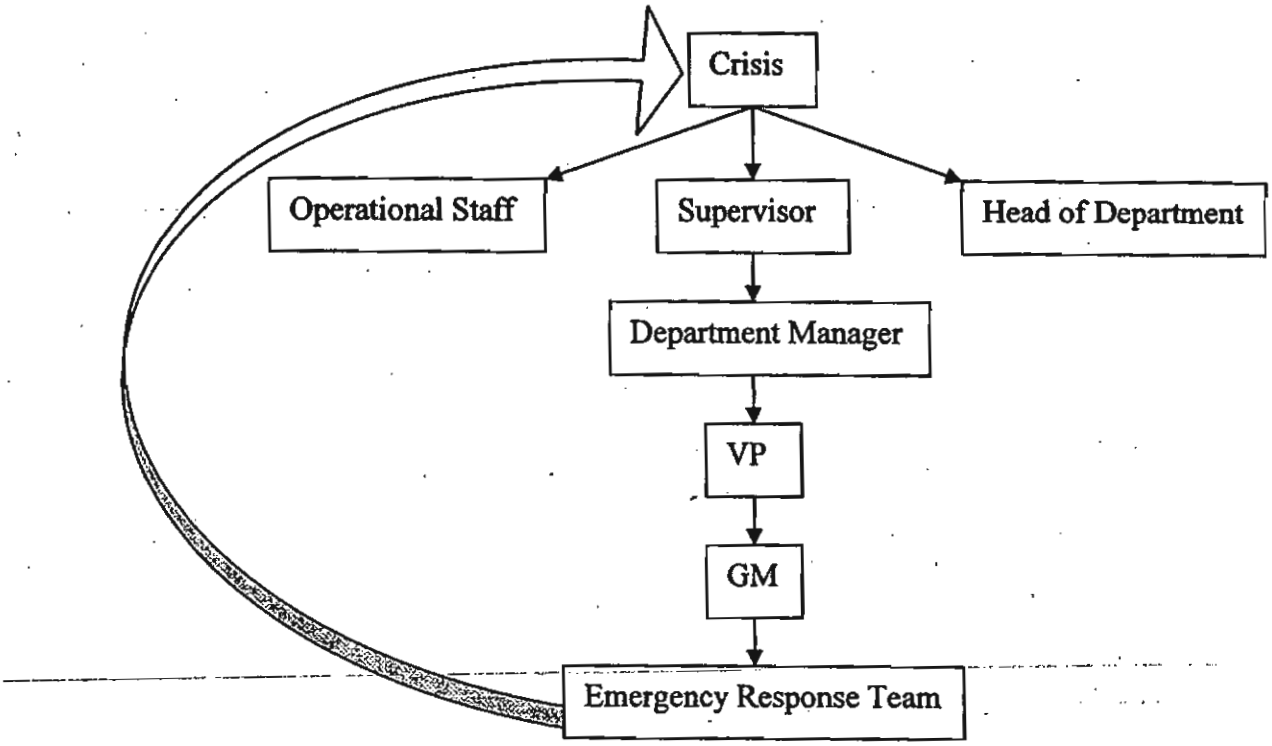
- Hotel staff came back to the hotel, helping to collect guests' belongings and send them back to the embassy.
- Cleaning up the hotel and plan the reconstruction*
- The government created the Tsunami centre for the flow of communication (crisis communication plan).

Dealing with the crisis 1 year later

- Recovered the resort infrastructure from their own funds.
- Took care staff mental problem and life crisis.
- Recruited the employees back to work if they would like to.

Hotel D was the first resort to recover from the situation and decided immediately after 1 month that they still wanted to run this business.
Communication is said to be one of the very best strategies when dealing with the crisis in every point in time. Start from the beginning when it is called "Pre-event phase", to communicate the meaning, severity and potential of crisis to the employees is very important.

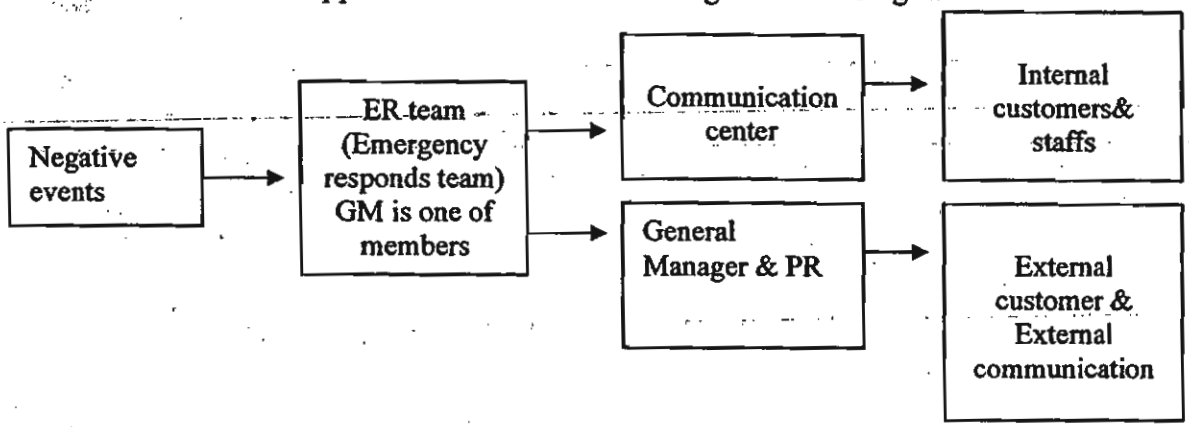
The communication plan could be in the form of training or workshops provided to the hotel staff. This effective internal communication program could create better understanding of the nature of the negative events or crises for better management. The internal flow of communication is some hotels shown above are very complicated and time consuming. In crises, there is a need of immediate actions and simultaneously decision making. The longer it takes to communicate, the more lost would incur. Complicated protocol shown below is one big mistake that extends the transferring time and manipulates the original message.



Own (2007)

Figure 14: Traditional Crisis Communication Flow

Today, the traditional practices are replaced by the contemporary practices. As a result the flow of information looks a lot less complex, and less time consuming. Shown below is a new approach that hotels are moving towards using it.



Own (2007)

Figure 15: New approach crisis communication flow

Additionally when it moves to the "Active phase", the employees know how to react and communicate to the customers. At this critical point, communication center should already be set and ready to give out facts and information needed by the public, clients, and internal staff as well. The most impressive action that hotels used during the Tsunami was when one of the hotels set up it own press center. All news and information are released from the press center. Apart from being the contact point for hotel guests, media, and public, the press center was also acted as a call

center for the hotel staff and their relatives. This turned out to be a very intelligent approach which enabled the hotel to manage the flow of information and news much more effectively.

The communication during the "Post-active phase" is excessively important as it helps boost up the sales. Different communication strategies must be applied. Some sample hotels use press conference and fam-trip to rebuild and maintain the trust from their customers. As previously mentioned in chapter 2, the tree actors model which represent the connection between stakeholders, affected destination, and media has to be taken into account. The communication approach that should be implemented now in this Post-active phase is basically aiming to regain the confidence among the customers. Nevertheless, it also intends to create positive psychological effects to the hotel staff and local community.

Area three: Customer occupancy, cancellation after crisis. How the hotels boost up the sales?

Hotel A boosted up the sales by cutting prices to compete with other hotels. After the year 2006, the hotel has set the price higher than before the Tsunami crisis. It might be because of the amount of customer come to Phuket more than ever before. Hotel D had no doubt about guest cancellation because it was hit directly and severely. Cancellation had been done automatically because of media announcement. After almost 2 years, hotel D created promotional champagne to increase the sales volume by contacting with travel agencies and welcoming all inspectors who would like to come and see how the resort has improved. After a while those agencies and inspectors have been sending more and more guests to the hotel. Majority of the guests today are returning guests who had experienced the Tsunami in 2004.
Another obvious effect apart from enormous number of deaths and lost from crises raised by the interviewees was about dramatic drop in sales in the beginning of the year 2005 until the year 2006. Price policy is one of several crisis management instruments that could be used to boost up the sales. The hotels altered not only their product but their price policies during their recovery period as well. Prices were cut down in some hotels.

Price bundling of products was used more often than before. There are several cases that the hotels combine their products and sell at a more attractive price to their agencies. From the interview, there were only few international chain hotels that did not really implement any changes in either prices or products just because had the support from fund raising and from the head quarters or branches abroad or they were not affected by the crisis.

In the context of consumer behavior and decision towards the crisis, it is found from the interviews that the impacts of man-made crises have higher influencing power than those of natural crises. For natural disasters, the majority of tourists tend to come back to the hotels and the destinations faster and more often than expected. This obviously supports the previous researches on the impacts and recoveries of different types of crises.

Area Four: Media plays important role? How

Hotel A did not deal with the other hotels in the area because of the hotel A was not really affected. Three days later the hotel informed all customers in their database, and travel agencies about the situation.
Hotel B had no websites, the manager said it was not necessary to make it bigger. The other hotels in the area had already done the websites. Therefore, they had to try to minimize the negative images that caused by the media which were news broadcasting and the world-wide-web.

Hotel D mentioned that media was very important and they need a strategic plan to deal with. The only person who dealt with the media at the time of crisis in 2004 was the GM. The GM of hotel D was in charge of external and internal communication. There were no public relations or marketing department who could give appropriate reaction and responses.

From the in-depth interviews with seven hotels, it is found that hotels tend to neglect the power of media. Only those who were affected by the negative impacts of the crisis value the importance of the media. However, the hotels did not approach the media, they were engaged with taking care of their customers. A GM of one hotel said that there were reporters everywhere, the best thing was to have a press center and so the reporter could only get the news from there.

Media as mentioned in chapter 2 is one of the most important factors that influent the decision making of the travelers. Media crisis, one type of crisis was discussed in many interviews. Perceptions that the tourists have towards the destination as Decrop (1999) discusses in the paper can come from mediated sources such as guide book, brochures, and mass media and may also come from personal sources for instance tour operators, travel agents, and personal experiences. Mediated sources can reach more number of consumers within a short period of time whist the personal sources are said to be more effective but slower, and reach less number of consumers, it is also harder to control. This is why the hotels should not forget how important mediated sources are. The pro-active approaches which mean making the move first such as providing the press releases and news to media would be a wise way to have a control over the information given out to the public.

Area Five: Dealing with the customer feeling

Hotel B does have the letter that they put in the room to inform every guest about how to deal with Tsunami and other crises and the steps that they have to do when a crisis happens.

Hotel D had no plan to deal with the customers' feeling during crisis but the majority of survived staff could make guests to feel better. They set up a team, and brought the hotel guests to stay over night in their house. Besides, they helped the hotel guests as much as they could, even though staffs themselves were in a harsh trouble.

Apart from providing the customers with their basic physical needs, some hotels tried to make their guests feel better by providing extra instructing information

and services. This is supported by the study of Ritchies et al (2005), one of the basic five points in crisis communication plan is to give information of what, when, where, how, and what action should be taken.

Area Six: Dealing with the staff and how communication plan is developed. Hotel A has a very basic training from their orientation. Four to five groups will be in the intensive training program. The ERT (Emergency Response Team) has to deal with every negative event. The flow can be seen as in the following diagram.

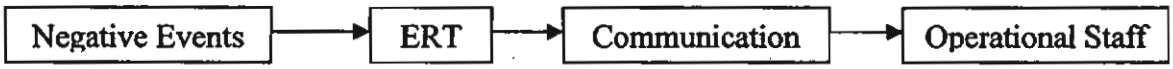


Figure 16: The Emergency Response Team (ERT) operation

Hotel B dealt with staff by giving them funds to recover the crisis situation. HR team responded very well in this situation. After the hotel realized negative events, the hotel has many regular training for staff like how to deal with the panic, how to deal with crises with different concept to make sure they will respond quickly to help customers.

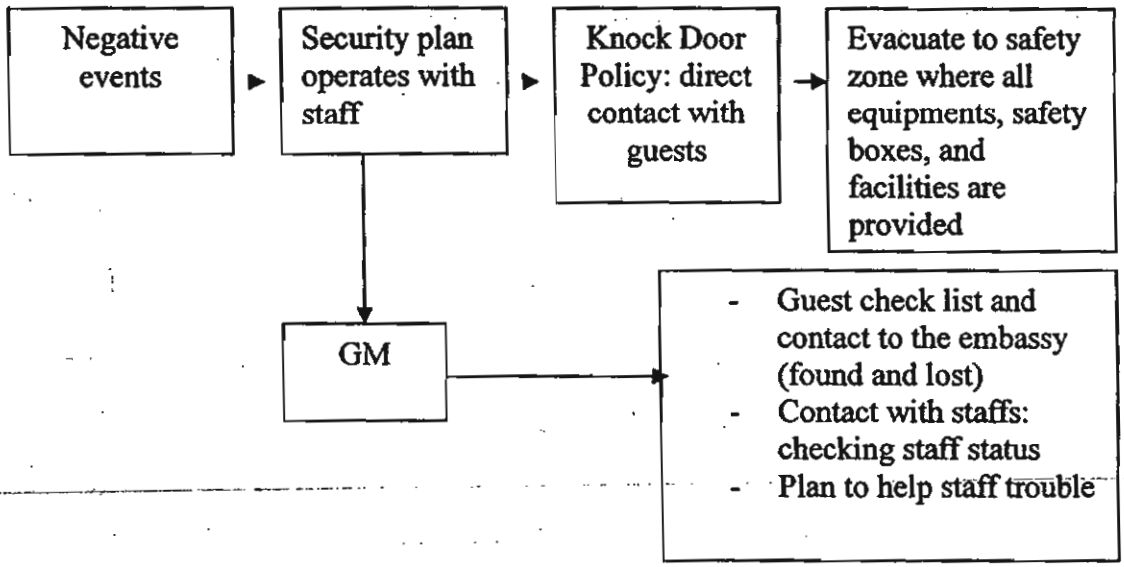
GM and PR are the only channels for communication. They are responsible for announcing news and updates for the organization.

- They have a communication center for customers with 24 hours service. Management staffs are in charge of answering and giving the information to the customers who are panic and need to contact their relatives. When the hotel got hit by the Tsunami, there was no electricity, no telephone signal. The customers also wanted to know the current situation. All of updated information has been posted on the notice board. Therefore, it could make customer feel less nervous with the crisis situation.
- Hotel A has no communication center before but there is the emergency plan to adapt and create this center after 24 hours of crisis until 3 days later. Providing food and drink to the guests for free. All Information was responded by Management team members who were in charge of the communication center. Staffs were not allowed to answer any questions without approval. Therefore it was better way to go to the communication center to find out the truths or the right messages.

Hotel C stated that they immediately operated following the guiding principle such as printing guest lists and staff list to fortune in case of computer system was broken. In addition they have conducted new guiding principle as follows:

- Setting community joined with other chain hotels for Tsunami funds through websites.(Customers support almost 100 millions baht to help victims including the hotel staffs)
- During the crisis, the hotel needs to have a meeting every month with the ER team.
- Surprise drills, Tsunami drill, fire drills every 3 days. To check how effective of training.

Hotel D had a solid comment about communication strategies. The manager said, as a leader he needed to be strong and confident to pass through the difficult time. The internal crisis communication flow of hotel D after the Tsunami in 2004 can be seen as following illustration:



Own (2007)

Figure 17: The internal crisis communication flow of hotel D

It is noticed that the hotel has set the criteria and crisis procedure according to the past experience crisis which is the Tsunami in 2004. However, if next time the negative events hit harder than the ever before, it will cause severe problems. For example, if they set the safety zone on the third floor, so if the Tsunami waves are bigger than last time, the third floor will not be safe enough to be used as the evacuation ground.

The training of Hotel D has been created for staff to ensure they will survive and have abilities to help the guests. The hotel Manager mentioned that the staff will be trained during low seasons which including how the warning system works, and Tsunami crisis training. Moreover, the safety zone should be a helicopter parking area. From the interview, it can be seen that Hotel D shows more concern on the safety issue than short term benefits.

Area seven: Government involvement

All hotels said that the government did not help them much. The government is not being consistent, they were so alert during the first period when a crisis hits. There were no funding from the government, affected hotels usually rely on charity, donation, and insurance compensation. One manager of a hotel we have interviewed actually said that "We help ourselves. We actually help them not they help us."

However, the most important thing is to improve and regain positive image of the destination. Moreover, the government plays a very important role in restoring the

positive image of destination. This will create confidences among the tourists, it is not only beneficial to one hotel but for the destination or a country as a whole.

Area Eight: Suggestion to government

Hotel A had no comments or suggestion to the government, the hotel manager said it was totally understandable about the ability and power of the government.

The manager of hotel B said, now government has a better communication team or crisis management team, so they know what they should do first when crisis happen. Consistency for government is the key. The plan that makes sense, and it makes customers happy are very important. Hotel C answered that the government should communicate with hotel before they communicate with the world. Hotel D, E , F, G recommended that the government need to help the local community, and not only trying to promote what they have been done. Doing is more significant, and they should do it effectively. This will help coping with crises.

As for this last point, the stakeholder network needs to be taken into consideration again. Now it is necessary to look at what benefits each party in the stakeholder network is aiming for, and what each party can give back to the community. As hotel C mentioned that the government and those affected companies should coordinate first before give out the message to the public. Considering the diagram of Three Actors Model presented by Glaesser (2006), it is agreeable that internal communication should be very well managed before discussing about the external communication.

Additional to this last point, the help from government can be in the form of workshops, training programs, and professional consultancy services, not all the time that it has to be the monetary remuneration.

New hotel business approaches crisis communication plan

New hotel businesses which conducted of 3 small hotels with the initials E, F, and G. It could be summarized that all hotels plan for crisis management of communication plan which the hotel adopted from fire training and applies to conduct special training for Tsunami. In other words, new hotel business started to use communication strategy by arranging fam-trips for travel agencies and presses to show how the business is ready to for a customer.

In terms of dealing with staff, Hotel E and F gave extra bonus for their staff every month post Tsunami and keep continue to give a salary and if someone has some problems with emotional issue, they can leave without pay until they want to come back. That is make them less pressure.

Hotel E and F has been trained by government to prepare for negative events such as Tsunami, the hotel seems depends on the government offering. However, communication plan flow by organizing the crisis centre and Front office staff respond to all of guest as the first contactor by using a knock door policy. If Tsunami happens, staff will go direct to the guests and bring them to the crisis centre. The hotel E and F concept are like personal service then training is most important to avoid panicking and less experience need to be prepared regularly. Government training is helpful for the small hotel but need to verify how training is workable in this area.

Importantly all hotels recommended that it doesn't work if hotels concerns themselves without helping local community. Community is still struggling how the hotel and destination can be improved.

The hotel G has planed to use crisis planning to apply with the new business but it's not the first year. It might be the next year after they has done introduction stage, building up brand awareness and making sure the profit will lead to the point. After that they will concentrate to the crisis planning according to giving the knowledge about how to deal with customer and staff within the negative events. It concluded that new business couldn't support the cost for something intangible, no dateline when it will be happened like Tsunami or any crises. In this point of view, all hotels need to reconsider about how crisis management in case of communication plan is significant.

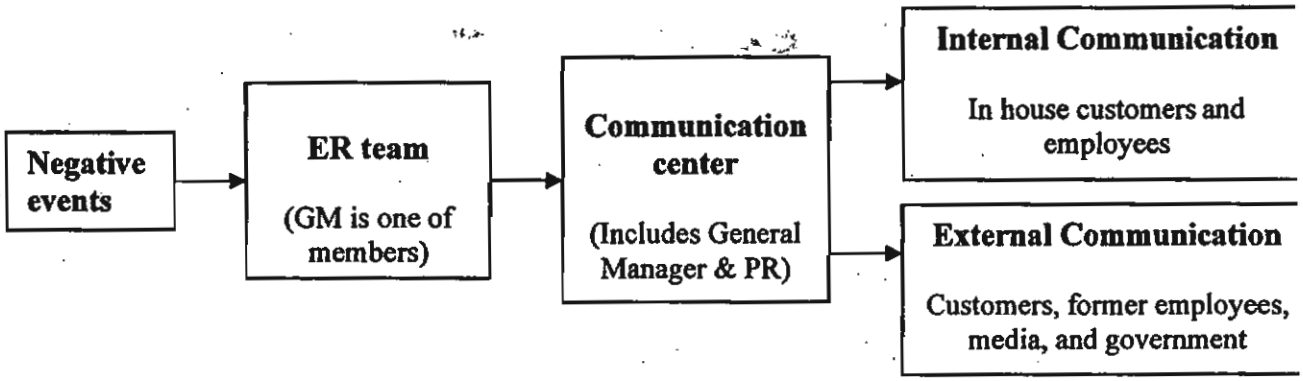
Summary

In the field of tourism, crisis management is mandatory and it also involves the management of communication within and outside the organization. The destinations or organizations that are not well prepared to resist or react to a crisis or disaster may not survive the first impact of a crisis. By implementing appropriate and feasible approaches of crisis communication plan, it will help the affected firms or the countries to react properly.

The research has elaborated the theoretical frameworks of crisis management that are most important and applicable for tourism business. It has reviewed various definition of crisis in general. The most recent definition that could be applied to tourism industry states that a crisis is "self-inflicted" of the organization or when a firm has its own failure. Therefore, the crisis management has to start from within the firm.

Similar to risks, a crisis can be classified by its severity, possibility, and time pressure. A Crisis Classification Matrix created by Burnett (1998) has illustrated that the crises has the total of 16 types, and it can be in different level of severity (from level 0 to level 4). By using this classification matrix, a firm can apply the appropriate tools to solve the problem.

The focus of this research is upon the problems of communication planning and the implementation of the plan before, during, and after a crisis. It was found that large hotels and international chain hotels are well prepared with the Crisis Communication. It was integrated into the firm's marketing strategies using the basic instruments namely product (destination) policy, price policy and distribution policy. The thorough crisis communication plan is more systematic and very well functioned proven by the previous Tsunami Crisis in Phuket in the year 2004. The immediate crisis communication policies and plans are based on security management and risk management theories. The flow of information is a significant factor towards the successful of immediate crisis communication management. The most feasible communication plan according to the result of the interview with several hotels that should be implemented is shown in the following diagram.



Own (2007)

Figure 18: Immediate Crisis Communication Plan

The above model is inspired by the result of the interviews, and combination of all methods each hotel used when they faced with Tsunami crisis in 2004. Apart from the Immediate Crisis Communication plan that should be employed in the pre-event and during the event stages; the press releases, fam-trips, and press conferences are also found very important in terms of enhancing positive image of the destination or the organizations after a crisis. The communication strategies used after the crisis is to include the key stakeholders into the crisis management plan for future collaboration.

Suggestions

This research might open up the possibility for hotels and resorts in Thailand to think comprehensively about the execution of Crisis Management policies and its communication plan. It is probable to extend the scope of this research to different type of crises, or to focus on the man-made crises and its effects towards tourism. Further research survey is needed to analyze the frequency of man-made crises which have a stronger influence on the decline in tourism demand. The implication of crisis management is underlining within Thailand's tourism business. Currently the government of Thailand has set a special team who is responsible for risk and crisis management of the country, the board members conduct several tourism organizations and companies. The corporation with the government sectors are recommended for future researches.

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Paper 2 Searching for Security through the Haze: An Examination of the Complexities of Intra-ASEAN Cooperation

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Abstract

Open burning and traditional agriculture practices in Sumatra, Indonesia have brought to the fore environmental degradation as a security threat. Air-borne particles – set off intentionally or otherwise – were blown hundreds of miles by monsoon winds to Malaysia and Singapore. In 1997 and 2006, haze caused millions of dollars in lost tourism dollars and imperiled the health of Malaysians and Singaporeans. These states, along with Indonesia, endeavored to find a lasting solution to the problem. What seemed to a simple case of inter-state cooperation turned out to be anything but. Drawing on the theoretical concepts of collaboration and coordination and using the haze issue as a case study, this paper addresses the larger question of the complexities of intra-ASEAN cooperation. It argues that cooperation is hampered by differing priorities and perceptions of security held by Indonesia and other ASEAN states. Indonesia, which holds the key to the problem appears to be dragging its feet and is less amendable to a multilateral approach to resolve the issue. When self-interest takes priority over communal interest, cooperation is problematic and this seems to be the case with efforts to combating the haze threat in Southeast Asia.

INTRODUCTION

Political collectives are rare in an international system where states are predisposed to act individually to pursue their *individual* national interest. Informed by the notion of self-help, states rely on themselves and internally generated strength for self-preservation and empowerment. Granted that this essentially realist worldview is widely shared and adopted, in reality political entities do find ways to cooperate and forge collaborative ventures. The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) is *sui generis* as arguably the most successful regional organization amongst developing nations. From an ostensibly anti-communist outfit, ASEAN has flourished as a respectable actor. It is an integral actor in East Asian affairs and have, in recent times, been courted by the likes of China, Japan, India and the U.S. The European Union has institutionalized its relations with ASEAN through ASEM (ASEAN-Europe Meeting), in which the former hold formal talks and consultations with ASEAN on issues of mutual concern. Notwithstanding these developments, detractors have criticized ASEAN as lacking in substance and in spite of its forty odd years in existence have accomplished few achievements of note. This paper evaluates the efficacy of ASEAN in the management of transboundary haze.

DEFINING THE PROBLEM: THE CASE OF THE 1997/9 TRANSBOUNDARY HAZE

Transboundary haze became a central issue in 1997 when uncontrolled open burning, exacerbated by the El Niño phenomenon. Farmers and plantation workers typically use fire as a cheap and efficient method to clear forests and vegetation for commercial purposes. The Indonesian Ministry of Environment cautioned against open burning. Unsurprisingly, these warnings were ignored as fire is commonly used by small and big landowners to clear land, which produced haze and degraded air quality. Nevertheless, the haze is a temporary phenomenon and would usually clear with the advent of the raining season in September. Instead of rain, El Niño prolonged the dry season and set in motion the haze problem throughout Indonesia and beyond:

> The use of fire for land clearing is not restricted to Kalimantan and Sumatra – and fires were reported from 23 of Indonesia's 27 provinces in 1997-98 – but the large number of fires set o those massive islands by plantation firms and government projects clearing tens of thousands of hectares at a time produced enough smoke by July to create a blanket of haze that spread hundreds of kilometers in all directions.[1]

Transboundary haze is not a new problem, with at least five other serious cases (1982-3, 1987, 1991, 1994, and 2006) in the last quarter of the century. The extent and devastation wrought by the 1997 sets it apart from other antecedents. "By late September, approximately one million km^2 were haze-covered, affecting about 70 million people."[2] The effect of the haze was felt beyond Indonesia. "In late September, the API reached values of over 800 in Kuching, Sarawak, and 300 in Kuala Lumpur."[3] These readings indicate a high degree of contamination. Air pollution index (API) readings between 101-200 is considered "unhealthy," 201 to 300 is "very unhealthy" and 301 to 500 is "hazardous" and values above 501 posses as "significant harm" to living beings. The brunt of the devastation caused – directly or indirectly – by haze is borne by Indonesia. It is estimated that 85% of the US$4.46 billion damaged was incurred by Indonesia. Of this total, US$2.78 billion was attributed to fire and US$1.01 billion to the haze (see Table 1). Indonesia was at the epicenter of the forest fires and was directly affected by the haze. The human suffering endured by Indonesians was phenomenal. Indonesia spent US$924 million compared to US$16.8 million by neighboring countries to address short-term health problems caused by the haze. The difference between the quanta spent on remedial health care is a clear indication of the vast number of Indonesians affected by the haze. The death toll stood at 527. The figure for non-fatalities was also staggering: 298,125, 58,095 and 1,446,120 were treated for asthma, bronchitis and acute respiratory infection respectively (see Table 2).

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[1] Barber, Charles Victor & Schweithelm, James, *Trial by Fire: Forest Fires and Forestry Policy in Indonesia's Era of Crisis and Reform* in Matthew, Richard, Halle, Mark & Switzer, Jason (Eds.) Conserving the Peace: Resources, Livelihoods and Security (Winnipeg: International Institute for Sustainable Development, 2002), p. 129.

[2] Ibid., p. 130.

[3] Barber, Charles Victor & Schweithelm, James, *Trial by Fire: Forest Fires and Forestry Policy in Indonesia's Era of Crisis and Reform* (n.p.: World Resources Institute, 2000), p. 20.

Table 1: Fire- and Haze-related damages from the 1997 Indonesian Forest Fires (US$millions)

Type of Loss	Loss to Indonesia	Loss to other Countries	Total
FIRE-RELATED DAMAGES			
Timber	493.7		493.7
Agriculture	470.4		470.4
Direct forest benefits	705.0		705.0
Indirect forest benefits	1,077.1		1,077.1
Capturable biodiversity	30.0		30.0
Fire-fighting costs	11.7	13.4	25.1
Carbon release	-	272.1	272.1
Sub-total	2,787.9	285.5	3,073.4
HAZE-RELATED DAMAGES (summary)			
Short-term health	924.0	16.8	940.8
Tourism	70.4	185.8	256.2
Others	17.6	181.5	199.1
Sub-total	1,012.0	384.1	1,396.1
TOTAL DAMAGES	3,799.9 (85%)	669.6 (15%)	4,469.5

Source: Glover, David & Jessup, Timothy (eds.) *Indonesia's Fires and Haze: The Cost of Catastrophe* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999, reprint 2006). Available at http://www.idrc.ca/openebooks/332-1 [accessed: 13 September 2007).

Table 2: Health Effects from Fire-Related Haze Exposure in Eight Indonesian Provinces, September-November 1997*

Health Effects	Number of Cases
Death	527
Asthma	298,125
Bronchitis	58,095
Acute respiratory infection (ARI)	1,446,120
Daily activity constraint (number of days)	4,758,600
Increase in outpatient treatments	36,462
Increase in hospitalizations	15,822
Lost work days	2,446,352

* The eight provinces are Riau, West Sumatra, Jambi, South Sumatra, West Kalimantan, Central Kalimantan and East Kalimantan.

Source: Barber, Charles Victor & Schweithelm, James, *Trial by Fire: Forest Fires and Forestry Policy in Indonesia's Era of Crisis and Reform* (n.p.: World Resources Institute, 2000), p. 19.

The impact of the 1997 forest fires and haze also had in irreversible impact on flora and fauna. Sumatra and Kalimantan – areas where the hazard was most pronounced – are home to several endangered species like the orang utan and the Sumatran tiger. Widespread destruction of primary forests effectively destroyed the support system and habitat for these and many other wildlife. Together with the destruction of plants and fragile ecosystem, the cost for the fires and haze could be immeasurable.

To be sure, the El Niño phenomenon was a catalyst and amplified the degree of environmental degradation but it was not the cause of the 1997 fire forest and the resulting haze. Fault lies squarely in the hands of irresponsible and short-sighted parties. Narayan Sastry explains:

> The forest fires in Southeast Asia in 1997 was entirely man-made. The main reason for setting fires was to clear the land for vegetation – either primary growth forest or overgrowth – for shifting agriculture, plantations, or transmigration-program settlers. Fires were often used to resolve land disputes and, in particular, to drive off settlers. Although the fires were originally blamed on slash-and-burn farmers, examinations of satellite images have shown that large plantation

> companies, many with ties to the Suharto government, used the fires to clear vast areas of land.[4]

Sastry's analysis points to a larger and systemic problem associated with forest fires and haze. That the fires were set off by small bands of farmers practicing traditional method of farming – slash-and-burn – is irrefutable. Nevertheless, the impact by systematic and large scale clearing of land by plantations companies takes the problem beyond the social realm. Fires were not accidental but instrumental and purposive acts to enhance financial gains. Not only has the rampant acts of degradation threatened and destroy the imbalance of the ecosystem, it had undermined the harmonious relationship forged between societies that had co-existed with nature and relied on the jungle for their livelihood. The destruction of the forests robs these communities of their heritage and culture, forcing them to flee and perhaps even to abandon the lifestyles of their forefathers. The cost of the forest fires and haze runs in the billions and had negatively impacted on the human security.

Estimates by the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) on the opportunity cost of resources lost to the countries affected provide a sobering picture of the stakes involved:

> ... Indonesia could have used its lost resources to provide basic sanitation, water and sewage services for 40 million people, or one-third of is rural poor. WWF estimates that the losses suffered by Singapore tourism alone could have fully funded the Community Chest in that country, which comprises fifty charities and benefits 180,000 people, for three years. Malaysia could have financed all of the federal government's social programmes for the last three years out of the resources that is lost to the fire and haze.[5]

Transboundary haze is not merely an environmental issue. Its ramifications go beyond clean air and protecting wildlife and fauna. Even as the flames of the 1997 fires are put off, the citizens of the affected countries continue to shoulder the burden of our mismanagement of environment, in terms of lost opportunities and incomes that would otherwise derived from the devastated jungles and forests.

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[4] Sastry, Narayana, "Forest Fires, Air Pollution, and Mortality in Southeast Asia," *Demography*, Vol. 39, No. 1 (February 2002), pp. 2-3.

[5] Quoted in Severino, Rodolfo C. *Southeast Asia in Search of an ASEAN Community: Insights from the former ASEAN Secretary-General* (Singapore: ISEAS, 2006), pp.108-109.

Table 3: Haze-related Damages Arising from the 1997 Forest Fires (US$millions)

Type of Damage	Indonesia	Malaysia	Singapore	Total
Short-term health damages	924.0	8.0	8.8	940.9
Industrial-production losses	D/U	157.4	N	157.4
Tourism losses	70.4	127.4	58.4	256.2
Airline and airport losses	17.6	0.2	6.9	24.7
Fishing decline	D/U	16.2	N	1.62
Cloud seeding	D/U	0.8	N	0.8
Total	1,012	310	74.1	1,396.1

Key: D/U Data unavailable N Negligible

Note: Damages exclude long-term health damages, reduced crop productivity, aesthetic value of reduced visibility, avertive expenditures, accidents, loss of life, evacuvations, and loss of confidence by foreign investors. Small discrepancies in totals reflect rounding.

Source: Glover, David & Jessup, Timothy (eds.) *Indonesia's Fires and Haze: The Cost of Catastrophe* (Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1999, reprint 2006). Available at http://www.idrc.ca/openebooks/332-1 [accessed: 13 September 2007).

CONCEPTUALIZING COOPERATION

In an anarchic international system, cooperation is often seen as problematic as states are deemed to be self-regarding. Instead of exploring avenues for mutual benefits, states often ask "who benefits more?" This forms the crux of the problem realists identify as *relative* gains. In this paradigm, states eschew cooperation and prospective gains for fear that such collaboration would strengthen its competitors and to the detriment of one's self. Relative gains is an important obstacle hindering international cooperation, but it is neither a sufficient nor necessary condition explaining the failure of states to cooperate. The neo-liberal school posit that cooperation is widely observed with states opting to focus on *absolute* gains. This paradigm is more conducive to cooperation as it places premium on mutually beneficial payoffs. The neo-realist and neo-liberal schools of thought present differing perspectives on cooperation and instruct us to the different motivation that animates inter-state relations. In reality, cooperation is also contingent a various variables such as issue, context and the relationship among the parties involved. For example, relative gains calculations are more subdue – or perhaps ignored – among allies. Such was the case in the post-1945 period when the US contributed resources and political capital to rebuild its wartime enemy – Japan – even doing so might serve to rehabilitate a potential challenger to its primary because Japan was seen as a

bulwark against communism in Asia. Thus, although the international system is one of anarchy, cooperation is widely practiced and observed.

The Prisoner's Dilemma game model as shown in Figure 1 conceptualizes the dynamics of inter-state behavior. Framed in the context of two suspected criminals caught by the police, this model suggests that actors acting to maximize their own personal interest leads to less optimal outcomes. In this scenario, each suspect has two options – remain silent or confess. Acting rationally, each would opt to confess in exchange for a lighter sentence. If A confesses and B remains silent, A would obtain the highest payoff of "4" (A_2, B_1). Likewise, B would surmise that it is in his/her best interest to confess to avoid a higher jail sentence (A_1, B_2). However, the interactive result of both confession leads them away from their anticipated outcomes, with both receiving a payoff of "2" instead of the anticipated "4" (A_2, B_2). If both had eschew a strategy to forgo the highest payoff (4) and remained silent, each would be rewarded with a payoff better than A_2, B_2 and receive the A_1, B_1 of "3." However, the net result of the actors' most dominant strategy is A_2, B_2, although both would must prefer A_1, B_1 to A_2, B_2. "But the preferred A_1, B_1 outcome is neither individually accessible nor stable. To arrive at the Pareto-optimal outcome requires that all actors eschew their dominant strategies."[6]

FIGURE 1: PRISONER'S DILEMMA

		ACTOR B	
		B_1	B_2
ACTOR A	A_1	3,3	1,4
	A_2	4,1	2,2

[6] Stein, Arthur, "Coordination and Collaboration: Regimes in an Anarchic World," in Baldwin, David (Ed.) *Neorealism and Neoliberalism: The Contemporary Debate* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993).
p. 35.

The lesson drawn from the Prisoner's Dilemma model conjoins states to control their natural predilection for maximizing their *individual* interests and benefits in order to avoid jeopardizing their positions. It is also important to note that international relations is an interactive game whereby the final outcome of is dependent on one's behavior as much as the behavior of the other party. Both actors could avoid a less desirable outcome A_2, B_2 by committing themselves to cooperate. Stein explains that …

> [b]ecause each actor requires assurances that the other will also eschew its rational choice, such collaboration requires a degree of formalization. The regime must specify what constitutes cooperation and what constitutes cheating, and each actor must be assured of its own ability to spot others cheating immediately.[7]

The solution to Prisoner's Dilemma is to regulate the behavior of the parties involved in a manner that guides both parties to achieve A_1, B_1. As argued by Stein, overcoming Prisoner's Dilemma requires (a) compliance by both actors to forgo their dominant strategy, (b) a clear understanding of the expected norm of behavior, and (c) be able to identify and monitor compliance. In addition, the incorporation of punitive retaliation would serve as a strong disincentive for cheating.

THE FAILURE OF ASEAN COOPERATION

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed on August 1967. Beginning with five members – Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand – the organization now encompasses ten Southeast Asian countries. Motivated by anti-communist designs, ASEAN has evolved into arguably one of the most successful regional organizations in the developing world. It is in the process of building an ASEAN community and had made significant progress at economic integration with the implementation of the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA). ASEAN had progressed by leaps and bounds, with a concerted effort at forging cooperative ventures in politics, socio-cultural, economic and security spheres. For all its successes, detractors point to the frustrating pace in which ASEAN functions. The use of consensus as the decision rule effectively gives each member state a veto over all deliberations. This results in ASEAN progress at the pace dictated by the "lowest denominator" state. The failure of unanimity forced Singapore to break ranks with ASEAN to negotiate a free trade agreement with the US. ASEAN's management of transboundary haze is yet another example how the organization is prevented from taking positive measures to contain and mitigate the threat by its archaic consensus rule-making.

Recognizing the need for collective action and the gravity of the threat posed by transboundary haze, ASEAN formally entered into a framework to address the problem. The Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution was signed by all ten ASEAN states in June 2002. ASEAN's response had won it accolades from among others, the United Nations Environment Program (UNEP). The Agreement was

[7] Stein, "Collaboration," pp. 41-42.

entered into force on 25 November 2003. The responsibilities of the parties to the Agreement are as follows:

(a) Required to cooperate in developing and implementing measures to prevent and monitor transboundary haze pollution, and control sources of fires by developing early warning systems, exchange information and technology, and provide mutual assistance.
(b) Required to respond to a request for relevant information sought by a state or states affected by such transboundary haze pollution, when the transboundary haze pollution originates from within their territories.
(c) Required to take legal, administrative and/or other measures to implement their obligations under the Agreement.[8]

The Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution is the embodiment of ASEAN's sense of collective purpose and resolve to mitigate and prevent forest fires, and to control transboundary haze pollution. Some of the major ongoing ASEAN activities include:

(a) Development of 'zero burning' guidelines targeted to plantation companies and timber concessionaires;
(b) Promotion of 'zero burning' policy by ASEAN through dialogue sessions and corporate awareness campaigns;
(c) Development of controlled burning guidelines to smallholders, farmers and shifting cultivators;
(d) Development of standard operating procedures for monitoring, assessment and joint emergency response;
(e) Simulation exercises to enhance coordination and communication mechanisms among Member Countries in joint emergency response;
(f) Training programmes to strengthen law enforcement capability of ASEAN Member Countries (AMCs);
(g) Community-based fire management activities; and
(h) Public and community awareness campaigns.[9]

Two workshops were held in 2004 and 2006 in Kuala Rompin, Malaysia to enhance capacity-building. Similarly, two guidelines on the "Implementation of the ASEAN Policy on Zero-Burining" and "the Implementation of Controlled Burning Practices" were formulated for the same purpose. ASEAN Specialized Meteorological Center (ASMC) – based in Singapore – "has been designated to and continues to play a leading role in long-rang climate forecasting, early warning activities, and detection and monitoring of fires and haze in the region."[10] It appears that ASEAN has successfully harnessed its cooperative spirit that would no doubt stand it in good stead to ward off future haze threats. Such optimism proved to be unfounded as the region continues to be plagued by the haze menace, albeit not in the same intensity and scale of devastation as in 1997. 2006 would see a replay of the events of 1997, in spite of the institutional arrangement by ASEAN to combat transboundary haze.

[8] ASEAN Secretariat Press Release, 25 November 2003. Available at http://haze-online.or.id.news.php/ID=1069644529 [accessed: 13 October 2007].
[9] ASEAN, "ASEAN's Response." Avaiable at http://www.haze-online.or.id/help/response.php [accessed 13 October 2007].
[10] ASEAN, "ASEAN's Response."

FIGURE 2: ASEAN-INDONESIA PRISONER'S DILEMMA MODEL

INDONESIA

ASEAN	*Contribute*	*Free-ride*
Contribute	A 3,3	B 1,4
Free-ride	C 4,1	D 2,2

The failure of ASEAN to effectively address transboundary haze could be explained through the Prisoner's Dilemma model. As far as the Agreement on Transboundary Haze Pollution is concerned, ASEAN is divided into two groupings. The first group consists of all states that have signed and *ratified* the Agreement, namely Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Mynanmar, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand and Vietnam. The second group consists of Indonesia and the Philippines, who have signed but not ratified the Agreement. Although the cooperation of the Philippines is important, it is not as crucial as it plays a negligible role in the production of haze. In comparison, Indonesia's non-cooperation is vital a significant amount of haze originated from within Indonesian territory. This effectively pits ASEAN against Indonesia.

In the Prisoner's Dilemma model as depicted in Figure 2, cooperation refers to states that had ratified the Agreement and undertook steps to abide by the provisions of the Agreement. Free-riding is contextualized by behavior that is non-cooperative and leaves the burden of combating the haze threats to others. The outcome in quadrant A is optimal as it denotes cooperation by ASEAN and Indonesia. Cooperation by both parties enables Indonesia to draw on the resources of other ASEAN member states and the latter's resources could be *directly* utilized to prevent and fight fires at the point of origin and not on damage control and limitation within their political communities. Quadrant D is the worst possible outcome and represents a situation where ASEAN and Indonesia is averse to the risks and dangers posed by transboundary haze. This quadrant represents the pre-1997 environment where, besides a series of high level meetings, nothing substantive was implemented to address future catastrophe. It must be said that Indonesia and other ASEAN states did not have the inclination to spend resources and political capital on this issue as the damage wrought by previous haze occurrences were fleeting and limited in scope. Quadrant C is a likely outcome and common sense would indicate this to be the likely outcome. Forest fires and haze pollution effects Indonesia directly and its citizens bear the brunt of these dangers. It follows that Indonesia would lead efforts to mitigate and contain forest fires, paving the way for other ASEAN states to free-ride

and to bank on the efforts of the Indonesian government. Unfortunately, Quadrant B is the most accurate representation of the state of affairs between Indonesia and ASEAN. Rather than lead the charge to prevent a repeat of 1997 and to prevent forest fires, Indonesia had been dragging its foot at ratifying the Agreement. Conversely, it is the ASEAN states – especially Malaysia and Singapore – that had been more proactive. ASEAN states receive the lowest payoff (1) because it is paying the financial costs and political capital to negotiate the Agreement and implement other capacity-building and training measures but with little results. These efforts were not translated into effective results because without Indonesia's ratification of the Agreement, the resources of the member states were not deployed where it is most needed. The return of the haze to Singapore and Malaysia in 2006 proved that the association's anti-haze efforts *sans* Indonesia was ineffective. On the other hand, Indonesia's free-riding stance means that could continue its wayward approach to open-burning with the comfort of knowing that it could draw on the financial resources and aid of its neighbors if the situation gets out of hand.

Indonesia's sense of apathy is confounding. *The Jakarta Post* reported that several legislators from the parliamentary Commission for Defense and Foreign Affairs were not in favor of ratifying the Agreement. "[T]hey condemned the agreement, which they said placed all responsibility for the haze on Indonesia."[11] According to Brad Sanders of the Asia Pacific Resources International Limited (APRIL), "[t]he problem here [Indonesia] is that the people want the fires to burn. They are lighting them on purpose to clear the land."[12] In the face of pressure, Indonesia has taken remedial actions. However, "while land-clearing by fire has been outlawed, weak enforcement continues to confound the problem."[13] Bureaucratic red-tape and layering complicate implementation and enforcement of laws. "Indonesia is divided administratively into provinces, which comprise several regencies, which in turn are further divided into districts. [...] This system often blurs the chain of command and can slow efforts to stop firestarters or put out fires."[14] The Environment Ministry – the proverbial custodian of environmental protection – does not have effective control over provincial authorities, leading to a disorganized and uncoordinated response to prevent and fight forest fires.

ASEAN's ineffective efforts to combat transboundary haze are symptomatic of the central problem besieging the organization. "The cross-border nature of the disaster initially created some expectation that the neighboring countries of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) would relax its general policy of non-interference in members' 'internal affairs' and take some collective action to force Indonesia to act more effectively to prevent future fires."[15] ASEAN lacked the institutional mechanisms to enforce decisions as its consensus-based decision-making allows states to ignore the collective interest of the organization and its members. ASEAN states' patience is wearing thin. Going against tradition, Malaysia and Singapore had voice their frustration openly. Azmi Khalid, Malaysia's environment

[11] *The Straits Times*, 14 March 2007.
[12] *Today*, 20 June 2007.

[13] *The Jakarta Post*, 31 October 2006.

[14] *The Straits Times*, (22 Noveber 2006).
[15] Forests, Fires and Confrontation in Indonesia, p. 132.

minister remarked: "They [the Indonesians] told me they had the systems to control the haze. It looks like their system is not effective."[16] Meanwhile Singapore's Prime Minister, Lee Hsien Loong called on "Indonesia to deal with the problem in a timely and effective manner so investor confidence in Indonesia and ASEAN's credibility would not be affected."[17] The issue at hand lies not in Indonesia's lack of resources to control forest fires because funding and assistance are readily available from ASEAN states and extra-regional states such as Japan, Germany and the US. An ASEAN Haze Fund has also been proposed. The crux of the matter is Indonesia's lack of political will. While President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono had promised to ratify the Agreement in all earnest, the ratification process is mired at the parliamentary committee level. At the local level, the economic incentive of using fire as a cheap and effective means of land-clearing outweigh the social and environmental costs of forest fires and haze. The primary beneficiary of these environmental unfriendly methods is plantation companies and farmers. As long as the cost of remedial healthcare and fire-fighting are transferred to other parties, free-riding remains an attractive option. Innovative approaches such as the adopt-a-district plan allows ASEAN states to work directly with the local government for more effective monitoring and fire-fighting, and thus circumventing Jakarta's impasse. Under this plan, Singapore and Malaysia had adopted the districts of Jambi and Rokan Hilir respectively by providing direct and dedicated assistance to them.

CONCLUSION: THE WAY AHEAD

The management of transboundary haze is a test case of ASEAN cooperation and inference could be drawn as to the realization of the ASEAN Community. A defining characteristic of a community is the feeling of togetherness and the primacy of collective interest over the individual. Indonesia's actions in the 1997 crisis and beyond are alarming in two regard. First, by taking slow and half-hearted measures to investigate and persecute the perpetrators of open-burning, the Indonesian government is sending the signal that vested interest is more important than public health. Second, as a founding member of ASEAN it is undermining the solidarity of the association by showing its disregard of the security and well-being of others. To be sure, pressure from ASEAN states on Indonesia is beginning to yield positive results:

[16] *The Guardian* (6 October 2006).

[17] Channel News Asia, (11 November 2006). Available at http://www.channelnewsasia.com/stroies/singaporelocalnews/view/234808/1/.html [accessed 13 Octobter 2007].

> In 10 fire-prone provinces, there are now 1560 personnel in fire brigades. The authorities have also identified three palm oil firms that practice open burning, and they are now under investigation. With the help of the German government, Indonesia is developing a fire control centre in East Kalimantan. It is also developing an early-warming system with the help of a Japanese institution.[18]

It is beguiling that Indonesia is more amendable to working with extra-regional actors such as Germany and Japan and keeping ASEAN states at arm's length. Members of a community must be willing to assist fellow members and also be willing to accept assistance. In exercising its sovereign right to stall ratification of the Agreement, Indonesia is paying a high price as it doing so continues to endanger its citizens in fire-prone localities. At the same time, Indonesia's non-cooperative stance is jeopardizing the health and economic position of its neighbors. Indonesia's fixation and uncompromising stance on the supremacy of sovereignty and domestic interests does not augur well for regional cooperation. As dangerous and serious as its indifference toward transboundary haze, the implications and effects of the Indonesian government have far reaching consequences on the harmonious relationship and future cooperation of ASEAN.

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Paper 3 The Effect of the Home Literacy Environment on Reading Habits and Attitudes: An Investigation of Thai Students at an International College

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Introduction

There has been considerable concern in recent years over the apparent unwillingness of Thais to read for pleasure. Literacy rates of over 92% (World Fact Book, 2007) compare favourably with other parts of the world, but the amount of actual reading done appears to be very low. Statistics from 2003 from the National Statistical Office of Thailand for example indicate that the average Thai reads only 5 books a year (Pradit, 2006). This compares with 17 books read by the average Singaporean and 50 books read by the average American. This level of reluctant readership is likely to undermine Thailand's competitiveness in the Information Age.

It may be however that Thailand's reading rates are skewed by the presence in the national sample of large numbers of the less well-educated. It is possible a prosperous middle class in Bangkok has leisure reading rates approaching, or even surpassing, international norms. They and their children may have already acquired the "literacy fitness" levels necessary to compete successfully in the international arena. Their critical thinking skills, life-longing learning habits, and language skills, have all been enhanced by prolonged exposure to the ideas, opinions and experiences of the world's movers and shakers. "Literacy fitness" also implies cognitive fitness. If, however, they have not, and reluctant readership is endemic across the social classes, then there are serious implications for the future intellectual leadership of the Kingdom, and therefore of its ability to adapt to the challenges of the 21st century.

Students at Mahidol University International College (MUIC) provide an opportunity to survey the reading habits of those at the top end of the educational and social spectrum. This paper will report on the findings of the effect of the home literacy environment on the reading habits and attitudes of a large sample of MUIC students.

Literature review

The literature review will cover four areas related to reluctant readership: extensive reading; library provision; the home literacy environment; L1 to L2 transfer.

Extensive reading

The benefits of extensive reading (ER) for first and second language learners are well documented (Krahsen 1993; Day & Bamford, 1998). In this approach, students choose to read in their own time, with reading materials they have selected

for themselves. They read for pleasure. There are no tasks to complete and there are no tests. It is a leisure activity where students are exposed to large amounts of naturally occurring language in context, an essential component if students are to acquire more complex language (Krashen, 1982). Despite the theoretical underpinnings from Krashen's "input hypothesis" (Ibid), and the extensive research findings in support of ER, it is not all plain sailing. A number of studies suggest there are problems when ER does not take account of local conditions.

Green (2005) reported on the disappointing results in high schools of the Hong Kong Extensive Reading Scheme in English (HKERS). He attributed this to the top-down manner it was implemented. More importantly, he believes it is a fundamental mistake to see ER as a 'stand alone' policy. He argues that for it to be successful ER cannot be simply viewed as an extra-curricular activity, but must be incorporated into the classroom, especially in exam-based environments like Hong Kong. In another study from Hong Kong (Yang, 2001), non-degree adult learners of English were required to read in their own time two Agatha Christie detective novels over a 15-week course. One hour of the weekly three-hour lesson was dedicated to discussing the books, exploring ambiguous language, and previewing the following week's reading requirement. In the post-test, the learners showed significant improvements in both their reading proficiency and motivation over the control group.

In Malawi in Africa, Williams (2007) suggested two main reasons to account for the drop in reading scores four years after the implementation of an ER programme. Firstly, when 'outsiders' do not take in to consideration the 'cultural-educational ecology' of a country, there is unlikely to be a best fit between on the one hand, western beliefs about education, and the role of reading in particular, and on the other, indigenous educational principles. Secondly, and very strongly liked to the first, is the large gap that exists between the theoretical principles that underpin ER, a western concept in origin, and the realities of classroom practice in other parts of the world.

The requirement in the pure form of ER for students to choose their own books, and then to read these in their own time, usually at home, is greatly at odds with the teacher-centred approaches that predominate world-wide. It is also alien to the educational experiences of the overwhelming majority of students. Xinchun et al (1999) reported that in Chinese primary schooling for example intensive reading is emphasized, but ER is neglected. In China, reading is used to assist students' mastery of the complexities of Chinese orthography, not to stir their imaginations, nor expose them to the full range and complexity of their own language.

Exponents of ER would argue the Chinese primary school environment is ripe for exposure to ER. This may be true. Certainly, the Fijian 'Book Flood' scheme (Elley and Munghabai, 1983), and its forerunner the New Zealand 'Shared Book Experience' (De'Ath, 2001), have shown ER works particularly well with young children and adolescents. However, in other situations it may need a strong classroom focus. This is the position of Macalister (2007), who says that with pure ER many students are likely to use their free time to do anything other than read. Krashen (1982) also makes the point that weaker students may need interaction with a teacher to help with meaning. This is what Lituanas et al (2001) did in the Philippines. They trialed a classroom ER program with a class of 60 first-year remedial students whose

ages ranged from 12-18. Ninety percent of them were from low-income families where reading material was scarce, if not non-existent. These students read extensively for 40 minutes every day in class, and had help from the teacher on understanding difficult words, selecting books to read, or simply chatting about what they had read. After six months, this experimental group showed significant improvements in reading comprehension over the control group.

Others have found it necessary to include ER in the classroom alongside intensive reading (IR) - short texts selected by the teacher, read in class, and checked for understanding through a series of questions and exercises. Carrell and Carson (1997) argue that if students are to be properly prepared for university entrance, both IR and ER must be incorporated into EAP programs. In another study, Hamp-Lyons (1983) reported on an ER course she developed, first in Malaysia, and then in the US, to assist non-Western ESL students to cope with their university reading loads. She came to the conclusion that classroom instruction was necessary to assist with the development of reading strategies. She also felt some of the students' reading problems were a consequence of transferring poor reading strategies from their L1.

Another potential barrier to implementing ER is attitude. Krashen (1982) addresses this in his "affective filter". He says if attitudes are not optimal, language *input* may not result in acquisition; *uptake*. He suggests that even if the students understand what it is they are reading, messages do not necessarily pass to the part of the brain responsible for acquisition, unless directed there by the effort of attention. Reluctant readers in effect put up their own psychological barriers to language acquisition.

Yamashita (2004) investigated the reading attitudes of 59 Japanese university students enrolled in a 13-week ER course in English. Her results support the transfer of positive attitudes of reading from L1 to L2, and in particular that positive feelings students had in both L1 and L2 facilitate performance in ER (measured by a TOIC test). She went on to say it was important to "understand learner's attitudes (particularly feelings) to reading both in L1 and L2 for encouraging L2 learners' involvement in extensive reading".

In short, ER works well, especially with younger children and adolescents, but if it is transplanted direct from the West, without regard to local conditions and expectations, it is likely to fail. When used with adults, whose attitudes are more firmly entrenched, the importance of good reading habits and attitudes in L1 become critical. If these habits are weak, or attitudes are negative, then reading may not be the vehicle for second language acquisition many claim it to be.

Library provision: indirect evidence of reluctant readership

In reader-friendly societies, children as well as adults are likely to read more. When they read more, they become better readers, and better readers in turn read more; a virtuous upward spiral which widens the gap between those who read and those who do not - the "Matthew effect" (Stanovich, 1986). This should not come as a surprise. Reading is after all a skill, albeit a cognitive one, and like other skills benefits from practice. But the converse is also true. Those who read less, that is to

say do little if any practice, will be less proficient. They are also likely to drive less pleasure from reading than those who practice. Thus, lower reading rates are one possible indicator of reluctant readership.

One factor likely to influence reading rates is the availability of printed reading material. The literature indicates that access to books has an effect on reading ability. Where there are fewer public libraries, reading comprehension scores in children are lower (Heyns, 1978). Another study found that the more children visit libraries, the more their reading levels improve (Snow et al, 1991). How does library provision in Thailand compare with elsewhere?

According to Lerdsuriyakul (1999), there are 915 public libraries in Thailand. This contrasts with the UK which has 4,891 public libraries (LISU, 2000). In other words, Thailand has almost 70,000 people per public library, whereas in the UK the figure is only 12,000. This six-fold difference in library provision is very likely to have a concomitant effect on reading rates, that is, one would expect Thais to read less than people in the UK. Data for Malaysia suggests there are nearly 500 public libraries (Jaafar, 1998), and with a population close to 25 million, the ratio is 50,000 people per public library. Apart from public library provision, another potential influence on reading rates is the influence of the home literacy environment.

The home literacy environment: parental influence

A number of studies have highlighted the role of parents in children's success at school. These have focused on parental educational attainment and have shown that as a mother's educational level increases so do the child's L1 reading scores, vocabulary skills and reading performance (NCFL, 2000; Darling 2001). Flouri and Buchanan (2004) claim that active parental involvement is a more powerful determinant of a child's success than a parent's educational background. Bus et al (1995) are even more specific. They claim it is parental involvement in reading that is the single most important determinant of childhood literacy. How much reading to children do parents do, and what is the effect?

A review of The Early Childhood Longitudinal Study for kindergarteners by the US National Institute for Literacy (NIFL), found in a survey in autumn 1998, that nearly half of US parents (46%) read to their children every day (n.d.). The study also found in the spring of 2000 that children who were read to at least three times a week by a family member were almost twice as likely to score in the top 25% in reading than those children who were read to less than this (Ibid). In addition, parents in higher socioeconomic groups were almost twice as likely to read to their children every day as those of lower socioeconomic status (62% as compared to 36%; Ibid). Lomax (1976) also showed that children who are read to at home read more by themselves.

Children are also influenced by what they see. The parents of children who do more leisure reading also read more than the parents of children who are less interested in books (Neuman, 1986). Young children read more when they see other people read, both at school and at home (Morrow, 1982).

To conclude, through their involvement and example, parents significantly influence their children's literacy development.

L1 to L2 transfer

L1 literacy is of considerable interest to EFL professionals because there is considerable evidence to show a transfer from L1 to L2 (cross-linguistic transfer). Findings from a study by Sparks et al (2006) indicated that L1 skills in spelling are important predictors of future achievements in overall literacy development in an L2, perhaps from as early as first grade. Phonological awareness across a range of L1 populations has been shown to accompany high levels of L2 word recognition and spelling (Caravolas and Bruck, 1993). Meschyan and Hernandez (2002) found that L1 word decoding skill of college-age adults in their native Spanish was one important predictor of L2 competency. L2 research with American high school and college students supports the role of L1 vocabulary skill as a predictor of overall L2 proficiency (Proctor et al, 2006). In a review of L2 studies on processing, Ganschow et al (1998) cited numerous authors to show the strength of support for a link between L1 oral and written abilities on the one hand, and L2 aptitude on the other.

The current study

The current study explores for the first time how the home literacy environment may have affected the reading habits and attitudes of Thai university students today. The findings may have implications for understanding how well Thailand is prepared for the demands of the Information Age.

Research questions

The following research questions were examined:

1. Does parental reading to children affect the reading habits of these children as adults?
2. Does parental reading to children affect the reading attitudes of these children as adults?
3. Do parents' past reading frequencies associate with students' present reading frequencies?

Methods:

Participants

The participants were 545 MUIC students, the majority of whom were first- or second-year students. 54% of them were female and 46% were male. They were aged between 19-23 years old, with a mode of 19. Just over 40% of students had studied overseas, and a further 20% had studied at local international high schools. Nearly two thirds of students' parents had graduated from university.

Materials, procedure, and analysis

A questionnaire written in English was developed over a 12-month period, and items deleted or modified as a result of informal feedback sessions with students. The questionnaires were handed to individual classroom teachers to give out to students on the first two days of the new trimester in January 2006. It took about 15 minutes to fill in the questionnaires, and these were collected back at the end of the lesson. The questionnaire data were entered into SPSS (Version 11) and descriptive and inferential statistics were calculated. Effect sizes were interpreted using Cramer's V, or Cohen's (1988) rule of thumb for evaluating the practical importance of d (for a small effect d=0.2, for a medium effect d=0.5, for a large effect d=0.8).

Results

The main independent variable

The main independent variable asked *how often students were read to as children at home*. Results indicated three fifths (60.4%) of respondents had never been read to as a child, and less than one fifth (17.2%) had been read to three times a week or more. Of those who had been read to, in 87% of cases it was one or other, or both of their parents. For the remainder, it was a mix of older siblings and grandparents.

1) Never	60.4%
2) Less than once a month	1.7%
3) Less than once a week	5.1%
4) Once or twice a week	8.3%
5) Three time a week or more	17.2%
6) Yes, but not indicated	7.3%

For statistical analysis, when one-way ANOVA or Chi-Square was used, the main independent variable was converted from 6 groups (see above) into three:

1) never read to
2) read to less than once a week
3) read to more than once a week
* The 'not indicated' group was dropped

For use with the Independent Samples t Test, the main independent variable was converted into two groups:

1) *read to less than once a week* (including the 'never read' to group)
2) *read to more than once a week.*
* Again, the '*not indicated*' group was dropped.

Research Question 1: parental reading to children and these children's reading habits as adults

Students' reading habits were determined through two questions, one assessing how often they read each week, and the other how long they read each day.

In the first question, students were asked to record how often they read for pleasure eight different types of reading material: magazines, newspapers, cartoon books, short stories, novels, non-fiction, technical books, and the Internet. 540 respondents answered this question and a frequency graph was computed by allocating 0-4 points for their answers of *never / rarely / once a week / often / almost every day* respectively. The maximum score possible was 32 which would indicate that a respondent read each of the eight items almost every day.

Computation of the raw data gave a mean, a median, and a mode, all very closely aligned at 15 points. This would indicate that the typical student reads each of the eight items once a week, or reads one of the items once a day.

One-way ANOVA was used with the three levels of the main independent variable (as outlined earlier) and from Table 1 it is clear that there were significant differences between group three - those who were read to once or more a week by an adult - and the other two groups, though the size effects were small. That is, those who were read to by their parents once or more a week as children were significantly more likely to read more frequently as students than the other two groups.

Groups	Mean difference	Sig. level (p)	d	Description of d
1 & 3	1.22	.014	.15	< small effect
2 & 3	2.00	.031	.25	Small effect

Table 1. Statistical significance (p) and effect size (d) for the 3 reconstituted groups with the largest mean differences when comparing the main independent variable and reading frequencies.

For the second question, students were asked how much reading they did every day. Over a quarter of respondents said they read for pleasure for more than an hour a day (26.0%), including 5.2% who read for more than two hours a day. At the bottom end, nearly 40% read for 20 minutes or less, with more than one in twenty (4.4%) saying they never read. Average reading time was between 20-30 minutes a day.

More than 2 hours	5.2%
1-2 hours	20.8%
30-40 minutes	34.3%
5-20 minutes	35.3%
None	4.4%

A statistical comparison was made with the main independent variable, *how often parents read to their children*. Results were only significant at p=.077; Cramer's V was only .101, a negligible effect size. This approached statistical significance.

Reading rates were also compared with the main dependent variable, student reading frequencies. Pearson chi-square was $\chi^2 = 99.058$, df=8, p=.000 and Cramer's V was .316, a significant result with a medium effect size. This suggests that those who read more frequently also read for longer.

Research Question 2: parental reading to children and these children's reading attitudes as adults

Students' reading attitudes were determined through three questions: their view of reading as an activity; their self-appraisal as readers; the number of non-academic books they own.

Students were asked to describe reading on a scale from a) *"very boring"*, to e) *"fun"*. The mode was in the *"okay"* category with 45.1% of the 550 respondents choosing this position. Nearly 38% of respondents viewed reading in a positive light (the top two categories) compared to 17.3% who viewed it negatively.

Fun	11.6%
Quite enjoyable	26.0%
Okay	45.1%
A bit boring	13.8%
Very boring	3.5%

One-way ANOVA was rejected because the group sizes were too unequal even when merged, and an Independent Samples *t* Test violated the test for the homogeneity of variances. Initially, for Chi Square, there were too many cells (40%) with less than the minimum tally of 5. This was overcome by reducing the number of categories from five to three:

1) those who viewed reading ***negatively***
2) those who were ***neutral***
3) those who were ***positive***

The main independent variable was used with two groups (those who read to their children less than once a week; those who read more than once a week). Pearson chi-square was $\chi^2 = 8.183$, df=2, p=.017 with no cells with less than the expected count. This was statistically significant, but Cramer's V was only .127, a weak effect size.

The second question asked students to describe themselves as readers from a) *I will do anything to avoid reading*, which scored 0 points, to e) *I read a much as I can*, which scored 4 points. The mean was 2.03, placing it just above *"I read occasionally"*. This neutral position (58.9%) was also the mode. 21.4% respondents viewed themselves negatively as readers, as opposed to 19.8% who rated themselves positively.

I read a much as I can	4.4%
I like to read a lot	15.4%
I read occasionally	58.9%

I read if I have to	21.2%
I'll do anything to avoid reading	0.2%

In the statistical analysis, One-way ANOVA was abandoned because the group sizes were unequal. Though an Independent Samples *t* Test was statistically significant: t (499)= -2.167, p= .031, the effect size was negligible at .11. An initial Chi-Square test had too many cells (48%) containing less than the expected count. This was overcome by reducing the number of groups from five to three:

1) those who read reluctantly (21.4%)
2) those who read occasionally (58.9%)
3) those who read a lot (19.8%)

Pearson chi-square was χ^2 = 7.430, df=2, p=.024. which was significant at the .05 level, though Cramer's V was .122, suggesting again only a very weak effect size.

The third question asked students to estimate how many non-academic books they have of their own at home. The mean was around 40 books:

More than 100	20.0%
More than 50	23.6%
20-30	29.9%
5-10	24.8%
None	1.8%

When student book ownership was compared with the main independent variable, the result for Pearson chi-square was χ^2 = 17.097, df=8, p=.029, with only 13.3 of cells with less than the expected count. This result was significant beyond the 95% level of certainty, but with Cramer's V of .130 the effect size was weak.

When reading frequency was compared to book ownership, an Independent Samples *t* Test was statistically highly significant: t (499)= -9.462, p= .000. The effect size d was .43 which was in the range small to medium. Thus the more books students owned the more likely they were to read.

Research Question 3: parents' past reading frequencies and respondents' present reading frequencies

Parents' past reading frequencies were determined through a question asking how often parents were seen to read every week by students when they were children. The results from 549 responses suggested the average frequency was about twice a week.

Never	1.3%
Rarely	18.4%
Once a week	7.5%
Often	43.5%
Every day	29.3%

For Chi Square the two categories "Never" and "Rarely" were merged, and then the variable was compared to the main independent variable, the frequency with which parents read to their children, and the resulting Pearson Chi Square was χ^2 = 16.064, df=3, p=.001. This was statistically highly significant and with Cramer's V value of .172 had an effect size approaching moderate in strength. That is to say, those parents who read more were statistically more likely to read to their children.

This variable was also compared with respondents' present reading frequencies and Pearson Chi Square was χ^2 = 27.336, df=12, p=.007. This was statistically very significant, but the Cramer's V value of .130 showed only a weak effect.

Discussion and Conclusion

Summary of main findings

This study investigated the relationship between the reading frequencies and attitudes of MUIC students and two key variables related to the home literary environment. The main findings are described below.

1. Differences in students' reading frequencies were associated with three aspects of the home literary environment:
    - how often their parents read to them as children
    - the degree of parental book ownership
    - the extent of past parental reading frequencies
2. Differences in students' reading attitudes were associated with the frequency their parents read to them as children. These reading attitudes were:
    - reading as an enjoyable activity
    - self appraisal as a reader
3. Differences in students' reading frequencies were associated with student book ownership. Those who had more books reported reading more.
4. The association between student reading times and parental reading to children approached statistical significance.

Discussion of reading frequencies and reading rates

The average student reported reading for a total of about 20-30 minutes a day. There were no gender differences. A survey for the 5th World Book Day in the UK found that 15-16 year old teenage boys spent 20 minutes a day reading for pleasure compared with 40 minutes a day for girls (Teenage readers, 2002). UK female teenagers read nearly 50% more a day than the students in this survey.

In a study on adult leisure reading in Holland, Knulst and Kraaykamp (1998) found the time spent on reading books was 1.2 hours per week in 1995. The time spent reading by students in this study was on average about 2 hours a week. To manage 1.2 hours a week, students would have to spend 60% of their reading time on books, which is very unlikely. As an estimate, 30%, or half the Dutch book reading rate, would be a more likely figure.

Discussion of the home learning environment

The effect of parental reading to children at home was compared to student reading frequencies today. Statistical analysis indicated there was more than a 95% probability that those students who were read to more than once a week as children read more frequently today than those who were read to less than once a week.

When asked how often they had been read to as a child, 60% of students from what is the top socio-economic group in Thailand replied, "never". Only 17% had been read to three or more times a week. This is in stark contrast to 36% of kindergarteners from the lowest socio-economic groups in the US who are read to every day (Coley, 2002, p55). That is, the lowest income groups in the US read to their children twice as often as the top socio-economic group in Thailand. This is a huge gap born out by other international comparisons. Thailand participated in a 32-nation study on reading literacy conducted by the International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) and was placed 26th on reading achievement for 9th grade students. In the same study, the US was placed 4th (USDE, 1996, p5).

At the other end of the social spectrum, data from the National Survey of America's families of all children aged 1-5 throughout the US in 1999 indicated only 13% of high income families read to their children less than three times a week (Vandivere et al, 2000). The comparable figure for this survey was 83%, six times higher.

Parental and student book ownership

Another element of the home literacy environment is book provision. The number of books children have access to is associated with reading achievement. For example, Weinberger (1996) found that children with literacy difficulties owned fewer books than those who did not have difficulties. In this survey, over 25% of students had less than 20 books of their own. This is below the minimum of 25 books set by the US National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) to be classified, for the purposes of their survey, as having books in the home (Donahue et al, 2001, p58).

Though the average number of books owned was low by international comparisons, higher book ownership for both students and parents in this study was associated with higher reading frequencies. Thus, the finding for this sample of the Thai population supports the IEA claim that the availability of books in the home is a key factor in higher reading achievement (1994).

Socialising effects of the home on reading habits

As well as the importance of being read to by parents, and book provision, a number of authors have looked at the 'socializing effects' of the home literary environment toward reading (e.g. Van Peer, 1991). These effects include children seeing their parents read, being encouraged to read by their parents, discussing books (Guthrie et al, 1995), and generally living in a household where there is a positive view towards literature. Verboord and Van Rees (2003) found that socializing effects on children's motivation and literary competence were still evident in adulthood. In general, parental involvement, not just in reading, predicts educational attainment by the age of 20 (Flouri and Buchanan, 2004).

Using representative data for the Netherlands for 1998 (n=1,762), Kraaykamp confirmed that parents who read literature have a positive effect on the present reading levels of their offspring (2003). This survey of students would appear to provide some Thai support for this conclusion, as there was a small but significant association between students' present-day reading frequencies and their parents' past reading frequencies.

Julia Strong from the UK government-funded National Reading Campaign sums it up best when she says, "Children copy what they see and if you don't come from a reading house, or haven't been read to as a child, there's a much stronger chance you won't read yourself" (Buckley, 17 August 2005). From the evidence presented thus far, Thai households may well be falling short in their support of their children's "literacy fitness".

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study suggest Thais have reading rates significantly below those of other countries. This has implications for their willingness to access information on-line and therefore to compete in the Information Age. It also has implications for their ability to learn other languages; an important consideration for the 21st century. Those who do not read in their own language are unlikely to read in a second language, and so will not benefit from extended exposure to large amounts of naturally occurring language found when reading extensively.

The study found that the home literacy environment had a significant influence on students' reading habits. However, the effect sizes were small, indicating that there are other major influences on students' reading habits, as well as the home environment. One of these is likely to be schooling, and there were suggestions of this in student responses to this survey, but not mentioned in detail here. It is also possible that simply reading to children is not enough on its own. Children probably need to be actively encouraged to read, as well as to listen. Positive interaction with the words on the page may be an essential component of the reading experience.

Further research would investigate the effect of schooling on reading habits and attitudes, and inquire into the type of reading interactions positive readers had with their parents.

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Paper 4 Personal Epistemological Development during the Undergraduate Education: Beliefs about Knowledge and Knowledge Acquisition of Thai University Students

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Abstract

Objectives: This research investigates students' beliefs about knowledge and knowledge acquisition (i.e., personal epistemology) to evaluate how students develop epistemologically during their undergraduate education. Methods: Two groups of undergraduate students (N = 3,050) in a Thai university completed a questionnaire: first-year students who were about to begin studying in the university (n = 870), and students who had just graduated from the university (n = 2,180). Results: A five-factor structure is identified for the personal epistemology of the students. Significant differences are identified between the first-year students and the graduates in four out of the five factors. The differences between the male and female students are also significant in four out of the five factors. Further separate breakdown analyses by students' subject major indicate that the discrepancies between the first-year and the graduates are more noticeable in some majors than others. Conclusions: The research results provide a global picture of the dimensional structure of personal epistemology of Thai university students. Moreover, they also suggest that undergraduate university education has an influence on the students in developing their epistemological viewpoints in certain aspects.

Keywords: knowledge, knowledge acquisition, personal epistemology, student learning, university undergraduate education, student development

Introduction

How is knowledge structured? Is knowledge a collection of isolated bits of information? Is knowledge stable over a period of time? Where and how do people gain knowledge? For more than two decades, researchers has been empirically investigating what do people believe about these issues. This research topic, termed "personal epistemology" by Hofer and Pintrich (2002), has drawn increasing attention and interests from a large number of educational psychologists. It is largely because of the potential power of these beliefs in individuals' learning and knowledge acquisition. People would naturally learn and acquire knowledge in particular manners consistent with their beliefs about knowledge and knowledge acquisition. Consequently, the achievements and outcomes of learning would be inevitably determined in part by the learners' epistemological beliefs. In fact, many empirical studies have had results supporting the relationships between individuals' epistemological beliefs and variables of learning processes and outcomes. Moreover, originally the purpose of the early pioneering empirical studies was to evaluate and trace how students change their epistemological beliefs during the undergraduate study period. While they attend a university, students are expected not only to learn,

but also to develop epistemologically and to become to understand the true nature of knowledge. Students develop epistemologically to have more sophisticated views about knowledge, as many studies have empirically identified. However, very little is known about theses epistemological developments at dimensional levels. At which dimensional levels students develop epistemologically? Are there any epistemological dimensions where the university education can effectively foster? Do students develop epistemologically faster in some dimensions than in others? This study will address these issues of developmental nature of personal epistemology.

Research on Personal Epistemology

Empirical investigations of what people believe about knowledge and knowledge acquisition began about two decades ago by researchers with various disciplinary backgrounds and from different perspectives (Hofer 2005; Schraw & Sinatra, 2004). Numerous different terms has been used to categorize this area of research, reflecting the varied scope of each study (e.g., Baxter Magolda, 1992; Belenky, Clinchy, Goldberger, & Tarule, 1986; Hofer, 2000; King & Kitchener, 1994; Kuhn, 1991; Schommer, 1990). Hofer and Pintrich (1997) were among the first to address this chaotic situation. They reviewed and integrated what had been identified in the studies to date. Hofer and Pintrich (2002) proposed the umbrella term "personal epistemology" to categorize this area of studies. Hofer (2004) defined "personal epistemology" as "a field that examines what individuals believe about how knowing occurs, what counts as knowledge and where it resides, and how knowledge is constructed and evaluated (p.1)."

There are two different lines in the personal epistemology studies (Chan & Elliott, 2004; Hofer, 2001). The first approach is concerned with its developmental aspects, trying to describe individuals' trajectory of personal epistemological development. Most of the studies in this category can be traced back to Perry (1970), who examined undergraduate Harvard students in longitudinal studies. Individuals are measured to identify their stage or position of personal epistemological development. The developmental models suggest that individuals move "from a dualistic, objectivist view of knowledge to a more subjective, relativistic stance and ultimately to a contextual, constructivist perspective of knowledge (Hofer, 2002, p.7)". The major models include those proposed by Baxter Magolda (1992), Belenky et al. (1986), King and Kitchener (1994), and Kuhn (1991), as summarized by Hofer and Pintrich (1997).

The second stream focuses on the dimensional structure of epistemological beliefs, intending to uncover its components and nature. Schommer and her colleagues (Schommer, 1990; Schommer, Crouse, & Rhodes, 1992) pioneered this second approach, and made a clear departure from the developmental approach that was dominant at that time (Hofer, 2001). Schommer conceptualized the personal epistemology as a system with five distinct independent dimensions: (a) Structure of Knowledge, ranging from "knowledge is compartmentalized and isolated bits" to "knowledge is highly interrelated and integrated," (b) Stability of Knowledge (also referred as Certainty of Knowledge), ranging from "knowledge is absolute and unchanging" to "knowledge is constantly evolving," (c) Sources of Knowledge, ranging from "knowledge is handed down by omniscient authority" to "knowledge is reasoned out through objective and subjective means," (d) Ability to Learn (also

called as Control of Learning), ranging from "ability to learn is fixed at birth" to "the ability to learn can be changed and learned through experience," and (e) Speed of Learning, ranging from "learning is quick or not-at-all" to "learning is gradual." However, Schommer has been unsuccessful in empirically identifying one of these five factors regarding sources of knowledge (Schommer, 1990). Schommer also developed a first paper-and-pencil questionnaire on personal epistemology that has been the most widely used (Hofer & Pintrich, 2002). This type of research also has made a large contribution in empirically identifying the correlations between this construct of personal epistemology and other variables in learning, such as comprehension in text reading, conceptual change, and study strategies (Chan & Elliott, 2004).

Development at Dimensional Levels and Cultural Variations

The number of studies investigating dimensions or components of individuals' personal epistemology still remains limited (Hofer, 2000). There is no consensus between researchers of the field regarding even the number of the dimensions (Pintrich, 2002). Furthermore, in the first place, the boundaries of what we mean by "personal epistemology" remain controversial among researchers (Pintrich, 2002). Undoubtedly the construct requires further clarification in terms of its dimensional structure. In addition, more importantly, very few studies have examined the epistemological development over a period of time at dimensional levels (Schraw & Sinatra, 2004). Studies of epistemological development have been intending to identify individuals' position only at the holistic level. It is empirically identified that individuals transform their epistemological views over a period of time to become more sophisticated in terms of these views. However, this transformation at the dimensional levels is not yet clear.

Although there are many studies of personal epistemology in the United States, research that examined cultural variations is almost nonexistent (Chan & Elliott, 2000, 2002; Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). Chan and Elliott (2000) are one of the first published works investigating this aspect by comparing the dimensional structure reported by Schommer (1990) to that of Chinese students in Hong Kong. The dimension of Omniscient Authority, which was not clearly extracted in Schommer's studies, was very distinctive for these Chinese students. Because they were unable to duplicate Schommer's (1990) results in their later research, Chan and Elliott (2002) argued that "culture is an important variable in the study of epistemological beliefs (p.410)." Clarebout, Elen, Luyten, and Bamps (2001) also used Schommer's 63-item questionnaire to investigate students of higher education institutes in Belgium and the Netherlands. The factor structure identified was different form that of Schommer's (1990). Most recently Karabenick and Moosa (2005) compared Omani (West Asian) and American students in terms of their epistemological beliefs in the sciences. They found several significant differences between these two culturally different groups of students.

This current study addresses these two particular aspects of personal epistemology: (a) individuals' epistemological development at the dimensional levels and (b) cultural variations of the personal epistemology. Regarding the first issue of the epistemological development, two groups of students within in a same university but at different stages of their education, that is, one at the time of enrollment and the

other at the time of graduation, were compared in terms of the their personal epistemology at the dimensional levels. This comparison was an alternative to a longitudinal study, mainly for practical constraints. As far as the second issue is concerned, still only a very few number of studies investigated personal epistemology of Asian students (Chan & Elliott, 2000, 2002; Hofer & Pintrich, 1997). This study is an additional endeavor to examine cultural variations of personal epistemology, investigating Thai university students.

Purposes of the Study

This research investigates students' beliefs about knowledge and knowledge acquisition through questionnaire surveys to two different groups of undergraduate students in a Thai university: (a) first-year students who were about to begin studying in the university and (b) students who were to graduate from the university. First, the structure of students' personal epistemology was identified, and then the first-year students and the graduating students will be compared. The comparisons between the two groups enabled us to evaluate empirically how the students develop epistemologically during the undergraduate education in the university. It was ideal to measure the same group of students at two different times to examine this developmental aspect. In this research, however, these two groups were compared, mainly for practical reasons, considering the many characteristics shared by these groups of students.

To summarize, the objectives of this study were as follows:
(1) To examine the dimensional structure and nature of Thai university students' personal epistemology, that is, beliefs about knowledge and knowledge acquisition;
(2) To examine how these beliefs change (or not change) during a period of undergraduate university education.

Methods

Participants

A total of 3,050 students in a university in Thailand participated in this study. They were composed of two different groups of students: (a) 870 first-year students at the beginning of their first semester, and (b) 2,180 students who had just finished their 4- to 6-year undergraduate programs. They were all of Thai nationality, and they all indicated Thai as their native language. They enrolled in various undergraduate programs in different faculties in a large research university located in the greater Bangkok metropolitan area in Thailand.

The age of the majority of the first-year students (99.2 %) was between 17 and 20 years old, with the mean being 18.2 years old (SD = .803). The most dominant age group was 18 years old (70.4 %). This was followed by 19 years old (20.1 %). In the graduate group, the age was more varied, but the majority (91.8 %) was between 21 and 26 years old. The mean of the graduate group was 23.8 years old (SD = 3.800). The largest age groups was 22 years old (34.8 %), followed by 23 years old (27.2 %) and 24 years old (19.7 %).

Among all these participants, female students were nearly seventy percent. This female dominance was slightly more noticeable in the first-year student group. In terms of their subject major, measured by the faculties where the students were about to study (for the first-year students) and studied (for the graduating students), nursing was the largest group (21.1 %), followed by science (14.4 %), and two separate faculties of medicines (9.0 % and 8.5 %). Most of the students were from either medicine-related disciplines or other science fields. Very few students from humanities or social sciences were included among this group of participants.

Materials

A Thai language version of 39-item questionnaire was developed for this study from two versions of Schommer's epistemology questionnaire. The first one was the middle school version (Schommer-Aikins, Brookhart, & Hutter, 2000). From this middle school version, 29 items were obtained, evaluating the four hypothetical dimensions of personal epistemology: (a) Ability to Learn (ABI), (b) Speed of Learning (SPE), (c) Stability of Knowledge (STA), and (d) Structure of Knowledge (STR). In order for the questionnaire for this study to cover the fifth dimension, (e) Source of Knowledge (SOU), 10 items were retained from Schommer's original version questionnaire (Schommer, 1998)

Schommer's middle school version was selected as a base for several reasons, the main being that the language was simpler than in Schommer's original. The other reason is that this instrument has a fewer number of items than the original 63-item Schommer questionnaire. People in Thailand would generally consider filling out of a questionnaire rather a demanding task. With fewer items, we aimed to achieve a balance of asking enough questions to measure each dimension and not overloading the students.

After the expressions in each item were further simplified by the author, they were translated into Thai by Thai English bilingual speakers. The order of the 39 items was randomized. A total of 23 items were written so that less epistemologically developed students would agree, while the remaining 16 were written so that these students would disagree. The participants were asked to rate these 39 item sentences on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 5 (*strongly agree*) to 1 (*strongly disagree*). In the second part of the questionnaire, demographic questions were also included.

Procedure

The questionnaire was administered in a gathering separately for the first-year and the graduating students. As for the first-year students, the questionnaire papers were distributed during a freshman orientation session that was held at the beginning of the academic year before the classes in the first semester began. Students were given several days before they were to return the filled-out questionnaire to the office of student affairs of the university. The graduating students were asked to fill in the questionnaire during a compulsory meeting prior to their commencement ceremony.

Results

Dimensional Structure

The data was analyzed by a principal component analysis with varimax rotation to investigate the dimensional structure of the participants' personal epistemology. Prior to the analysis, the scale was standardized by recoding (i.e., reversing) the responses so that higher scores always indicate a more epistemologically developed beliefs about knowledge and knowledge acquisition in all the cases. Following the procedures used in Wood and Kardash (2002), the internal consistency of the 39-item scale was computed in the next step. The coefficient alpha was .570, and the item-total correlations ranged from -.254 to .489. Nine statements with negative item-total correlations and seven with item-total correlations less than .100 were all eliminated. Using the remaining 23 items, the internal consistency was again calculated, producing a higher coefficient alpha of .790.

Through a principal component analysis with varimax rotation, using the remaining 23 items, five factors of personal epistemology were extracted. These five factors explained 44.6 percent of the total variance. Cronbach's coefficient alpha for each factor was .755, .519, .453, .446, and .433, respectively. All these five factors had an eignevalue higher than 1, and additional factors would make a relatively small contribution to improve the explanation of the total variance. An inspection of the screen-plot also confirmed this decision. Table 1 represents the five factors and the items constituting each of the five factors. The numbers in the table represent the factor loadings of the items.

Table 1
Dimensional Structure of Thai Students' Personal Epistemology

	Factor loadings				
Items	Factor 1: Nature of Successful Learning	Factor 2: Nature of Knowledge	Factor 3: Speed of Learning	Factor 4: Ability of Learning	Factor 5: Source of Knowledge
38. Successful students understand things quickly. **(SPE+)**	.703				
37. Good students memorize facts. **(STR+)**	.686				
33. Students who are average in school will remain average for the rest of their life. **(ABI+)**	.551				
32. To succeed in school, you should not ask too many questions. **(SOU+)**	.478				
35. You can believe almost everything written in books. **(SOU+)**	.473				
25. An expert is someone who is born smart in something. **(ABI+)**	.465				
21. Working hard on a difficult problem only helps the really	.427				

smart students. (ABI+)					
30. If I am going to understand something, I will understand it the first time I read it. (SPE+)	.671				
7. The best thing about a science course is that most problems have only one right answer. (STR+)		.657			
2. I can rely on the facts in my school textbooks for the rest of my life. (STA+)		.558			
11. Most words have one clear meaning. (STR+)		.530			
19. It is hard to learn from a textbook unless you start at the beginning and learn one chapter at a time. (STR+)		.442			
16. You have to accept an answer from a teacher even if it is confusing. (SOU+)		.420			
27. Reading the textbook twice will not help me learn more. (SPE+)			.724		
36. If I read a textbook chapter a second time, I understand it better. (SPE-)			-.667		
22. If I can not understand something quickly, I will never understand it. (SPE+)			.389		
13. Some people are born smart, and some people are born stupid. (ABI+)				.669	
9. The really smart students don't have to work hard to do well in school. (ABI+)				.614	
8. What you get from a lesson depends on the quality of the teacher. (SOU+)				.407	
15. You will get confused if you try to combine new ideas in a textbook with what you already know. (STR+)				.387	
29. Even advice from experts should be questioned. (SOU-)					.714
28. Thinking about what a textbook says is more important than memorizing what a textbook says. (STR-)					.668
6. If I can't understand something right away, I will keep trying. (SPE-)					.458

The factor structure was complicated. The identified factors all had a combination of items representing two or three different hypothetical dimensions, except the third factor. This made it difficult to label these identified factors. However, these five factors were named as described below, giving more importance to items with higher loadings than those with lower loadings.

Factor 1 was named "Nature of Successful Learning" noticing what was actually evaluated by the first two heavy-loaded item at .703 and .686, respectively. The sentences in these items appeared to describe necessary qualities for the academic success. In addition, the fourth item with a factor loading of .478 also described another characteristic required for the learners' success. Factor 2 was labeled as "Nature of Knowledge" considering that all the five items concerned the knowledge itself. Factor 3 was readily and easily named "Speed of Leaning" as all the three items originated from this dimension. Factor 4 was called as "Ability of Leaning" because of the two prominent items representing this dimension with factor loadings at .669 and .614, respectively. Factor 5 was named "Source of Knowledge" primarily because of the first item with a loading of .714. This decision was supported by the second item, as it also seemed to partially measure the respondents' beliefs about a source of knowledge.

Personal Epistemology and University Education

Overall comparison between first-year and graduates

Mean scores of each identified factor were compared between the first-year students and the graduating students. As explained earlier, the responses of the 24 items that less epistemologically developed students would agree with were recoded (i.e., their scores are reversed) so that all the responses always indicated that the higher the score, the more epistemologically developed the respondent was. This analysis included only participants who rated all the 23 statements covered by the five factors and also only those who indicated his or her gender. The mean scores are described in Table 2.

Table 2
Factor Variations of the Students with Different Periods of Study at the University

Type of students	Male Female Total	Factor 1: Nature of Successful Learning		Factor 2: Nature of Knowledge		Factor 3: Speed of Learning		Factor 4: Ability of Learning		Factor 5: Source of Knowledge	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
First-year	(n = 218)	3.69	.609	3.23	.553	3.88	.714	3.32	.709	4.15	.551
	(n = 605)	3.78	.517	3.28	.557	4.00	.628	3.36	.606	4.04	.557
	(n = 823)	3.75	.543	3.26	.556	3.97	.654	3.34	.634	4.07	.557
Graduates	(n = 697)	3.62	.584	3.36	.625	3.87	.637	3.18	.633	3.98	.578
	(n = 1,360)	3.70	.499	3.30	.539	3.92	.593	3.31	.570	3.89	.562
	(n = 2,057)	3.67	.531	3.32	.571	3.90	.609	3.27	.595	3.92	.569
Total	(n = 915)	3.64	.591	3.33	.611	3.87	.656	3.21	.654	4.02	.575
	(n = 1,965)	3.72	.506	3.30	.545	3.95	.605	3.33	.581	3.94	.564
	(N = 2,880)	3.69	.535	3.31	.567	3.92	.623	3.29	.608	3.96	.569

Two-way between-participants ANOVA was used to investigate whether there was any difference between the two groups of students: first-year students versus graduates, and male students versus female students. In all the five factors except Factor 3 (Speed of Learning), the main effect of whether the student was a first-year or a graduate was significant (Factor 1, F (1, 2876) = 9.614, p = .002, partial η^2 = .003; Factor 2, F (1, 2876) = 9.364, p = .002, partial η^2 = .003; Factor 3, F (1, 2876) = 2.609, p = .106, partial η^2 = .001; Factor 4, F (1, 2876) = 10.628, p = .001, partial η^2 = .004; Factor 5, F (1, 2876) = 37.470, p < .0005, partial η^2 = .013).

There was also a significant main effect of the students' gender in all the factors except Factor 2, Nature of Knowledge (Factor 1, F (1, 2876) = 10.652, p = .001, partial η^2 = .004; Factor 2, F (1, 2876) = .039, p = .844, partial η^2 < .0005; Factor 3, F (1, 2876) = 9.760, p = .002, partial η^2 = .003; Factor 4, F (1, 2876) = 10.387, p = .001, partial η^2 = .004; Factor 5, F (1, 2876) = 15.375, p < .0005, partial η^2 = .005).

The interaction between these two variables (i.e., the students' status type and their gender) was significant only in Factor 2, Nature of Knowledge (Factor 1, F (1, 2876) = .004, p = .947, partial η^2 < .0005; Factor 2, F (1, 2876) = 3.996, p = .046, partial η^2 = .001; Factor 3, F (1, 2876) = 1.904, p = .168, partial η^2 = .001; Factor 4, F (1, 2876) = 3.165, p = .075, partial η^2 = .001; Factor 5, F (1, 2876) = .116, p = .734, partial η^2 < .0005).

Breakdown comparison within the groups of the same subject major

The participants were divided into several categories in terms of their subject major. As a next step of the analysis, the mean scores of the five identified factors were compared between the first-year students and the graduates within each of these subject majors. Only the participants who rated all the 23 statements covered by the five factors and those who indicated his or her major were included in the analysis. In

addition, sport science and management science majors were not included in the analysis here, because there was no first-year student majoring in sports science and only eight first-year students in management science.

Similarly to the previous overall comparison, two-way between-participants ANOVA was used to investigate whether there is any difference between the two groups of students: first-year students versus graduates, and male students versus female students, within the group majoring in the same academic field. The mean scores are represented in Table 4.

The main effect of the student type (i.e., first-year vs. graduates) was rather limited and only significant in the following factors and majors. In terms of Factor 1, the main effect was significant only in two majors: Medicine S, F (1, 258) = 11.394, p = .001, partial η^2 = .042, and Dentistry, F (1, 91) = 4.735, p = .032, partial η^2 = .049. For Factor 2, only in Engineering it was significant, F (1, 207) = 5.409, p = .021, partial η^2 = .025. Factor 3 had a similar result, and it was only in Medicine S, F (1, 258) = 5.129, p = .024, partial η^2 = .019, where the main effect was significant. In Factor 4, the main effect was more observable and it was identified as significant in the four following majors: Medicine S, F (1, 258) = 11.516, p = .001, partial η^2 = .043, Medical Technology, F (1, 195) = 5.799, p = .017, partial η^2 = .029, Public Health, F (1, 192) = 6.142, p = .014, partial η^2 = .031, and Pharmacy, F (1, 99) = 5.947, p = .017, partial η^2 = .057. For Factor 5, it was in five majors where the main effect was significant: Science, F (1, 407) = 4.877, p = .028, partial η^2 = .012, Medicine S, F (1, 258) = 19.662, p < .0005, partial η^2 = .071, Medicine R, F (1, 236) = 10.158, p = .002, partial η^2 = .041, Medical Technology, F (1, 195) = 9.068, p = .003, partial η^2 = .044), and Pharmacy, F (1, 99) = 5.092, p = .026, partial η^2 = .049. In other words, the main effect of the student type was significant in the 13 cases: Science (Factor 5), Medicine S (Factors 1, 3, 4, and 5), Medicine R (Factor 5), Engineering (Factor 2), Medical Technology (Factors 4 and 5), Public Health (Factor 4), Pharmacy (Factors 4 and 5), and Dentistry (Factor 1).

Table 4
Factor Variations of the Students with Different Subject Major at the University

Intended or completed major	First-year Graduates Total	Factor 1: Nature of Successful Learning		Factor 2: Nature of Knowledge		Factor 3: Speed of Learning		Factor 4: Ability of Learning		Factor 5: Source of Knowledge	
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Nursing	(*n* = 119)	3.68	.498	3.16	.497	4.05	.574	3.40	.602	3.94	.559
	(*n* = 488)	3.67	.538	3.23	.538	3.90	.629	3.35	.564	3.96	.557
	(*n* = 607)	3.67	.530	3.22	.531	3.93	.621	3.36	.571	3.96	.557
Science	(*n* = 158)	3.80	.596	3.31	.595	3.92	.703	3.32	.634	4.08	.600
	(*n* = 253)	3.71	.568	3.30	.590	3.89	.627	3.30	.589	3.93	.568
	(*n* = 411)	3.74	.580	3.30	.591	3.90	.657	3.30	.606	3.99	.584
Medicine S	(*n* = 64)	3.97	.398	3.49	.487	4.16	.500	3.46	.575	4.21	.446
	(*n* = 198)	3.72	.476	3.51	.573	3.97	.521	3.19	.613	3.88	.580
	(*n* = 262)	3.78	.470	3.51	.552	4.02	.522	3.25	.615	3.96	.568
Medicine R	(*n* = 84)	3.68	.517	3.32	.568	4.01	.662	3.40	.660	4.04	.549
	(*n* = 156)	3.65	.524	3.47	.549	3.91	.556	3.15	.547	3.87	.557
	(*n* = 240)	3.66	.521	3.42	.560	3.94	.596	3.24	.600	3.93	.559
Engineering	(*n* = 79)	3.49	.684	3.06	.578	3.78	.847	3.09	.729	4.14	.553
	(*n* = 132)	3.67	.562	3.29	.602	3.93	.515	3.09	.636	4.03	.567
	(*n* = 211)	3.61	.615	3.20	.602	3.87	.661	3.09	.671	4.07	.563
Medical technology	(*n* = 60)	3.81	.499	3.25	.438	3.96	.583	3.53	.570	4.23	.457
	(*n* = 139)	3.77	.479	3.37	.548	3.90	.634	3.37	.616	3.99	.549
	(*n* = 199)	3.78	.484	3.34	.519	3.92	.618	3.42	.606	4.06	.533
Public health	(*n* = 32)	3.77	.466	3.28	.601	3.83	.672	3.23	.527	3.96	.597
	(*n* = 164)	3.67	.525	3.35	.533	3.95	.625	3.49	.607	3.86	.594
	(*n* = 196)	3.69	.516	3.34	.543	3.93	.633	3.45	.601	3.88	.594
Pharmacy	(*n* = 28)	3.93	.516	3.49	.537	4.06	.522	3.44	.484	4.17	.501
	(*n* = 75)	3.86	.334	3.50	.450	4.11	.515	3.03	.561	3.83	.552
	(*n* = 103)	3.88	.390	3.50	.473	4.10	.515	3.14	.568	3.92	.557
Dentistry	(*n* = 20)	3.86	.544	3.33	.596	4.08	.724	3.10	.681	4.08	.601
	(*n* = 75)	3.60	.451	3.35	.543	3.92	.553	3.14	.584	3.82	.552
	(*n* = 95)	3.65	.482	3.35	.551	3.95	.593	3.13	.602	3.87	.569
Physical therapy	(*n* = 30)	3.82	.569	3.17	.662	3.82	.598	3.35	.694	4.23	.473
	(*n* = 39)	3.68	.554	3.19	.681	3.91	.596	3.18	.633	3.90	.514
	(*n* = 69)	3.74	.561	3.18	.668	3.87	.594	3.25	.661	4.04	.521
Total	(*n* = 823)	3.75	.543	3.26	.556	3.97	.654	3.34	.634	4.07	.557
	(*n* = 2,057)	3.67	.531	3.32	.571	3.90	.609	3.27	.595	3.92	.569
	(*N* = 2,880)	3.69	.535	3.31	.567	3.92	.623	3.29	.608	3.96	.569

The main effect of the students' gender was more limited and only significant in the following majors and factors, totaling five cases all together. In Factor 1, the main effect was significant for Nursing, F (1, 603) = 5.410, p = .020, partial η^2 = .009), and Engineering, F (1, 207) = 4.560, p = .034, partial η^2 = .022. For Factor 2, a significant main effect was identified in Medicine R, F (1, 236) = 4.218, p = .041, partial η^2 = .018. In terms of Factor 3 and Factor 4, the main effect of the participants' sex was not significant in all the majors. Regarding Factor 5, in Medicine S, F (1, 258) = 9.556, p = .002, partial η^2 = .036, and Medicine R, F (1, 236) = 4.879, p

= .028, partial η^2 = .020, the main effect was significant. To summarize, the main effect of the students' gender was significant in the four faculties: Nursing (Factor 1), Medicine S (Factor 5), Medicine R (Factors 2 and 5), and Engineering (Factor 1).

The interaction between these two variables (i.e., the students' status type and their gender) was significant in three factors: Factor 2, Factor 4, and Factor 5. In terms of Factor 2, the interaction was significant in Physical Therapy, F (1, 65) = 4.255, p = .043, partial η^2 = .061. For Factor 4 in two majors the interaction was significant: Nursing, F (1, 603) = 5.006, p = .026, partial η^2 = .008, and Medical Technology, F (1, 195) = 6.736, p = .010, partial η^2 = .033. For Factor 5, it was in Physical Therapy that the interaction was significant, F (1, 65) = 4.128, p = .046, partial η^2 = .060. In other words, the interaction was significant in the following three majors: Nursing (Factor 4), Medical Technology (Factor 4), and Physical Therapy (Factors 2 and 5).

Discussions and Conclusions

Findings of the Study

A five-factor structure was identified for the personal epistemology of the Thai university students. The five factors were labeled as follows: Factor 1, Nature of Successful Learning; Factor 2, Nature of Knowledge; Factor 3, Speed of Learning; Factor 4, Ability of Learning; Factor 5, Source of Knowledge. In four out of these five factors, the first-year students were significantly different from the students who had just graduated. The differences between the male and female students were also significant in four out of the five factors. The discrepancies between the first-year students and the graduates were more noticeable in some majors than others. In other words, the gaps of the epistemological development between the first-year students and the graduates varied among students in different faculties. Differences between the male and female students within the same faculty were also significant for some faculties, but it was much more limited than the differences between the first-year students and the graduating students.

Dimensional Structure

The first finding appears to endorse Schommer's conceptual framework of a multidimensional system of personal epistemology. Yet the identified factor structure was complicated. Within one factor, items representing two or three different conceptual dimensions loaded together. Nevertheless, this identified dimensional structure provided a global picture of personal epistemology held by Thai university students.

The epistemology structure identified in this study, however, was different from what has been reported by the previous studies of Thai students in terms of both the number of factors and their compositions. Fujiwara and Phillips (2006a, 2006b) identified a four-factor structure and a three-factor structure, respectively, for Thai university students. However, this difference could be attributed to a methodological inconsistency. They used a different measurement instrument from this study. Their questionnaire had 29 items covering only four of the five hypothetical dimensions proposed by Schommer. Secondly, the items grouped in the factors were also different

from both of these two past works by Fujiwara and Phillips (2006a, 2006b). The compositions of each factor were also different from that of Schommer-Aikins, Brookhart, and Hutter (2000), that used the similar questionnaire, although the participants were middle school American students, not university students. These findings were difficult to compare with Chan and Elliott (2000, 2004), mainly because of the different questionnaires used in their studies.

Some methodological problems were also encountered concerning the measurement instrument. The most critical one is about the composition of the factors. As noted earlier, there was a convergence of the items representing different conceptual dimensions into the factors. This problem was encountered not only in Fujiwara and Phillips (2006a, 2006b) investigating Thai, but also in Chan and Elliott (2000) investigating Hong Kong Chinese students. The measurement instruments used in these three studies were different from this study. These results would imply inter-related rather than independent nature of the dimensions of personal epistemology. Additionally, they are likely to strengthen Chan and Elliott's (2002) claim that Schommer's questionnaire is not appropriate to measure participants in non-American cultural contexts.

Regarding the measurement instrument, another issue was also noticed in this study, as in Fujiwara and Phillips (2006a, 2006b). Among the items with statements worded from a more epistemologically developed point of view (e.g., "Studying means getting the big ideas from the textbook rather than the details."), only four out of 16 remained usable in the final analyses. Other 12 items in this category were all eliminated before the principal component analysis, due to their negative or very low item-total correlations. This problem seems to be persistent across different participants of Thai university students.

Considering that the questionnaire used in this study was translated into Thai from the items in Schommmer's two versions, it is plausible that the measurement instrument might have some deficiencies in itself. Some concerns regarding Schommer's instrument were already raised by Hofer and Pintrich (1997), claiming that expressions in some of the item statements are ambiguous and not clear about what they are to measure.

Epistemological Development

This study empirically observed the significant differences between the two groups of university students at different stages of their undergraduate student life in terms of their personal epistemological development, not as the holistic stage or position, but at the dimensional levels. All the participants were studying at the same university. The two groups were considered as comparable, sharing the similarities in various aspects, but differing only in terms of the period of time already spent in the university. Consequently, it is very likely that these differences are attributable to their university experiences. This result tends to indicate that university education could have an effect on some aspects of personal epistemological development.

However, these results are principally opposite from what has been expected. In the three out of the four factors where the differences between the first-year and the graduates were identified significant, the first-year scored higher than the graduates.

Only in Factor 2 (Nature of Knowledge), the graduates recorded higher than the first-year students. Considering the possible effects that undergraduate education might produce, these results are surprising and very different from what the authors speculated before the analyses of the data.

One plausible explanation would be addressed to the measurement instrument developed and used for this current study. As it was already pointed above, it might be possible that the items in the questionnaire did not measure what they were to measure. Alternatively, it is still possible that the results could indicate the actual level of the students' epistemological development. The personal epistemology that Schommer's questionnaire is trying to measure is certainly reflections of American cultural values. These perspectives could be regarded in a different manner in Asian contexts.

Other important aspects necessary to consider is the supposition about the participants' characteristics. The first-year student participants in this study were considered "comparable" to the students graduating from the undergraduate programs at the university where these first-year students were going to study. This supposition was mainly and simply based on the fact that they were all accepted by the same faculty in the same university as undergraduate students possibly under the same admission policies and practices. However, this might not guarantee that the first-year and graduate samples were comparable. First, even if potentially the students in these two categories are comparable, the participants in this study might not. The first-year student sample was taken from only those who study in campuses in Bangkok metropolitan area only, but the graduate sample included the students graduating from the university not only in the metropolitan campuses, but also provincial campuses.

The results from the analyses conducted at faculty level might provide an additional evidence for this discussion. Among the 13 cases where the difference between the first-year and the graduates was significant, it was in only two cases that the graduates scored higher than the first-year students (one case in Factor 2, and one case in Factor 4). In short, the analyses by faculty produced similar results to the holistic group analyses. The results from the breakdown analyses seem to support the discussions above regarding the issues about the validity of the measurement instrument and the comparability of the two groups of the participants of the study.

Implications and Recommendations for Future Research

The research results provided a global picture of the dimensional structure of personal epistemology of Thai university students. In addition, they also suggested that undergraduate university education has an influence on the students in developing their epistemological viewpoints in certain aspects. Still, many issues remain to be addressed in the future studies of individuals' personal epistemology.

First, it is very crucial for any further empirical study to develop a valid and reliable measurement instrument with satisfactory psychometric properties, as Chan and Elliott's (2002) questionnaire for Hong Kong Chinese students. This research once again pointed some limitations of Schommer's epistemology questionnaire. Without doubt, this methodological issue is among the most urgent to be addressed. Certainly, longitudinal studies following the same group of students over a 4- to 6-

year undergraduate period will provide more accurate pictures of the epistemology development. They will also clarify the relationships between the students' subject major and their personal epistemology. Although it seems that epistemological development is varying among different majors, we know still little about their relations. They need further empirical exploration. Empirical research regarding Thai students with narrower scopes of study investigating more discipline-specific epistemology might also complement the domain-general studies, such as epistemological beliefs regarding mathematics, science, and foreign language. All these further endeavors of empirical discovery will undoubtedly lead to better understandings and clarification about how students epistemologically develop during their undergraduate study period at the dimensional levels.

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

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SESSION 2
MANIFESTATIONS OF HARMONY

Chairperson: Dr.Marja-Leena Heikkila-Horn

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Paper 1 Trading Spaces: An Analysis of The Immigrant Communities and Their Compromise for Harmony in Selected K.S. Maniam's Fiction

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"What better way to know the country than to hunt down a beast that knows it well?"

(Haunting the Tiger, 1996)

This paper examines the representations of the nation in selected short stories and novels by K.S. Maniam, a prominent writer of Malaysian Literature in English. The issues addressed in these texts reflect prevailing socio-political concerns implicated in identity construction among immigrant communities and their descendants in, not only the past, but also present-day Malaysia. This paper aims to unravel these concerns to reveal the politics of power and discourse in a multi-cultural society, which ultimately transforms the constructs of identity and nation, through the analysis of these literary texts. The quotation above is an illustration of the way Maniam has constructed the issue of an immigrant's search for a sense of belonging to an adopted land in his short story "Haunting the Tiger". In this instance, the 'beast', namely the tiger, is synonymous to the territory it roams. As a writer of Indian origin, Maniam's perspective is intricately carved by multiple worldviews, his own Hindu spirituality and mythology as well as those of the other inhabitants of Malaysia. For here, the said beast is significant to the people of his homeland, Malaysia, and to those of India, the land of his grandparents. Hence, in the said story, why does the protagonist, born of immigrant parents, have to choose between two 'beasts' to claim his place in the land? Can he not amalgamate both to remain in the land as one? But can a hybrid beast be acceptable to everyone? Or can two 'beasts' occupy one space and co-exist peacefully? Or does one have to compromise for the other? If so, then which? These are among the socio-political concerns of immigrant communities that contribute towards the construction of a 'harmonious' nationhood which K.S. Maniam addresses through his literariness.

INTRODUCTION

"Nation-building is a process of identity creation, of developing and nurturing a 'sense of a nation' which people can relate to, and which helps to distinguish them from other groups" (Hng Hung Yong, 1998: 22). What then is the role of narrative genres, specifically the short story and the novel, in shaping the imagined community that is called the nation? Can the narrative capture the essence of that nation? How does the writer articulate a sense of national identity? What determines the process of imaging and articulating of the nation? Does the imagining of a particular nation alter depending on the gender of the person whose voice we hear? Or is race a factor too? Are the concerns of members of the nation gender biased? Does a woman's voice play a role in this imagining or is it a purely male narrative project? Are compromises necessary for a multi-cultural society, such as Malaysia, to achieve unity and

harmony? These are several pertinent questions for an endeavor that seeks to examine a writer's attempt at imagining a nation through his literariness.

Literature is an important conduit for nation-building as literature in Malaysia is not just valued for its aesthetic qualities; it is also used as a tool for various pedagogical, political or ideological purposes. In Malaysia, literature has always been seen as purposeful. Muhammad Hj. Salleh (1998:8) asserts that literature has always been recognised and fully utilised as a medium of moral and religious instruction in this region – as it was a "powerful tool of education, secular or moral". Legends, folktales and even the *wayang kulit* have for many generations been utilised to educate and integrate the young into the community. This sense of 'educating' could also be discerned in the 'manifesto' of the ASAS 50 writers, which declared that art/literature is not for art's sake but for society/the people. The writers assert that they write with a purpose – to show, to entertain, to educate, to make the reader realise something about themselves or the society they live in, etc. During the pre-independence period, for example, literature was utilised by local journalists/writers to open the eyes of the Malay population, to show them what was not right with their society, and how backward they were compared to the other races in the country. Literature had also been used in anti-colonialist nationalism; it became an important tool in the fight to free the country from colonialists, to rally the people to the idea of an independent nation - its people free to chart their own destiny.

Malaysia is a country that is home to cultural diversity, the result of both international and intra-national migratory flows. These have brought about changes to the levels of mobility in the population, complexity in the spatial patterning and diversity of the groups involved (Hugo, 1996). The experiences of Malaysia are indeed shared by the other vast and diverse regions that make up Asia. In fact, it has been noted "migrations and mobilities in and out of Asia today often no longer take the form of permanent ruptures, uprooting and settlement, but are more likely to be transient and complex, ridden with disruptions, detours and multiple destinations" (Yeoh et al 2005: 1). With migration at the hub of the population growth, how does this then affect the sense of belonging that one has to the new community that he or she has learn to accept? There have been claims from certain sectors about the difficulties in carving out that nation called Malaysia out of the various cultural and religious traditions that exist in the country, notwithstanding the colonial heritage left behind by the British. This is what this paper aims to examine, namely the representations of the nation as reflected in selected short stories and novels by K.S. Maniam, a prominent writer of Malaysian Literature in English. The issues addressed in these texts reflect prevailing socio-political concerns implicated in identity construction among immigrant communities and their descendants in, not only the past, but also present-day Malaysia. This paper aims to unravel these concerns to reveal the politics of power and discourse in a multi-cultural society, which ultimately transforms the constructs of identity and nation. In focus will be the coping strategies employed by these immigrants their attempts to understand and accommodate themselves and others in a new land.

K.S. Maniam, born on 4 March 1942, was named Subramaniam Krisnan; this is an auspicious name indeed for they are names of the Indian gods. He received the Raja Rao Award for his Outstanding Contribution to the Literature of the South Indian Diaspora in New Delhi in 2000. The issue of identity in Malaysia's multi-

ethnic society is prevalent in many of his works. He explores the notion of Malaysianness; the question of cultural identity in an immigrant society prevails in his works. For example, his first novel, *The Return* (1981), said to be autobiographical, narrates the story of a third-generation Indian man attempting to make sense of life between cultures in Malaya. His anthologies include *Plot, The Aborting, Parables and Other Stories* (1989) as well as *Arriving and Other Stories* (1995). The two other novels are *In a Far Country* (1993) and *Between Lives* (2003). His most recent publication is an anthology of short stories, *Faced Out* (2004). The voices of his protagonists provide a Tamil Indian perspective on Malaysia. These voices represent the diasporic who find themselves at a crossroad where past rituals and beliefs handed down the generations meet with local cultures, beliefs and ways of life. There is then a need for survival. Does one have to turn one's back on one path in order to go down the other road? How does one choose? Or rather does one have to choose? Is there only one way to a destination? Can't there be more than one route towards a destiny? Because choosing one means having to turn away from another and that could create a heart wrenching sense of betrayal.

'Nation', 'nationhood' and 'nation building' are terms that are repeatedly used in this paper. What then is a nation? This is indeed a subjective concept that has more than one definition. In *Nation and Narration*, Homi Bhabha states that nations are like narration in that they should be read and explored through "textual strategies, metaphoric displacements, subtexts and figurative stratagems" (1992: 2). Bhabha defines "nation" as an imaginary, ambivalent construction, replete with cultural temporality that inevitably makes it an unstable social reality. Together with Anderson, he urges us to "encounter the nation as it is written" in the narrative culture of the realist novel (ibid: 2). For Anderson, the nation is defined as an "imagined community" that is socially constructed by people who "will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion" (Anderson 1991: 6). He goes on to say that the nation is always "conceived as a deep, horizontal comradeship; it has the ability to rouse unlike peoples in dramatically unlike conditions in an impassioned chorus of voluntary co-operation and sacrifice" (cited in Fernandez 2007: 9). Meanwhile, Abdul Rahman Embong (1999) is certain that a nation is not merely an aggregate of peoples sharing the same socio-political space, but rather it is one tied together by some fate of a shared destiny. A nation then is something subjectively imagined, desired and felt; it has to be "alive in the subjective realm of the people's psyche and passed down from one generation to the other" (cited in Fernandez 2007: 14).

THE INDIAN DIASPORA IN MALAYSIA

Shanthini Pillai (2007) affirms there are "threads of continuity between the pioneer Indian immigrant community that lived and worked in Malaya and the present Malaysian Indian community" (x). These threads are neither fragile nor inconsequential; in fact, it could be argued that "they are in many senses the very fibre of the politics of identity of the Indian community in Malaysia, as there was an enormity in the role that the early migrants played in carving the niche for an overseas Indian to exist on Malayan soil" (ibid, x). The presence of this group of migrant workers can be found in colonial narratives of Malaya, in which their representation have been subordinated to colonial ideological discourses. There they remain voiceless, nameless, meek and subdued; they have been constructed to remain perpetually indebted to the colonial master. However, a new perspective is given through K.S. Maniam's narratives; indeed he brings to life the concerns of the Indian community in Malaysia. His is indeed the voice to include as he emerges from the said Indian immigrant community of Malaya.

It is indeed natural for a writer to write about his own community. Maniam, too, consents to this perspective:

> Being of Malaysian Indian origin myself, it seems natural that I write about my own community. It is commonly accepted that a writer writes about what he knows best. That material would stem from his immediate family background, society outside his family & his educational background. (p263)

In his articulation of the Indian experience in Malaysia, he ends up having to confront the polemics of nationhood. Yet, Maniam has no answers available for questions that the migrants tend to ask themselves:

> The migrant consciousness registers loss; the dominant cultural consciousness celebrates its sense of supremacy. The migrant feels bereft only after he has gone through the journey of recollection and evaluation; the indigenous consciousness rests in the ritualistically recalled sense of assurance. (x).

Here, what come to mind is the term *transculturation*, which was coined in the 1940s by a sociologist called Fernando Oritz, illustrates the course by which the colonised choose and select aspects of the dominant culture that they will assume (Pratt 1999). Transculturation distinguishes the supremacy of the subordinate culture to create its own account of the dominant culture (ibid). In postcolonial theory, the term is used to refer to the means by which subordinated or marginalized groups select and invent from materials transmitted to them by a dominant culture. The Indians and other immigrant communities in Malaysia have been subordinated by the dominant presence of the Malays. Hence, in this instance, transcultural productions result in a changed identity in the individual, creating new cultural experiences for these individuals, experiences that differ from the experiences they encounter in their homeland.

The Indian community in Malaysia has sometimes been unfairly marginalized. For example, in the Introduction to *Imperial Policy and Southeast Asian Nationalism 1930-1957*, the editors talked about nationalism in Malaysia as the "emergence of an ethnic Malay nationalism that, through an alliance of convenience with the Chinese community, has dominated the country since" (Antlov and Tonnesson 1995: 13). No mention is made about the contributions of the Indian community to the struggle for national independence; in this instance, the existence of the Indian community has been erased from any significance at all. Maniam believes that the articulation of the Indian voice can prevent marginalization of the concerns of the community:

> In a multiracial country, the chances are that the ignored realities will remain ignored if the writer does not probe deeper into its cultures and the interfaces of cultures. ...There is the risk of treading on cultural sensitivities; there is the risk of political persecution if he so much as criticizes the establishment. The greatest risk of all is being coerced into presenting a jaundiced view of society and the quality of life it embraces or supports. The coercion can come from political image-makers, communal purists and cultural loyalists. When faced with such as situation he has to have the courage to accept the view that 'writers among the most intellectually anarchic, most representative, most probing of artists.'" (xi) – Toni Morrison, Playing in the Dark: Whiteness and the Literary Imagination, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1992, 15).

In a multi-racial society such as the one in Malaysia, it is not feasible or safe to encourage communal isolation and development. For Maniam, this is "denying the facts of existence and a writer cannot, if he is to be faithful to his vocation, speak from a false, culturally biased viewpoint" (Quayum, 265).

In 1990, there were 1.5 million ethnic Indians in Malaysia, some 8 percent of the country's population. The immigrant generation had come for a better future and, as the rest of the other citizens the descendants aspire to be members of the Malaysian nation. A nation is one that has been defined as "a historically consolidated community of people, with a common territory, sharing a common economic activity, with a common political will, name and identity" ( ). As of today, there is still no one definition that has been accepted for use to define the Malaysian nationhood; it is still a polemic agenda with many sides contributing to the argument. To achieve harmony and prosperity for all in the country, to bring together all the different people in Malaysia, the ruling government designed a framework for nation building by formulating the RUKUNEGARA to build unity in Malaysia's multicultural society. Officially introduced on 31 August 1970, which is more than a year after the racial riots of 13 May 1969, when tensions were high, insurrections were breaking out intermittently, cars were set afire and shops were looted. The five principles enshrined in the 'National Ideology' of the RUKUNEGARA aims to strengthen national unity:

> We, her people, pledge our united efforts to attain these ends guided by these principles:
>
> - Belief in God
> - Loyalty to King & Country
> - Supremacy of the Constitution

- Rule of Law
- Mutual Respect & Morality

This is the first nation-building framework to have been constructed by the National Coalition policy-makers in Malaysia. Clearly here, what A.B. Shamsul (1996) claims as the three main pillars of Malayness, namely language (*bahasa*), religion (*agama*) and royalty (*raja*), have been adopted as the framework for instilling unity among the many races in Malaysia.

Literary texts are cultural artifacts that present "the interplay of discourses, the web of social meanings, operating in the time and place in which the text was written" (Tyson 1999: 288). In his Preface to his anthology, Maniam claims his writing is the result of his contemplations of living in Malaysia:

> "Writing the first story is an exciting encounter with the primeval energies of creativity. As the stories continue to come from you, the questioning, even skeptical, consciousness is awakened. The heady experience of floundering about in the darkness of uncertainty is replaced, perhaps not completely, by a more disciplined attitude. ... It put me in touch with my creative fires and, more importantly, it revealed to me the enormous responsibility a writer is burdened with when producing a piece of fiction. ...These inner workings of the writer's self, I grasped, were necessary in realizing the infinite variations of the relationships the intuitive imagination can have with the world it is compelled to contemplate."
>
> (1996: ix).

Maniam advocates the crucial role literature plays in articulating new strategies, perspectives and approaches to living in a multicultural national setting. He is well-recognized as the leading voice of the Indian diaspora in Malaysia. His works suggest that national and cultural identity is not fixed but always evolving; it has to in order to adapt to its people and society. His themes are expressed in language rich in imagery and symbolism. In fact, his works are imbued with a search for self and a longing for a sense of rootedness to the land. Insights for his protagonists come from the past experiences, especially from immigrant forefathers or foremothers. For example, in the short story "The Kling-Kling Woman", to be someone new and lead a new way of life Sumathi, a fourth generation immigrant descendant, makes a pact with herself:

> She would never be like her mother! She would never wear the *pottu* dot on her forehead. She wouldn't sit in that dumb way, waiting for *her* husband to come back; sit there hoping he would come back to her, and finally praying he would come back to the family. ... Instead for the rest of her life, she would follow her mother about. Working or resting, to taunt her away from subservience. (2003: 120)

Sumathi instead gets inspiration from her great-grandmother, the matriarch of the family, "one of those rare young women who, country-born and country-bred, suddenly realized there was more to life than following the time-honored tradition of

being given in marriage to some young man, bearing children, serving her lord and master, bringing up her children, worrying about sickness and death, and receiving in return for the fulfillment of her last days on earth, the tidings of the marriages of her grandsons and granddaughters" (ibid: 120). Hence, this female Abraham leaves her homeland to come to Malaya as a railroad worker.

Maniam's protagonists are portrayed as alienated selves faced with the complexities of life as they attempt to make sense of the adopted lands of their fathers. Their stories are always central to the concerns of Maniam's narratives. There is always that inchoate need for rootedness which is stemmed by the conflicts in identity between first-generation and second-generation immigrants. Their individuality is nonetheless compromised by the repressive social system of their forefathers not necessarily left behind in India. He attempts also to evaluate ethnic traditions and redefine inherited social and psychological backgrounds in the multicultural and pluralistic postmodern Malaysian context. His is a culture that is vital and hybrid.

Maniam's short stories are "deeply informed by the dynamics of diaspora experience" (http://www.samvadindia.com/si-award2000.htm). They depict the trauma and losses that besiege the individual undergoing cultural, linguistic, geographic and temporal displacement. Critics have written about his early stories, "Ratnamuni", "The Third Child" and "Removal in Pasir Panjang" as having succeeded in capturing "the nuances of disaporic Indian life, replete with its fears, failures and feelings of betrayal as its members cling desperately to familiar, long-ago rituals that are fast losing their currency in the new cultural location" (ibid). This paper explores the manner in which the migrant protagonist negotiates with an evolving identity and a sense of self under transcultural circumstances in the new land, which is usually bound up with the homeland of forefathers; the journey in the new land and the struggle to establish a sense of belonging to the adopted country.

The complexity of migration is that it cuts across class, ethnicity and gender. Many of Maniam's protagonists are female. Why is this so? What is crucial, however, is the fact that in migration, one has to reconsider the conceptual relations between 'mobility' and 'space', socio-political and economic impacts of "thickening translocal interconnections between places, as well as the implications for identity, citizenship and notions of 'home' (Yeoh et al 2005: 1). For example, in his short story, "The Kling-Kling Woman", the protagonist is a female railroad worker who has to toil together with the other male workers. Clearing the jungle is only part of the challenges she and other female workers have had to face; more come from having to fend off unwanted attention from not only the other workers but also the white superiors. Disparaging remarks, sexual advances and less pay are among the discriminating gender biases that she and her sisters have had to receive.

MIGRANTHOOD AND THE SEARCH FOR HOME

In *Writing Diaspora*, Hall proposes two questions regarding the notion of migranthood that every migrant will have to face at some point in his or her life:

> The classic question which every migrant faces are two-fold: "Why are you here?" and "When are you going home?" No migrant ever knows the answer to the second question until asked. Only then does she or he know that, really, in the deep sense, she/he's never going back. Migration is a one-way trip. There's no "home" to go back to. There never was.
>
> (Chow 1993: 142)

For the hundreds of thousands of immigrants to the many imperial shores, the answer to the second question would inevitably be the quest for a better life. In another paper on a study on the protagonist's search for self in Maniam's *The Return* (1981), this writer focuses on the exodus that "deals with the diaspora of the people from the lower Gangetic Plains of sub-continent India which began massively after the British-claimed founding of Penang in 1786" (Noraini Md. Yusof 2000: 169). The journey of immigration involves embarkation and disembarkation at ports from the point of departure to the point of arrival. There is also the "coolie contract, that transcript that was to govern their lives for many years" in Malaya (Pillai 2007: xi). The document defines the confining structures that framed the livelihood of these workers. These indentured laborers then had to undertake long voyages to reach a destiny that involves hard labour in roadwork or plantation. Besides pushed away from their homeland by natural factors, including famine and drought, unnatural factors such as a rigid social hierarchy that disadvantaged their forefathers, themselves and their future generations, these workers were also pulled by colonial incentives and organized immigration strategies. The dangled carrot was the promise of prosperity. Chow asserts the "migranthood has a deterritorialized mode, a form of 'interference' – the crossing of borders and obstacles" (1993).

Migranthood and its socio-political consequences are one of the issues addressed by Maniam. In the short story, "Arriving", immigration issues become pertinent to a society that distinguishes between 'immigrant' and 'son of the soil'; this raises the all important question of when such labeling will end. After how many generations will the 'immigrant' stain absolve itself? Or is the stain perpetually inherited from one generation to the next? Krishnan, the protagonist in the story, is traumatized when a good friend, Mat, calls him *pendatang*, an immigrant:

> He didn't mean that, he told himself. We've known each other for too long. *Pendatang*! Only politicians campaigning for votes used that word. Not always. Some ministers had gone up to the platform to discourage its use. These people are not *pendatangs*. Their great grandfathers were *pendatangs*. Some of their grandfathers were *pendatangs*. Their fathers were not *pendatangs*. They're not *pendatangs*. The minister has spoken angrily, heatedly. (2003: 122)

The context of the story implicates the consequences of colonial immigrant policies. It involves conflicting definitions to notions of 'arriving' and 'belonging' – of coming to terms with a sense of nationhood, of belonging to the land and its people. It also depicts the difference in perspectives between the two men on who is *pendatang* and who is not. Krishnan regards himself as belonging to the land and almost equal to the natives even though he is the descendant of immigrants from India. Unfortunately, in the eyes of Mat, there is an invisible gap that still distinguishes between native and non-native.

The story also triggers a sense of discontent; the question is what the source of the discontent is. Can a resolution lead to an understanding of a self? For example, find answers to these questions: Who am I? What am I? What is my relationship with this land? Or the people? The protagonist questions the definition of the word *pendatang*, "Arrivals? Illegals?" (ibid, 123). In his mind, everyone is a *pendatang* at one time:

> Then, suddenly, their minds cannot repel anything, not the shadows, not the countries that come hurtling at them through time. The fear they have held on to leaves them. The boundary of their self-centered consciousness, breaks, and releases them into the continuum of a new awareness. And the people come through the centuries, their clothes patchy with history but their faces aglow with abstraction, aglow with enigmatic wholeness. Krishnan and Mat are specks of fascination in the tide of wholeness.
>
> And as specks of unenclosed awareness they flow along the banks of time, recognizing here a primeval adventurer, there an Alexander outdistancing their native lands; there is Buddha in his bubble of meditation and further down the Greek sages wrapped up in their own wisdom. Riding the time cells, they go past the cataclysm of nations at war, cultures in conflict and come to their own histories and see the conquistadors bringing their ships and their ways of living to the country's shores. There is no stopping time and soon Mr. Cuthbert come into their vision, puny and defeated, his personal history in tatters but his spirit shining through to the future. Then Mat and Krishnan come face-to-face with the figure of a man, historyless, moving on the current of discovery and when they look behind him there is nothing; when they look where he is looking there is a swirling mist of everything. (130)

The discontent, or rather disenchantment, is that which is referred to as the result of the 'myth' of the nation. It is the consequence of marginalization – when the minority feels they are to be sidelined from the mainstream. Krishnan's parents felt it and now he too feels it:

> Of late, he has been forced into thought by his disgruntled parents: they want to return to the country from which they came.
> "They can give up this land for a life they've known,' he thinks. "But what do I have to give up?"
>
> (p110)

Cheah Boon Kheng (2002: 235) asserts that nation building in Malaysia is based on the theme of making and sharing of the Malaysian nation among its multi-ethnic citizens. He claims that the willingness of the Malays and other *bumiputeras* (sons of the soil, or indigenous peoples) to share their notion and membership of their "Malay land" and "native lands" in the Malay peninsula and in the Borneo states of Sabah and Sarawak, respectively with each other and with other ethnic communities who have migrated from India, China, the Middle East and the countries of Southeast Asia is the starting point of nation building in Malaysia. The significance of land and having possession of it are addressed in all three of Maniam's novels – *The Return*, *In A Far Country* (1993) and *Between Lives* (2003) – though in various ways.

IDENTITY CONSTRUCTION AMONG IMMIGRANT COMMUNITIES

> *"What better way to know the country than to hunt down a beast that knows it well?"*
>
> ("Haunting the Tiger", 1996)

The quotation above is an illustration of the way Maniam has constructed the issue of an immigrant's search for a sense of belonging to an adopted land in his short story "Haunting the Tiger". In this instance, the 'beast', namely the tiger, is synonymous to the territory it roams. As a writer of Indian origin, Maniam's perspective is intricately carved by multiple worldviews, his own Hindu spirituality and mythology as well as those of the other inhabitants of Malaysia. For here, the said beast is significant to the people of his homeland, Malaysia, and to those of India, the land of his grandparents. Hence, in the said story, why does the protagonist, born of immigrant parents, have to choose between two 'beasts' to claim his place in the land? Can he not amalgamate both to remain in the land as one? But can a hybrid beast be acceptable to everyone? Or can two 'beasts' occupy one space and co-exist peacefully? Or does one have to compromise for the other? If so, then which? These are among the socio-political concerns of immigrant communities that contribute towards the construction of a 'harmonious' nationhood which K.S. Maniam addresses through his literariness.

When talking about his story, "Haunting the Tiger", Maniam claims it "landscapes the interface between a dominant and a migrant culture. What is the relationship between these two cultures? What does it feel to give up one's own cultural heritage for the sake of being assimilated into the society of the adopted country?" (xi). His use of the tiger metaphor raises the question of whether a sense of belonging can be nurtured. Or is the bond naturally inherent in the people? Of concern here is the issue of national politics; to enforce social order and camaraderie among the different people, imposition of 'selected' will upon others has had to be recourse. Assimilation is necessary in nation building. For the protagonist, Muthu, he faces a choice of either identifying with the land in the way of the tiger or the chameleon. He is faced with a diasporic dilemma. To follow the tiger is the way that is continual and ritualistic immersion into the spirit of the land. The way of the chameleon is the blending into whatever economic, intellectual and social landscapes that are available. Faced with such a crossroad, which can Muthu choose?

The nation needs to be crafted through conscious planning and effort; this is the foundation for development of the Malaysian National Agenda that is to homogenize society. The identity construction of the nation involves exploration and experimentation. Maniam's protagonists question themselves consciously or otherwise; questions such as "Who are we?" and "Where do we belong?", can sometimes persist in haunting some people. What is the nature of the human spirit when it is conditioned by diaspora, migration, displacement and exile? To belong to a nation means to be connected to a community's way of life, their traditions and social practices, including their rituals and myths. Members of the community have to believe in these aspects. Notions of the other, however, can hamper the unity of the community, especially when the way of life, tradition, rituals and myths are diverse. In "Haunting the Tiger", the beast comes to symbolize the cultural elements of the land; to 'know' the tiger is to know the land and be one with it:

> ...Zulkifli seems to blend into the landscape. 'I'm the chameleon!' Muthu protests within himself. He is more than determined now to wrest the sight of the tiger out of the man.
> "I know what's wrong," Zulkifli says. "There's something foreign to the tiger's nose. He won't show himself until the smells are gone."
> Zulkifli fixes Muthu with a surveying stare. Muthu becomes nervous.
> "What smells?" he says.
> "Mind and body smells," Zulkifli says.
> Muthu is offended and turns away from him. Not in the way you can't go near a person," Zulkifli says confronting Muthu. "The clothes you wear, the thoughts you think. Where do they come from?"
> "They are just clothes and ideas," Muthu says.
> "They must fit into the place where the tiger lives."
> "Why must they fit in?" Muthu says. "I only want to break out from my father's hold on me."
> "So you brought a purpose with you?" Zulkifli says. "And a way of thinking. How can you get into the tiger's stripes and spirit?"
>
> (119-120)

In the extract above, the issue of assimilating to the 'local' (hence, recognizable by the tiger) is addressed by Maniam. It raises the issue to having to 'fit into the pace where the tiger lives' that is the land in order to belong. For Zulkifli, the

solution is easy: Muthu will have to shed his clothes and way of thinking so as to claim to be one with the tiger. But for Muthu, shedding his clothes means more than that. It means having to shed his own identity. That is the price of his assimilation.

Relevant also to the question of identity in a multi-cultural land is a post-modernist concept where "different worlds, cultures and ontologies are juxtaposed, superimposed, fragmented, restructured and wrought together in an impossible space," which Foucault calls "heteropoia" (Sardar 1998: 152). In such a space an implosion of different worlds occurs, where immigrants encounter the indigenous of the land. Immigrants are viewed as the Other, and in such an unrealizable space "the historical or contemporary reality of the Other becomes meaningless, a sense of location disappears, issues of identity evaporate and the Other is presented as an empty vessel into which can be poured the desires and concerns of the west" (ibid).

MULTI-ETHNIC COMMUNITIES AND A HARMONIOUS NATIONHOOD

Can a pluralistic society achieve unity? Fernandez (2004) believes that "harmony, amity and fraternity in a multi-racial society can be experienced not through mutual exclusive views, religious stubbornness, and forced assimilation of races, but through tolerance, sensitivity, and intended appreciation of the values of all races" (5). Understanding, love, mutual respect, integration of races are contributing elements to harmony while extremism, ultra-radical, racial and religious views are not. Different views have to be accommodated for the sake of promoting fellowship and peace. Achieving harmony means resisting ideals that are dehumanizing and despiritualizing; each ethnic group has to be willing to accommodate each other so as to foster a harmonious relationship with one another.

What is vital for nation building is the elements of 'adaptation' and 'adjustment', not just for the Indian immigrant community and their descendants but also all the other races living in Malaysia. Maniam has this to say regarding the matter of the diasporic concern:

> Just as the migrant has continually to adopt an accommodative sense and hybridize his approach to life in the new country, so too the exile-at-home. The latter, somewhat like the chameleon, seeks to inhabit, simultaneously, different intellectual, cultural and imaginative spaces. He is not only aware of his own culture but also of the cultures around him and of those inherited through his education and reading. He therefore occupies several cultural spaces just as he does several imaginative spaces; and add to this his tendency to expose himself to and assimilate various forms of philosophical and literary discourses and you have an almost complete profile of what I would like to call the new diasporic man.

The concept of nationalism is the expression of the unity commonly held by ties of race, religion, language and tradition; it also refers to the consciousness in individuals or groups of membership in a nation, or of a desire to forward the strength, liberty or prosperity of a nation, whether one's own or another (Kautsky 1968: 112). This definition is clearly an ideology and a movement that aims to unite

all who speak a single language and share a broadly common cultural heritage. For example in Malaysia, a similar concept of nationalism was one that was mooted by UMNO (United Malays National Organisation) as stated in *The Basis of UMNO's Struggle (Dasar Perjuangan UMNO): "Malay Political Parties and the Concept of Malay Nationalism"* (1971: 19-20):

> The theory of nationalism pursued by UMNO is a broad concept, in accordance with the method of democratic government and international acceptance, that is, while striving for the privileges, sovereignty, and priority of the owners of this country, UMNO also acknowledged that members of other races who have become citizens, those who have severed all connections and loyalty to their countries of origin, shall also receive specific rights as citizens of Malaya.

Attention is given to this condition given for members of other races to receive "receive specific rights as citizens of Malaya", they would first have to "become citizens, those who have severed all connections and loyalty to their countries of origin". For Malaysia, it is a society that is politically united but made up of communities divided by race, language, religion and historical experience. For nationalism to exist in a plural society the question of tolerance is thus pertinent in ensuring the acceptance of the new members by the existing nation. This is why in the Malaysian framework for nation-building, tolerance is encouraged. After 1969, Malaysia instated public policies, strategies and programs that sought to achieve national integration and unity. Even until today, one only needs to check the mass media nearing the National Day celebration and a barrage of nationalist slogans come through: Unity in Diversity; Muhibbah; etc.

For the immigrant community to belong to the new land, integration is an essential process that has to take place. But the question is in what way the integration should take place. Jayum A. Jawan (2003: 161) claims integration and unity are commonly used interchangeably. Thus, for a united Malaysian society to be manifested, the integration of the many ethnic groups has to be the framework of the nation building process. There are several types of integration, namely through assimilation, amalgamation and pluralism. Assimilation refers to "a process of interaction that in the end results in minority groups being assimilated by the majority group" where the minority adopts cultural characteristics of the dominant group, whether it is language, culture or religion (ibid: 162). This one way process can be cultural assimilation or acculturation and structural assimilation. In acculturation, minority groups acquire cultural characteristics from the host or dominant group, but they still retain their own socio-cultural identities. Structural assimilation refers to the success of minority groups in penetrating and participating in major institutions of the dominant group. Since independence, the Malaysian government has been encouraging the participation of all communities in its political and socio-economic agenda. Meanwhile, amalgamation is a process of biological integration; it can happen only through biology, namely the marriage between two individuals from different ethnic or racial background. The birth of a new identity is the amalgam that inherits the uniting traits. Lastly, pluralism simply refers to a number that is at least two (ibid: 164). The assumption is that all ethnic (and racial) groups are entitled to their socio-cultural, psychological and biological heritages. No group has the ultimate authority, moral or otherwise, to tell others that they should lose their identities and

adopt those of the host/dominant group. Differences are also natural and unavoidable among human groups; it is these diversities that are seen as strength for the nation.

National aspirations are also expected to be accomplished through the various Malaysian Plans:

- To achieve greater unity for all her peoples
- To maintain a democratic way of life
- To create a just society in which the wealth of the nation shall be equitably distributed
- To ensure a liberal approach to her rich & diverse cultural traditions
- To build a progressive society which shall be orientated to modern science & technology

Today, Malaysia has already completed eight Malaysian Plans and is currently in its Ninth. Different leaders contribute their framework to the nation building process. In 1991, the then Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohamed implemented the Vision 2020 framework that aims to turn Malaysia into a fully developed country. Nine central strategic challenges were identified in order to achieve developed status:

- establishing a united Malaysian nation with a sense of common and shared destiny
- creating a psychologically liberated, secure, and developed Malaysian Society with faith and confidence in itself
- fostering and developing a mature democratic society
- establishing a fully moral and ethical society
- establishing a matured, liberal and tolerant society in which Malaysians of all colours and creeds are free to practise and profess their customs,cultures and religious beliefs and yet feeling that they belong to one nation
- establishing a scientific and progressive society, a society that is innovative and forward-looking
- establishing a fully caring society and a caring culture, a social system in which society will come before self
- ensuring an economically just society – fair and equitable distribution of the wealth of the nation
- establishing a prosperous society, with an economy that is fully competitive, dynamic, robust and resilient

In 2004, the current Prime Minister, Dato' Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi, proposed the Islam Hadhari framework toward nation building. It was introduced in the Ninth Malaysia Plan as a "comprehensive and universal framework for the nation" to promote "a progressive developmental outlook" and "a moral society with strong religious and spiritual values". Islam Hadhari, or Civilisational Islam, is a theory of government based upon the principles of Islam as derived from the Holy Quran that seeks to emphasise development consistent with the central tenets of Islam. In particular, ten fundamental principles have been outlined and this includes faith and piety in Allah, a just and trustworthy government, and freedom and independence to the people

All these strategies are nation building projects that aim towards the process of shaping a 'national' culture through political means. Assimilation is the chief aim – that is process of bringing heterogeneous people into mainstream national culture – a homogenizing project that seeks to forge national consciousness and culture. Of national concern is that the needs of community is over and above the needs of individuality, and to achieve this there is the need for the selection of ONE culture over others. Even if it means the inclusion or exclusion of a particular culture, or even several cultures. This of course raises the issue of rights, individual and community. In "Arriving", this concern for ethnic and minority rights is addressed:

> Beneath Francis Lim's Christian sense of charity, Krishnan remembered seeing a violent self-possessiveness. They had been talking about the individual rights of the citizens in the country.
> "What individual rights?" he had almost thundered. "You take what you can and don't let go. Those are the only rights you have."
> "Chop-chop," Teng had said. "You fist, you knife, you gun. That give you what you want. You stand up somebody kick you down some more."
> And he had laughed, saying, "You know who that somebody." He was looking at Mat. But they had all laughed, including Mat, as if they all accepted the deceptions they practised on each other.
>
> (128)

CONCLUSION

The presence of the Indian diaspora in Malaysia since the late 19th century "has seen many changes to the constitution of a community that transplanted itself in new surroundings, equipped with a certain amount of cultural paraphernalia of the ancestral land, India" (Pillai, 2000). For K.S. Maniam, a writer of that descent, the "borders of his imagination do not taper inwards into that ethnic community that he grew up amongst...[at] certain junctures, they edge out of the perimeters of the compound of the Indo-Malaysian world, into the territories of the other communities sharing the same soil" (ibid). Maniam states:

> Something there is in the affairs of the world that resents the near complete expression of the self in its many and complex manifestations. The writer is therefore compelled to distort the familiar in order to reveal its transience; he is compelled to make accessible the strange in order to reveal an ignored reality. (x-xi).

Maniam's literary perspectives are testaments of his explorations of past, present psychology, conflicts & ambitions of the Indian community in Malaysia. His works attempt to "bring the precision of the English language to the versatility and depth of Hindu mythology and spirituality" (264). His perspective has an idiosyncratic 'Malaysian' quality that addresses, among others, emotions and experiences of a nation in growth, issues of identity, hybridity, sense of belonging and

identity, themes of alienation, and issues of identity, finding oneself. His narration has no parochial or communally chauvinistic attitude to it.

For Maniam, the Malaysian society is a heterogeneous one; there is non-availability of common source of collective images, symbols, myths as a system of references. Hence, the forging of a national consciousness of being one nation has many challenges and is an on-going process. There are no short cuts towards achieving harmony in society. Reconstruction and contestations are natural in the route toward the foundation of a new nation.

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Paper 2 **Hybridity and Harmony: Lessons from Yasmin Ahmad's Films *Rabun* and *Sepet***

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> I don't really get it when people say my films are Utopian. In "Rabun" a loving old couple get cheated by their own relatives whom they trusted, in "Sepet" the love of my heroine's life gets into a terrible accident, in "Gubra" nice people get beaten to death, and in "Mukhsin" a beautiful friendship is shattered by innocent love. I think my stories are actually quite dark. However they are always peppered with humour and moments of levity. Jack Lemmon once said, "It is hard enough to write a good drama, it's harder still to write a good comedy, and it's hardest of all to write a good drama with comedy. Which is what life is."[1]
>
> Yasmin Ahmad

Abstract

Yasmin Ahmad's films entitled *Rabun* (translated as blurred vision) and *Sepet* (translated as Slitty/Chinese eyes) have received positive reviews from the film industry (both locally and abroad) as well as the general audience. While *Rabun* generally touches on the issue of rural/urban divide, *Sepet* explores an inter-racial love story. Having originated from the Indie film scene, Yasmin's films are among the first to penetrate the mass market. Indeed, both films received several Best Film awards at local and international film competitions. One of the many major attractions of these films lies in their use of multi-racial actors to depict multicultural Malaysia. This depiction consequently attracts viewers from all ethnic backgrounds, breaking the elusive audience's racial demarcation. There is no denying that both films have been explored by many film critics and reviewers alike, especially on their depiction of interracial relationship. This paper, however, will look at Yasmin's depiction of hybridity, i.e. on how she creates narrative conflicts by hybridizing the characters. I would also argue that it is through the use of hybridity that the films finally arrive at harmonious endings; thus, reflecting Yasmin's vision of a harmonious society.

[1] This is taken from Yasmin Ahmad's blogspot.
(http://yasminthestoryteller.blogspot.com/search?q=sepet)

INTRODUCTION

Hybridity has been theorised in social sciences in order to cope with the growing awareness of social changes that are taking place in society. Generally speaking, it can come in three important forms: political, cultural and linguistics. One example of linguistic hybridity is the creation of a crealo language, which is the mixture of the native and the colonial language. Originating from biology and "referring to a selective breeding of plants to produce new varieties with specific qualities, its initial use in wider discourse was as a stigma in association with colonial ideas about racial purity and a horror of miscegenation".[2] With that in mind, the concept of hybridity in social sciences is often associated with negativity – with the idea of inquality and marginalization – that stems, more prominently, from xenophobia. This comes as no surprise as the "the idea of nation is often based on naturised myths of racial or cultural origin".[3] What this also tells us is that a hybrid subject, at least in social sciences, is seen as a sub-standard product.

The negative view surrounding the concept of hybridity especially as a sub-standard product of miscegenation has been perpetuated in the literary tradition. In the novel like Jean Rhy's *Wide Sargasso Sea,* for instance, the female character's hybridised subjectivity is portrayed as negative. The idea that "in the book [...] the dangers of such hybrids inevitably reverting to their 'primitive' traditions is highlighted throughout the novel."[4] However, this is eventually viewed as a myth by the more contemporary theorists on social development, especially with regards to transnationalism and diaspora. The more current view of hybridity perceives "hybridity [as] a fundamental feature of what is now commonly termed "the postmodern condition",[5] evoking the ironic sense of "balance".[6] This is indeed an ontological aspect of hybridity that reminds us of its apparent nature, that is, its "plurality".

The issue of plurality often hacks back to one important key concept in the theorisation of hybridity which is identity. Indeed, "hybridity is central to the way our popular culture is changing, as well as our sense of identity, both national and personal".[7] The question of identity has been at the forefront in the debate on the sense of belonging or 'home' (what is home?) of a the hybrid subject. The hybrid subject usually experiences the sense of being "neither here nor there"; thus reflecting its continuous struggle to define its spatial and temporal locations. It is within this struggle that a hybrid subject, to think as a postmodern irony, finds its strength to counter homogeny. What this does is that it creates an awareness in itself to create a space that not only questions but also celebrates difference, jettisoning its 'otherness'.

At the level of ideological symbolism, this 'positioning' of a hybrid subject within a 'in-between-space' – a hybrid space - has modulated its metaphoric status into a metonymic one. In effect, it can no longer be considered merely as the 'other', and that its status is real and has to be dealt with. Homi Bhabha, similarly, argues that

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[2] "Globalisation and Hybridity", p.11 (http://www.mediaed.org.uk/posted_documents/Hybridty.pdf)
[3] In "Hybridity" (http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/key-concepts/Hybridity.htm)
[4] Ibid.
[5] "Globalisation and Hybridity", p.11 (http://www.mediaed.org.uk/posted_documents/Hybridty.pdf)
[6] Brian McHale, p.2
[7] Globalisation and Hybridity, p. 11

"this space in an effort to open up the notion of an inter national culture "not based on exoticism or multi-culturalism of the diversity of cultures, but on the inscription and articulation of culture's hybridity. "[8] Therefore, in my opinion, a hybrid subject is not only in the outside, it is also in the inside of the social structure. In a way, this 'in-between-space' can also be seen as 'trans-space'; thus evinces the hybrid subject's social mobility and fluidity.[9] This notion of 'trans-space', that is, a temporal-spatial indicator of a hybrid subject's mobility, is central to Yasmin Ahmad's narratives in *Rabun* and *Sepet*. In it lies the conflict that, as as result, illuminates Yasmin's strategy of constructing a harmonious society.

REVISIONING HYBRIDITY: OPTICAL OR MENTAL SIGHT IN *RABUN*?

Rabun is Yasmin Ahmad's first feature length movie. It tells the story of one elderly couple – Pak Atan and Mak Inom - who plans to move back to their own village after the husband's retirement. Therefore, these two characters inhibit the 'trans-space', that is, the space between their house in town and the one in the village. To survive the nature of their mobility, they have to rely on each other. Pak Atan suffers from 'rabun' or blurred vision due to old age. On the other hand, Mak Inom has the inexplainable ability to throw at something and hit her target while being blindfolded. It is via this opposing depiction that the narrative conflict is unravelled.

So, in what way are they a hybrid? I would argue that their hybridity is manifested in two ways. One, linguistic hybridity. The two characters communicate in two languages, Malay and English, to each other and to their daughter, Orked. Two, their excessive expression of romantic love. This excessiveness is so bizzarre that even their future son-in-law is also stunned by show of affection and intimacy. This is not to say that their 'otherness' is foregrounded here by Yasmin to highlight their hybridity. Instead, this 'otherness' in the eye of the other characters is a signal of their ability to mobilize beyond their spatial boundary. In my opinion, this is Yasmin's strategy to not only challenge one's perception of her hybrid main characters, but it is also used as an impetus for the narrative conflict. Hassan Mutalib aptly observes that these two characters are portrayed in such a way that they are good at "maintaining calmness amidst chaos and turbulence - this perfectly describes Mak Inom and Pak Atan."[10]



[8] Cited in "Hybridity", (http://www.qub.ac.uk/schools/SchoolofEnglish/imperial/key-concepts/Hybridity.htm)

[9] Perhaps this is quite similar to what Homi Bhabha calls "The third space of Enunciation". In "Hybridity", ibid.

[10] *Rabun*, Criticine (http://www.criticine.com/review_article.php?id=12)

Picture One: Pak Atan and Mak Inom talking about the challenge that they are facing in an effort to make the village house their new home.

By the same token, Pak Atan's blurring vision or 'rabun' and Mak Inom's ability to hit a target while being blindfolded can be interpreted in three ways. First, they can be interpreted as a metaphor for their myiopic view of life, reflecting, ironically, their innocence and vulnerability. Second, they can be seen as a strategy of survival, and their inter-dependence on each other. Indeed, through Mak Inom, Yasmin is saying that optical vision is not an issue if one has a strong faith in oneself. Throughout the story, Mak Inom's voice can be heard loud and clear, making her an active character. In effect, she not only drives her husband around but also bathes him, a romantic scene that further strengthens the idea that they are complementing each other. Third, their characterisation can be seen to function as a mirror of the society that they are in. Their status as a hybrid allows them to have both enemy and friends. In a nutshell, all of the three interpretations can be concatenated and therefore viewed as the conflict that a hybrid subject has to encounter and fit into.

The issue of trying to fit in is manipulated by Yasmin to function as a dramatic irony. The two main characters initially are indeed blasé of their 'new' surrounding that they are not aware of being cheated by their own relatives, Yem. Yem is supposed to help Pak Atan and Mak Inom to settle down in the village. His job is to maintain the village house so that it will be comfortable for them to move into. Yem, an unemployed, lives with his stepmother. Mak Inom fully trusts him due to the fact that they are related. However, through the character Elvis, a constractor to work on the lawn of the house, that Mak Inom, to her chagrin, learns about Yem's dishonesty. The kind of relationship and trust that Mak Inom and Elvis are experiencing harks back to their similar position. Elvis is also a hybrid, a chinese guy with an English name. His ability to speak Malay and English to Mak Inom also points to their similarity as a hybrid subject. This similarity allows them to communicate well and to trust each other.

On the other hand, Yem is not a hybrid. Even though he is related to Pak Atan and Mak Inom, he sees the latter as his vulnerable target. He can see their vulnerability due to their position 'in-between-space', a position that he thought he could take advantage of. This causes a conflict of the story and it is therefore the result of Pak Atan and Mak Inom's hybridity. The climax of the conflict is when Yem, one night, eventually goes to their house and throws dead animal at the house. Realizing that there is an intruder in the vicinity of his house, Pak Itam goes after him. However, his eye-sight fails him and he becomes the victim of the intruder. On the other hand, Mak Inom who is left behind, is quite reluctant to follow suit. She, however, decides to throw a wooden stick to the intruder. This she does by closing her eyes, and expectedly, it hits him.

In solving the conflict that both Pak Atan and Mak Inom are facing, Yasmin chooses a surrealistic approach to the film ending. As a result, there is a sense of ambiguity in how the film ends, or to a great extent, begins. In the final scene, Yasmin shows Pak Atan and Mak Inom playing a game together with other characters in the story. They seem to be happy together and there seems to be any inherent animosity among them. This kind of ending can be perplexing to certain audience; however, this is one of the best ways for Yasmin to end a story. Without moralising the issue, she

opts to show that if differences are celebrated, people can live harmoniously with each other. In doing so, she also highlights the idea that through her hybrid characters, this is even more possible if they also learn to celebrate themselves.

WHAT HAS LOVE AT THE FIRST SIGHT GOT TO DO WITH IT? SEPET'S BEYOND THE MERE LOVE STORY

Sepet is Yasmin Ahmad's first commercial success. It is undeniable that it is this film that puts Yasmin on the map of the (Malaysian) film industry. Winning several awards locally and internationally, *Sepet* allows for an encounter with the uniqueness of Malaysians. Indeed, one reviewer comments on the film by saying that:

> "But what REALLY sets this movie aside from all the other Malaysian movies out there today, is that *Sepet* isn't just a deep love story with bright characters, it's a painfully realistic outlook into the world of city life in Malaysia"[11]

The reviewer is correct in pointing out the realistic depiction of Malaysia in the film as this has a lot to do with the way the film is shot. In effect, *Sepet* is shot in semi-documentary style, allowing her characters to inhibit the space that they want. Yasmin Ahmad, in her own blog, admits that:

> The film's opening moves from Sam Hui's yearning Cantopop song to Jason reading Indian poet Tagore's work in Chinese translation to his Peranakan (mixed Malay-Chinese descendant) mother, concisely framing the multi-Asian strands of Malaysian society and the film -- tradition and modernity, the Malay-Chinese-Indian pyramid, the purity and impurity of culture -- all set within a classic maternal metaphor.[12]

What Yasmin herself suggests by the 'purity and the impurity of culture" is the existence of a hybrid reality that moves between the two spaces.

The film evolves around, Orked, a 16-year-old Malay, and Jason or Ah Long, an 18-year-old, a pirated-vcd seller. Orked is of the Malay descent, and Jason is of the Chinese descent. They met when Orked went to buy her favourite Wong Kar-Wai's movie from Jason. That is the beginning of what seem to be a tragic love story. This scene is important because it highlights the idea that the two characters fall in love which other because they can identify with each other's similarity, despite the physical differences that the audience are likely to notice. This is the main motivation for the film to move beyond its love storyline.

[11] *Sepet*, http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0433692/
[12] This is taken from Yasmin Ahmad's blog:
http://yasminthestoryteller.blogspot.com/2005_04_01_archive.html



Picture two: Interracial love story is used as the backdrop for the hybrid subject to 'know' each other in *Sepet*.

In the film, the love story is used as a platform for the representation of the hybrid subject to take place and how that hybridity becomes a narrative conflict. In effect, both Orked and Jason are hybrid subjects. Orked's father is a pan-Asian, played by Harith Iskandar. The family also uses two prodiminant languages, Malay and English, in the household. Jason's relationship with his mother also highlights his hybridity. He usually speaks to his mother in Cantonese; however, his mother always responds in Malay. This is because his mother, being a Peranakan Chinese, is a hybrid. Jason also speaks English to Orked, making them hybrid subjects. In addition to that, although Jason's real name is Ah Long, he wants Orked to know him as Jason, an anglo-name that further reinforces the idea of him being a hybrid subject. Consequently, their inherent hybridity helps them to immediately recognise each other's difference and similarity. What this shows is that a hybrid subject is more accepting of each other than others due to their position in-between-spaces.



Picture Three: Jason's (Ah Long) family having dinner together. Although Jason speaks Cantonese to his mother, her mother will respond in Malay.

Yasmin uses both characters to represent the conflict that a hybrid subject encounters. Orked, being a hybrid, finds it very difficult to fit in with her school friends. This is due to the fact that the space that she occupies is the 'trans-space', a spatial location that reflects her fluidity and difference. For that reason, Orked has to

learn to cope with the space that she inhabits, finding comfort in the company of Jason, who also inhabits the same 'trans-space'. For Orked, the 'trans-space' that she inhabits takes her away from the typical teenagers sexual fantasy. She refuses to be the sexual object of her male friends. She insists on her own fantasy; thus, having a "Chinese-eyed" boyfriend instead of Leonardo De Caprio's cheap immitation is what she desires most. Jason provides the space for that fantasy to take place and the failure for him to continually be her fantasy becomes the conflict of the story. Orked's fantasy is of a "pure" Jason - asian and virginal. However, upon knowing that Jason has made his Chinese girlfriend pregnant, her dreams shattered.

The conflict between Orked's fantasy that derives from her hybridity and Jason's own struggle to recognise his hybridity finds its point of confluence in the way the story ends. Orked decided to sever her relationship with Jason who steadfastly tries to keep the relationship intact. Upon knowing that it was only an allegation, Orked tries to find Jason, but to no avail. This is the time when Orked's realisation that Jason's existence as a hybrid can provide the platform that she needs to feel happy. On the way the airport to further her studies abroad, Orked cries her eyes out, regretting her action towards Jason. However, it is her mother, who is a hybrid subject, who wants her to take action that she will not regret. The ending of the film is rather ambiguous. In my opinion, this reflects Yasmin's reluctance to provide a narrative closure to the story. What Yasmin is trying to say is that the hybrid subject also needs to recognise its difference to learn to embrace who they are. In this case, Orked's refusal to accept Jason's hybridity is the course of the inharmounious ending.

CONCLUSION

Yasmin Ahmad's effort to focus on the hybridity of her characters and the fluidity of the social settings that they are in allows for the eventual celebration of differences. This sense of celebrating the difference results in the production of a harmonious society that lives together peacefully. In the case of *Rabun*, the hybrid nature of the main characters may be the cause of their initial alienation; nonetheless, it is in that very nature that the film finds its strength and comic relief, pointing to the ironic nature of the postmodern condition. The fact that Yasmin chooses to end the film in such a playful way, that is, by gathering all the characters to play a game together, highlights the idea that their initial misunderstanding and animosity are fugacious and can be countered if they are willing to accept their hybridity. On the contrary, the ambiguous ending of *Sepet* may provide an example of a tragic ending of a society that denies the inevitable arrival and existence of a hybrid subject. Yet, it also points to the solution of the problem, that is, only through the celebration of hybridity and not the profligation of the other party – with the eventual acceptance of another's difference – that hybridity can be seen as progressive.

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Paper 3 Thai-Malaysia Relations: Celebrating 50 years of "Harmonious" Co-Existence

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Abstract

The paper will examine Thai-Malaysia relations in the last 50 years, focusing on the aspect of geo-political security. Geopolitical security, a main area of concern in Thai-Malaysia relations, has direct implications on the social and political harmony of both these countries. This is especially so since both countries share a common border and a long history of diplomatic relations. While both Malaysia and Thailand have maintained neighborly harmony, and in the spirit of alliance and friendship, have ensured peaceful co-existence, there have been intermittent periods of tension. This situation of "*neither in complete harmony nor in total conflict*" is most clearly seen in the case of the insurgency in southern Thailand, centering on Muslim minorities' agitation for separation or autonomy from the Thai state. On the one hand, Malaysia is "accused" of being partisan to the Muslim cause, while on the other, the Thai Muslims are "frustrated" by the lack of support from Kuala Lumpur towards their plight. Yet, officially, Kuala Lumpur claims a neutral stand towards the problem. This situation has tended to create a divide between the two countries. Thailand is generally seen as being pro-west (i.e. US), while Malaysia is anti-west and less liberal. Bangkok is also perceived as being less-tolerant of Islam while Malaysia is projected as an Islamic state. The scenario tends to indicate that Bangkok and Kuala Lumpur adopt different strategies in dealing with security concerns; and if the southern insurgency continues unabated, Kuala Lumpur-Bangkok relations may be harmed in the long run. Contrary to this assumption, I argue in this paper, that the Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok governments operate on a similar premise/framework. Both governments, led by a dominant party (i.e. UMNO/Malaysia, Democrat, TRT etc /Thailand) are "secular" in approach and are "cautious" of religious fundamentalism. This trend is dictated by the domain in which both nations operate, namely plural societies, and in the context of increasing regionalization and globalization. Citing a few issues in Thai-Malaysia bilateral relations in more recent times, this paper will demonstrate that the basis for the "harmonious" co-existence of both countries is to a large extent negotiated and determined by the predominant political parties which form the governments.

Introduction

Early Thai-Malay relations can be traced back to the time of the oldest Malay state, Kedah. During this period, Kedah and other states such as Temasek (old Singapura) sought the patronage and protection of the militarily powerful Siamese state. The ornamental gold and silver tree is perhaps the most known and illustrative aspect of traditional Thai-Malay relations. While the Siamese claim that the offering was a symbol of tribute in recognition of Siamese overlordship, the Malay states viewed the offering as a token of friendship and alliance. Thus the Siamese tended to view its relations with the Malay states as one between states of unequal status, while the Malay states tended to view their diplomatic relations with the Thai state as one among friends.[1] The contrasting views tended to contribute to a period of "defensive" co-existence with intermittent periods of friendship, alliance and war. Nonetheless, there was a free and fluid movement of people and exchange of goods between Thai and Malay states throughout this period.

However, the signing of the Anglo- Siamese Treaty of 1909, and the consequent demarcation between Thai and Malayan territories made the borders between the territories less porous. Thereafter issues of security, smuggling of goods and lawlessness along the border regions became a matter of prime concern in Thai-Malay diplomatic relations. Other issues too began to surface, for instance, heightened sense of Malay consciousness, activities of separatist movements in the predominantly Malay provinces in the southern Thai border as well as the presence of communist hideouts in the jungles along the border. These issues had serious security implications for both sides and have at times caused a strain in neighborly relations.

Roots of Co-operation: Fighting Separatism and Communism (1940-1960s)

In the mid-1940s, as WW II came close to an end, British policy makers began to discuss the need for an international security system in the Siamese-Malayan border region, stretching from the Kra Isthmus to the northern Malay states. The Thai government, on the other hand, had to deal with the activities of pro-independence movements in the southern Malay provinces during this period. Across the border, in Malaya, a heightened sense of Malay nationalism following the proposal by the British administrators to provide equal citizenship to all races in the country provoked Malay anger and triggered a mass movement of patriotism focusing on the issue of the sovereignty of the Malay Rajas, the Malay land and Malay rights. Events in Malaya inspired the Malays of south Thailand to defend the sovereignty of their territory against Thai rule. This was a period of intense Malay consciousness and posed a problem for both the British government in Malaya as well as the Thai state. In the post WW II days, resistance and separatist activities began to gain momentum with the founding of organizations such as the *Gabungan Melayu Patani Raya* (GEMPAR), founded in 1948 with the aim of uniting the Malays of south Thailand and to seek separation from Siam. In response, Bangkok began a crackdown on suspected Malay separatist leaders, who in turn fled to British Malaya seeking refuge.

It was amidst this political milieu that both Thailand and Malaya began to work together to ensure peace in the region. Co-operation at this stage included the sharing of intelligence between both countries, mainly to suppress anti-state organizations such as GEMPAR. Furthermore, the communist threat in the region in the post WW II days, particularly in the 1950s, pushed both sides to join hands to contain the activities of the Communist Party of Malaya (CPM) and the spread of the communist ideology. By early 1949, both governments signed the Thailand-Malayan Frontier Agreement on CPM (1949); it was the first in a series of numerous other bilateral agreements between the Thai and Malayan authorities.[2]

Even after the end of the emergency, the border areas remained under threat from defeated/exiled members of the CPM who were operating in the deep jungles and mountains of south Thailand. Troubled by CPM's alleged instigation and recruitment of people living in the border areas for guerrilla activities, the Thai and Malayan governments, acknowledging mutual-dependency in maintaining security along their common borders, established the Thai-Malayan Border Committee. The Committee founded in 1965 aimed to facilitate Thai-Malaysia military actions against communist activities and for general policing of the frontier areas.

Separatist Movements: Thorn in Thai-Malay Relations (1970s)

In the 1970s, the Thai government stepped up its efforts at containing separatist movements largely as a result of the activities of organizations such as the National Liberation Front of the Pattani Republic (NLF). This was a period of mutual suspicion between the Thai and Malaysian governments and a general sense of mistrust prevailed. The activities of the CPM in Thailand and the alleged support for dissenting groups in south Thailand from individuals and groups in Malaysia were the root causes of the bilateral disputes. [3]

Malaysia accused Thailand of harboring ex-CPM members and showing a lack of commitment towards eliminating this guerrilla group. Thailand, on the other hand, named the support given by political parties such as PAS (Parti Islam Malaysia) towards the secessionist movement in Thailand and the constant aid received by this group from Muslim countries as a threat to its internal security. The rise in religious fundamentalism and Islamic militancy particularly in the northern Malaysian state of Kelantan alarmed the Malaysian government which feared serious political repercussions domestically. The Malaysian government was walking a political tightrope at home; Kuala Lumpur therefore steered clear from the southern Thai issue by declaring that it was Thailand's internal problem. [4]

The situation described above is illustrative of the both the Malaysian and Thai government's stand on the issue of insurgency in the predominantly Muslim area of south Thailand. Fearing political backlash in the country, Malaysia refrained from interfering or providing assistance to the Thai Muslims. There are two possible reasons for this; first, Bangkok is an immediate neighbor with whom Malaysia shares a border and the matter is

clearly within Thai jurisdiction. Second and more importantly, the security threats that the situation presented namely the activities of Islamic groupings and their ultra-religious stance could upset the local social fabric of multi-ethnic, multi-religious Malaysia. Thailand too faced a similar situation; Malaysia's involvement would underscore Malay-Muslim solidarity and inspire religious-ethnic based movements to step up their demand for autonomy and separation. The primary aim of the power elites of Malaysia and Thailand was to maintain stability as well as regime security. In other words, maintaining the power, authority and legitimacy of the respective governments (or ruling party/monarch) is the priority of Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok. For Kuala Lumpur, regime refers to the ruling government, in particular UMNO, as opposed to opposition parties such as the PAS, whereas, for Bangkok, it refers to the coalition government led by the predominant party, while also mindful of the interests of the Thai monarchy.

By the 1980s, Thai military crack down on militants had disposed most of the NLF members. Most of the leaders fled Siam and lived in exile in foreign countries, creating a period of relative peace in the border region. Relations between Thailand and Malaysia too improved. From working together on security matters, both governments moved on to work closely on economic matters. The rationale was that through mutual economic development, security along the borders of the two nations could be enhanced. But on the issue of the southern insurgency, Malaysia from being a neutral observer began to lend-a-hand to the Thai government, thus acknowledging the problem and the possible spill-over of trouble into Malaysia.

Bridging Trust: Thai-Malaysia Relations (1980s-1990s)

The repatriation of Thai-Malay dissidents who had sought refuge in Malaysia back to Thailand by Malaysian Premier Mahathir Mohammad was a crucial turning point in the history of Thai-Malaysia relations. It was clear that Malaysia showed little tolerance for run-away dissidents and refugees. In 1982, during a visit to Thailand, Prime Minister Mahathir stressed that:

> "the Malaysian government is not supporting the insurgency in south Thailand, but that some other people in Malaysia might be. My government is not going to tolerate anything that would sour relations between Thailand and Malaysia".[5]

From treating the matter as a Thai internal problem, Malaysia openly addressed the sensitive issue of the insurgency in south Thailand, and indicated its willingness to support Thai efforts to quell the disturbances there. Mahathir's forthright approach put Malaysia- Thai relations on a better, less distrusting, platform.

In the last two decades, Mahathir consistently advocated a policy of non-intervention in the affairs of its neighbors. The Premier vehemently speaks against separatist movements in the region. Visiting Thailand again in 1993, Mahathir reiterated Malaysia's stand against the insurgency and pledged to "co-operate with Thai security

forces to suppress criminal activity along the border".[6]. As if to prove his stand, in 1997, the government of Malaysia handed over to Thai authorities three members of the militant-PULO who were captured in Kuala Kangsar, Malaysia after detaining them under Malaysian law for nine days. The handing over of the captured members to the Thai authorities via the Rantau Panjang-Sungai Golok Friendship Bridge was widely reported in local dailies.

While Mahathir's non-interventionist policies were based on the idea of the inviolability of political borders and state systems and were responsible for the repatriation of several dissident Thai-Malays to Thailand, his later policies advanced the importance of prospering together through economic growth. Through its five-year plans and joint economic groupings with neighbors such as Thailand (IMT-GT), Singapore and Indonesia (IMT-GT and SIJORI), Malaysia advanced the notion of maintaining security through development.[7]

This was also a period when regional security was no longer defined in ideological terms as was the case during the cold-war period. The change directed the focus of governments from traditional to non-traditional or soft approaches in security policies. Focusing on economic development belonged to the latter category. Also, given the rise in religious fundamentalism and terrorism, the change in the policy and attitude towards maintaining security was seen as necessary. The need to jointly combat threats to regime maintenance, stability and economic prosperity became imperative. Thus, Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok adopted similar strategies.

In terms of security cooperation, the Regional Border Committee Office (RBCO), based in Songkhla and staffed by members of the armed and police forces of both countries was set up. The aim of RBCO is to work together to counter security threats to the respective nations as well as to share intelligence on the situation along the borders of both countries. On the Thai side, the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC) was set up in 1989 by then PM Prem Tinsulanond. The SBPAC was intended to act as a crisis management institution, and to some extent has been instrumental in maintaining peace in the southern Thai areas.

Southern Insurgency: Renewed Tensions (2000-2006)

The recent unrest and turmoil in the southern Thai states of Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat, escalating since Jan 2004, has put a damper on Thai-Malaysia relations. While Malaysia's official stand on the issue is non-interference considering the matter is Thailand's s domestic problem, numerous events and exchanges between the leaders of the countries have sparked tension. Although overtly it appears that both parties are on the opposite side of the coin, a closer look at some of the issues relating to the state of insurgency and lawlessness in the southern Thai border provinces indicate that KL and Bangkok are in fact operating on a similar premise/framework and both are concerned with regime survival. The incidents/issues highlighted below underscore this point.

(I) Issue of Dual-citizenship and Asylum Seekers

Both the Thai and Malaysian governments have had to deal with the problematic issue of dual citizenship. Allegations of southern Thai Muslims holding both Thai and Malaysian citizenship has been cited as one of the problems in identifying and arresting persons involved in the southern conflict. There is a tendency among suspected insurgents to cross over the border asserting Malaysian citizenship in order to avoid arrest by the Thai authorities. Malaysia's open admission of the existence of the problem of dual citizenship and its subsequent stand to cooperate with Thai authorities in addressing the issue is indeed a positive development in Thai-Malaysia bilateral relations.

Both parties generally adopt negotiation and informal diplomatic strategies to overcome problems or strained relations due to certain events or incidents. The incident in Sept 2005 in which 131 Thai Muslims fled across the southern Thai border seeking refuge in Malaysia's northern state of Kelantan is a case in point. Although initially refusing to return these "asylum seekers", stating that the 131 people were refugees on Malaysian territory, Kuala Lumpur eventually sought the help of the UNHCR (United Nations High Commission on Refugees) to help in mediating or resolving the issue. This is in fact a departure from the norm in Malaysia-Thai bilateral relations. Instead of negotiating with the Thai authorities or "repatriating" the refugees, Malaysia sought to internationalize the matter by calling in the UN agency. In fact, according to Suhrke and Noble, in the earlier decades of the conflict in the south, "the commanding governmental power- the Malays in Malaysia- did their best to ensure that the conflict would not be internationalized".[8]

Malaysia's decision therefore reflects a change in the hitherto "harmonious" Thai Malaysia relations, pointing to possible tensions in their bilateral relations. The decision is also indicative of the contemporary "domestic threats" faced by Malaysia's central decision makers (i.e. the Malay elites of the ruling UMNO) on the maintenance of its authority and core values that the party espouses. The refugees sought hostage in the northern Malay state of Kelantan where the ruling government is led by the Islamic based PAS. UMNO's direct involvement would have had two impacts: supporting the 131 Malay (Muslim) refugees to remain in Kelantan would have won approval from PAS and conversely repatriating them would have won criticisms of UMNO being unsympathetic to fellow Muslims and therefore the party branded "un-Islamic". Meanwhile, supporting the refugees on the basis of their ethnicity and religion would indicate to non-Muslims in Malaysia, UMNO's "Islamic" slant and create possible political and economic instability at home. This is not to imply that UMNO is unsympathetic to fellow Muslims but it has always been led by moderate Malays who have sustained the interests of the Malays through the concept of *ketuanan Melayu* (Malay "moderate" hegemony). The current regime's approach to Islam, otherwise known as *Islam Hadhari* as advocated by PM Abdullah Badawi is reminiscent of this moderate approach; it accepts universal core values of Islam and rejects radicalism. The more fundamentalist Islamic groupings are by far less moderate in their approach and UMNO is mindful of the threat this creates to maintaining multiracial peace and stability in Malaysia. Thus by calling in the UNHCR, UMNO has remained secular in its approach to regime security while at the same time

avoid being branded as Islamic or un-Islamic, for these "categories" have serious repercussions when Malaysians go to the polls.

The Bangkok government is also confronted by a similar situation. Bangkok has always been seen as extending Buddhist hegemony by its Malay Muslim population; a factor which has caused the long unresolved conflict between the Malay Muslims and the Thai state. The situation has made Bangkok susceptible to criticisms at home (from its citizens) as well as from international organizations such as Amnesty International. Like Malaysia, maintaining regime security for Bangkok is determined by its ruling elites namely the elites of the ruling political parties.[9] Thai governments have traditionally held a secular approach to security issues, for they have long had to deal with ethnic minority grievances from among the northeasterners/Lao, tribal groups (Karen), religious minorities (Malay Muslim) and Buddhist groups. The Thai governments are no strangers to the volatile issues of ethnicity and religion vis-à-vis stability and regime security. Furthermore, Malaysia's direct involvement in the case would also impinge on the "sovereignty" of Thailand- namely its ability to handle what it claims "domestic matters". Essentially, the core values espoused by the power elites of both governments are similar, thus their approaches to regime security also seems to indicate much similarities.

(II) Malaysia's attempts to mediate peace

Domestic politics apart, external events taking place on the international stage have forced Kuala Lumpur and Bangkok to review their approach to national and regional security. In particular, the events of the last four years (2004-2007) have also prompted a phase of renewed understanding and greater cooperation among Thai and Malaysian governments. Both are committed to maintaining peace considering the prevailing threat of separatist movements, transnational crime and the larger global terror network. Apart from sharing intelligence, Thailand and Malaysia have co-operated in fighting terrorism and terrorist-network cells belonging to militant groups such as the Jemaah Islamiyah and Al-Qaeda.

In addition, Malaysia's role in facilitating the peace process between the Philippine government and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) clearly indicates Malaysia's efforts at promoting peace in the region. To quote S.P Harish of the Asia Times:

> it is not in Malaysia's interest to support the militants, backing the rebels would inevitably mean an increase in violence and economic repercussions on both sides of the border.[10]

More recently, in advancing the spirit of good neighborliness through the ASEAN Way, Malaysia offered to train Malay youths from south Thailand in religious and vocational training. In reciprocation, Thailand has shown keen interest in seeking Malaysia's help to mediate between the Thai government and the southern separatists. These developments have accelerated cooperation within the framework of security as well as the JDA (economic) and related areas under the rubric of functional co-operation.

Approaches to maintaining security in Malaysia-Thai relations: Analysis

While KL was expected to be sympathetic to the Muslim cause and the Thai state, on the other hand, expected to suppress violently the Islamic revivalism, both governments namely the elite of the ruling government took a "secular" approach and exercised caution in the matter. The political elites were also mindful of the threat the situation presented to their respective governments as well as the domain in which the ruling governments operated. The domain in this case refers to the multi-ethnic, multi-religious composition of its citizenry as well as the larger forces of globalization. In the case of Malaysia, its chairmanship of the OIC (Organization of Islamic Countries) is yet another domain in which it operates and can be held accountable for the kind of Islamic leadership it portrays. Malaysia can also influence or use the OIC as a channel in dealing with some of the issues pertaining to Islam both at the domestic and international levels.

In trying to understand the security culture of Asian countries, Muthiah Alagappa proposes a framework for Asian security that comprises three main components: (i) referent (ii) scope or domain and (iii) approach.[11] The discussion on Thai-Malaysia relations in this paper, in particular the main issues/incidents pertaining to bilateral security tend to concur with Alagappa's framework. The referent refers to the regime, nation-state or dominant grouping/party that is being discussed, while the scope or domain identifies the core values of the particular regime and the threats facing that regime. The final component is approach, namely the manner in which the respective nations/regimes deal with the given security issues. These components are useful in trying to understand the security culture of Asian countries. Besides, Alagappa's framework is non-ideological and most importantly it takes into account the multiple facets of the political milieu of a particular regime or nation, making it an apt framework for Southeast Asian countries like Malaysia and Thailand.

Conclusion

The spirit of alliance and friendship in ensuring peaceful co-existence among neighbors demonstrated by both the Thai and Malaysian governments is one of the salient aspects in Thai-Malaysia relations over the past 50 years, if not longer.

While security has been the prime concern in Thai-Malaysia relations, there are other aspects of cooperation as well. These include economic cooperation and various aspects of functional cooperation namely in the areas of environment, health and education. However, the latter appear secondary compared to co-operation in the field of security. Both the Thai and Malaysian governments priority concerns for the last 50 years and in the next few decades is in maintaining geopolitical security, both terrestrial and maritime security.

ENDNOTES

[1] See Kobkua Suwannathat-Pian (1998). *Thai-Malay Relations: Traditional Intra-regional Relations from the Seventeenth to the Early Twentieeth Centuries*, Singapore: Oxford University Press: pp. 56-57.
[2] See CO 717/156/4/F 15736, S.G. Thompson (British Legation Bangkok) to R.H. Scott Esq. (Southeast Asia Department, Foreign Office), 10 Oct 1949.
[3] Thailand had long suspected that the Malayan government knew of individuals/groups in Malaya supporting the secessionist movement in the Pattani region and at times accused the government of backing the anti-Thai groups. For details see FO 371/69999 [F 14816/21/40].
[4] For details on Thai-Malaysia disputes during this period see, Hans. H. Indorf (1984). *Impediments to Regionalism in Southeast Asia: Bilateral Constraints among ASEAN Member States*), Singapore: ISEAS: pp.38-42.
[5] *Asiaweek*, 24 Dec 1982, quoted in Michael Antolik (1990). *ASEAN and the Diplomacy of Accommodation* New York: ME Sharpe Inc.: pp. 59-60.
[6] *New Straits Times*, 25 September 1993.
[7] K.S. Nathan, "Malaysia: Reinventing the Nation", in *Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences* Muthiah Alagappa (ed). (1998). Stanford: Stanford University Press: pp 526-527.
[8] A. Suhrke and L.G. Noble, "Spread or Containment: The Ethnic factor", in A. Suhrke and L.G. Noble (ed.) (1977). *Ethnic Conflicts in International Relations.* US: Praeger Publishers: p. 221.
[9] Panitan Wattanayagorn, "Thailand: The Elite's Shifting Conceptions of Security", in *Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences* Muthiah Alagappa (1998):p. 417.
[10] S.P. Harish, "How Malaysia sees Thailand's southern strife", *Asia Times*, 12 Feb 2006, http:// atimes.com/atimes/Southeast_Asia.
[11] Muthiah Alagappa (1998). *Asian Security Practice: Material and Ideational Influences, p.15-17.*

MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

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THIRD PLENARY SESSION

Chairperson: Dr.Wariya Chinwanno

1. Harmonious Echoes from the Past: An Esoteric Interpretation of Hang Tuah's Journey to India - *Lalita Sinha*

PLENARY PAPER 3

Harmonious Echoes from the Past: An Esoteric Interpretation of Hang Tuah's Journey to India

Lalita Sinha
QUEST Services

> So Kisna Rayan too was pleased upon seeing the mannerisms of the admiral who spoke in the Keling language, the eloquence of his tongue and the sweetness of his countenance and the melodiousness of his voice, so harmonious with his words (*Hikayat Hang Tuah*, 423).[i]

Abstract

Classics of the world typically portray great warriors who literally and metaphorically "sail the seven seas" in quest of Enlightenment. This centrifugal motion engaging the protagonist with new, or alien, experiences not only involves plunder and dominance, but often epitomises a spontaneous reaching out that results in harmonious encounters that enrich and deepen not only their own, but also the other, cultures. This element abounds in the *Gilgamesh* of Mesopotamia, the Greek *Odyssey*, and the *Ramayana* of India, to name just a few. From Southeast Asia, the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (The Story of Hang Tuah) is little known outside the Malay world. Extolling the exploits of Hang Tuah the Malay warrior par excellence, the text is of no mean stature in comparison to the great classics.

Beyond interest in *Hikayat Hang Tuah* as a historical, political, social, or literary model of distinction, the traditional worldview reflected in the text has an added dimension: it embraces a sacred universe. From this arcane dimension, mythical and metaphysical shared "secrets" of harmony between different religious and cultural traditions shine forth. If only one cares to delve into an esoteric or essential interpretation of the text, one finds harmony of an innate, artless and spontaneous character (Sk. *sahajja*, natural), so distinct from the often necessarily contrived, and agenda-driven religious "tolerance" prevailing today.

Based on a Hermeneutical reading of the text, and informed by a perspective of Traditionalism, the essay will attempt to bring to light the esoteric meaning of the experiences of Hang Tuah on a particular journey to India, and to argue that the wisdom of the past, and the traditional realities embodied in the character of Hang Tuah have much to show us of the way to unity and accord that has been forgotten, and to sound a clarion call to reclaim it.

INTRODUCTION

Classics of the world typically portray great warriors who literally and metaphorically "sail the seven seas" motivated by quest and conquest. This centrifugal motion engaging the protagonist with new, or alien, experiences may not only involve plunder and dominance, but also epitomise a spontaneous reaching out that results in harmonious encounters which enrich and deepen not only their own, but also the other, cultures. This element abounds in the *Gilgamesh* of Mesopotamia, the Greek *Odyssey,* and the *Ramayana* of India, to name just a few. A tale of similar import from Southeast Asia, the *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (The Tale of Hang Tuah) is little known outside the Malay world. Extolling the exploits of Hang Tuah, Malay warrior par excellence, the text is of no mean stature in comparison to the great classics of the world.

Beyond any interest in *Hikayat Hang Tuah* (HHT) as a historical, political, social, or literary model of distinction, the text has an added dimension: it embraces a sacred universe. From this arcane dimension, mythical and metaphysical shared "secrets" of harmony between different religious and cultural traditions shine forth. This affinity, intimated in the epigraph to this paper, involves in the present case specifically the Malay-Muslim tradition (or the starting point), and Indian-Hindu tradition (or the destination) of Hang Tuah's traverse to India. Kisna Rayan, the Indian king is won over completely by the charm and grace of the speech of the Malay admiral, not only because he speaks the "Keling" or Indian language, but also because of the harmony of his personality with his words. However, one has to know affinities exist, in order to see them. In other words, "Believing is seeing." This "seeing" can be a grace, which springs from a profound love of God (McDonald 2003). If only one cares to "see" the esoteric import of the text, that is, delve into its essence, one finds accord of an innate, uncontrived and spontaneous character (Skt. *sahajjiya*, natural) typifying the traditional worldview[ii] that is so distinct from the often necessarily contrived, and agenda-driven religious "tolerance" prevailing today, as this paper hopes to show.

Hang Tuah's extraordinary capacity of language and speech is a marked phenomenon that offers rich dimensions for study. For this flair for speech, he is sent as an ambassador of peace to places near and far, among them Majapahit, India, China, Siam, and Turkey. These missions are well-deliberated by scholars as being primarily political in agenda. I wish to argue, however, that that is only one aspect of the nature of the missions. I would go so far as to say that the preoccupation on the perceptible issue of politics is a superficial and limited view of Hang Tuah's journeys. It does not do justice to the fullness of a work that exhibits a universe that is quite different from the predominantly secular view of the work. This lens shows a traditional religious and spiritual society that is holistic, and entirely in harmony with the environment, both physical and metaphysical.[iii] Thus the present view draws from dimensions ranging from the magico-religious, to the mystico-spiritual.

Informed by the perspective of Traditionalism, the esoteric meaning of the experiences of Hang Tuah on his journey to India may come to light. To support the argument for the esoteric dimensions of the HHT, I will refer to and interpret three extracts of the episode of Hang Tuah's presence in India: Firstly, the origin of the mission; secondly, the voyage to India, and thirdly, the "performance" of the horse ride before the Indian ruler. In these cases, the diction - both Hang Tuah's and the story teller's - represents the "data" of analysis, which convey "veiled" truths. Here it is only

possible to deal with a limited selection of these, and address a few salient features to suit the limited confines of a paper. It must be mentioned that the phenomena selected are not isolated occurrences in the text of HHT. The main concern, the uncontrived and spontaneous consonance between the two cultural systems, and between man and his environment, is abundant and consistent in the entire chapter of the visit to India, as it is in most parts of HHT. The approximately 43 pages of the chapter in question are heavily laden with diverse occurrences that may be brought to bear as witness to the truth of this claim: the depth and richness of the descriptions, the images of plenitude and magnanimity of conduct, the purpose and significance of numbers and signs, the miraculous and superhuman encounters, the kinship-centered relationships - these are a few of the dominant elements in the text. Many of these elements defy the logic of reason, belonging to the dimension of marvel and magic. Since they do not belong to the realm of reason, or of the secular, a positivistic approach in assessing them would be inappropriate and inadequate. Rather, a holistic, esoteric approach can reveal ample evidence of the spiritual truths they convey, and of the goodness and harmony of an inclusive, universal worldview of the Malay and Indian peoples and their interaction, that echo from the past.

CONCEPTUAL CONSTRUCTS AND DEFINITIONS

Prior to the textual understanding and interpretation which forms the thrust of the paper, some concepts and terms as they are specifically applied to the discussion are briefly explained in this section.

Traditionalism: Realities and worldviews

Traditionalism, also known as the perennial philosophy (Latin, *Sophia Perennis)*, refers to a school of thought propounded by an outstanding French metaphysician, René Guénon (1886-1951). Contemporary scholars such as Ananda Coomaraswamy, Titus Burckhardt, Martin Lings, Huston Smith, William Chittick, Harry Oldmeadow, James Cutsinger, and Seyyed Hossein Nasr have advocated Traditionalism "as an alternative to the secularist approach to religious phenomena" (Wikipedia 2007). Nasr has largely been responsible for its acceptance in Western academia and for its application to the comparative study of religions (Hahn et.al. 2001).

Although influential in the 20th century, the main ideas of the Traditionalists are based on the eternal principles present in all authentic traditions, originating from the Primordial Tradition itself. The conception of "Tradition" is based on the idea of *tradere,* transmission, of revealed principles that bind man to his divine origin. This is the foremost function of religion (Latin *religare*) – literally, "to bind" – man to his Creator. This principle is present in the *dharma* (Skt. *dhar*, to hold) of Hinduism which is loosely translated as the "eternal religion", and also recognizable in the *al-Hikmah al-Khalidah* or perennial philosophy of Islam.

Traditionalists discern between two dimensions of this pre-eternal bind. As pointed out by a foremost Traditionalist, Frithjof Schuon, one dimension is the exoteric or outward, phenomenal dimension of diverse religious traditions, also referred to as the "letter" of the Law or Doctrine of an individual religion. The other is the esoteric or inward, nuomenal significance beyond the diversity of religious forms, which is the

"spirit" or Essence of the Law. In the view of Schuon the unity or shared principles which he refers to as the "transcendent unity of religions" lies at this esoteric dimension or Tradition. In this view, "the historically separated traditions share not only the same divine origin but are based on the same metaphysical principles (Wikipedia 2007). Thus correspondences and affinities are detectable because they originate from shared metaphysical principles. The origin of these principles is the Absolute or Ultimate Reality which is the unknowable, supra-personal Beyond-Being, expressed as *Brahman* (Skt. literally, "no two", and "the One without a second") in the Vedantic tradition of Hinduism.

The approach of the Traditionalists may be applied to the study of literary texts, or more specifically the study of symbols in literary texts, to reveal the spiritual dimensions and essential truths inherent in symbols.[iv] The relevant ideas which are adopted to the needs of the present study may be summarized as follows: Firstly, higher levels of reality are expressed in symbolic language. Secondly, different traditions represent these realities by different symbols. Thirdly, and consequently, the meanings of traditional symbols are determined by the individual traditions. In the context of these ideas, the literary elements of the HHT text will be interpreted in order to understand the symbolism at the highest level. However, it must be stated that the application of these ideas is specifically to augment our understanding of the forms of expression, rather than to address issues of doctrine and metaphysics of the differing mystical traditions.

The main distinction made between conventional literary symbols, and traditional, spiritual symbols is that the former are subjective, arbitrary, individual, or creative expressions of the poet, whereas the latter is objective and has a precision in reference that is determined by its particular tradition. In fact, in the Traditionalists' view, symbolism is seen as an "exact science," and symbols represent the "technical" terms that authors employ in their works, and members of that tradition recognise. It is this recognition that facilitates the interpretation of symbols that are specific to a culture and religion.[v] Thus the interpretation of spiritual meaning takes place not arbitrarily or subjectively, but bound by the authority of the specific tradition.

In the traditional worldview, man, projected and manifested in the earthly domain, embodies primordial perfection and divinity. In Schuon's terms, Adamic,[vi] or primordial man is "relatively absolute" in relation to the Absolute. In this worldview,

> ... man affirms the Divine Principle in the human form by virtue of his being made 'in the image' (Latin *imago Deī*) of a Divine Being ... , his human nature expressed totality and completeness. ... he could see things directly ... and he symbolically walked with God (Herlihy 2003).

Thus the fundamental proposition is that traditional, or , "Primordial man saw God everywhere, ... and he was not enclosed in the alternative 'flesh or spirit'" (Schuon 2003). This is the particular context in which a classic text set in bygone times such HHT may be understood esoterically. And thus the diction and descriptions may take one beyond the direct and literal understanding, to a symbolic and allegoric one.

Tolerance - or encounter and engagement?

The word "tolerance" has been widely touted as the answer to conflicting religious and cultural differences. I would soundly dispute this. Such an expectation is fundamentally flawed if the anticipated result of tolerance is harmony. The definition of the verb, "to tolerate" is as follows: "Endure or bear (pain or hardship)" (NSOED 1997).[vii] While such an approach might augur well for Stoics of 300 B.C. Greece, the negativity attached to this understanding in the context of human diversity in the present, globalised context, is self-evident. In a different sense, to tolerate means: "to allow the existence, occurrence, or practice of (esp. a particular religion) without authoritative interference".

While this appears to be a more neutral, even conducive stance, the flaw lies in the fact that it involves no understanding or interest at the level of the individual, but rather, the placing of responsibility squarely upon authorities. For the individual, the approach bears connotations of the endurance of an inconvenient fact(or), precisely that of cultural diversity. Similarly, a further definition: "Treat with forbearance; find endurable, adopt a liberal attitude towards; accept without protest" is similarly flawed and insufficient, because the freedom of a "liberal attitude" does not guarantee the far-reaching demands of responsibility, besides being stoical in acceptance. Thus it may be said that on the whole, tolerance may be rejected as an attitude that falls far short of expectations. It is inadequate and ineffective in overcoming grave challenges of diversity between different cultural and religious communities of the world, especially in the context of globalisation.

On the other hand, if one looks to "engagement" and "encounter", the challenges of human diversity may not only be adequately met, but also yield a fruitful and harmonious coexistence.[viii] Engagement and encounter involves a number of deeply ingrained principles such as the aprioristic *acceptance* of human diversity, the *conviction* that diversity is a purposeful act of pre-ordained divine Will, and the *celebration* of diversity by recognising and highlighting differences as well as shared values. Towards this end the revealed texts of the world provide ample direction. The Qur'an states that the human race has been deliberately cast in different communities so that they can interact, understand, and learn from each other (xxxix:13). In another verse it is said, "... If Allah had so willed, He would have made you a single People, but (His plan is) to test you in what He hath given you; so strive as in a race in all virtues" (v:51). The words of the Bhagavad Gita resonate with similar principles:

> One who sees the Supersoul in every living being and equal everywhere does not degrade himself by his mind. Thus he approaches the transcendental destination ... When a sensible man ceases to see different identities, which are due to different material bodies, he attains to the Brahman (13:29-31)

The priceless message of these two traditions, echoed by other major religious traditions of the world, is that both diversities and commonalities of humanity may be fused harmoniously, not by merely tolerating, but actively engaging, encountering, and relating with other cultures and religions. It does not mean the homogenising of cultures but on the contrary, the recognition and maintenance of heterogeneity and plurality. Thus the richness of individual cultures may be shared and understood *on their own terms* rather than by being held up to designated templates and norms. This can engender a

meaningful dialogue, sensitise one's sense of human relatedness and interdependence, and heighten the highly-desired awareness of the "self" in the "other". This principle is noticeably embodied in the Malay word *kami*, the inclusive "we" which encompasses a sense of "you-me". In this regard, literary texts, particularly those of an uncontrived, traditional worldview that directly nourish the mind and imagination, are indeed catalysts in nurturing understanding and harmony.

ENCOUNTER WITH INDIA

The event of a mission to India comes about through a royal command. The Ruler of Melaka, Tuanku Syah Alam, is troubled by the enmity with, and threat from, the nearby kingdom of Majapahit.[ix] It is hoped that alliance with India (Bijaya Nagaram, (meaning, City of Victory)[x] will serve the safety of Melaka, and the choice of envoy falls on Hang Tuah because he "knows the Keling (assumed, Tamil) language, and besides he knows the protocol of all kings" (HHT 410).[xi] A letter to the Indian king is composed, supplies for the trip are arranged, gifts duly organized, and the party of Hang Tuah sets sail for its destination. All said and done it is an apparently politically motivated, diplomatic mission.

Details of the depiction, and the diction however, allow an interpretation that it is much more than the apparent. This may be evidenced by several factors. Firstly, in this episode the protagonist is always referred to as *laksamana* (never Hang Tuah). This begs the question, why does the teller of the tale do so?[xii] The persona, definitions, and associations of the word, might provide the answer. At the mythological level, *laksamana* is prefigured in ancient Hindu scriptural texts precisely as Lakshmana. According to the *Puranas,* Lakshmana is an incarnation of Naga (Lord of Serpents), and an inalienable part of Rama, The Perfect Man (*Purushottama*). In the *Ramayana*, Lakshmana is an invincible warrior totally devoted to the service of Rama, never coveting the throne of Ayodhya nor hesitating to join his brother in exile, serving him with unswerving loyalty, love and commitment. Thus Lakshmana symbolizes selflessness and due respect of a man for elders and superiors.[xiii] The characterization of Hang Tuah in HHT accurately reflects each of these aspects: of warrior, of respectful disposition, of selfless loyalty and service, of *kembara* (Malay, to roam, wander), corresponding to the idea of *pravrajana* in Sanskrit, meaning to go forth, set out for, exile or banishment.

The word, *laksamana* literally means admiral in Malay and in Sanskrit. In the Malay naval tradition, a *laksamana* personifies the function and power of one who has command of a ship.[xiv] Especially in the traditional worldview, this persona is connected to spiritual navigation, as will be shown in a subsequent example. At the lexical level, *laksa* means one-hundred thousand, indicative of abundance, and symbolic of spiritual plenitude and treasures of the spiritual "mansions". It also means, a sign, a mark to aim at, target, etc. Thus, the association with Laksmi, Goddess of Fortune and Prosperity, *laksana*, intellect, sight; *laksabhuta*, that which has become the aim or object (of all). Or *laksanika*, meaning "acquainted with signs, an interpreter of marks or sign; indicatory, expressing indirectly or figuratively." A search for substrings of *laksa* shows more exciting results: *ahitalaksana* noted or known for good qualities; or *buddhilaksana* a sign of intellect or wisdom.

Next, *mana/maan* means mind, intellect. Also, devotion, regard, respect, honour, or proof, demonstration. Thus, as a prefix, it conveys positive meanings, as in *manaapa* gaining the heart, attracting; *manahputa,* pure in heart, mentally pure. Thus the collocation or combination of *laksa-* and *-mana* produces not only many positive significances, but also refers directly to qualities and attributes of Hang Tuah. In this context, it may be that for the teller of the story, the choice of *laksamana* as term of reference to Hang Tuah indicates that it personifies and embodies the positive qualities mentioned. Thus the reference as *laksamana* is a purposeful, rather than random, choice in diction.

The contention here relates to the traditional worldview of a warrior. A consummate warrior (Skt. *viraha*; Malay, *wira*)[xv] not only engages in war at the physical level, but most importantly at the inward level. In Islam this principle is referred to as "the Greater War" (*jihad*) and in Hinduism epitomized by the warrior castes (*kshatriya*) engaging in the epic Battle of Kurukshetra. This principle lies at the heart of the issues of conflict and conquest, both literal and figurative, in HHT. In this context, the restraint and control accomplished in one's utterances at all times, as Hang Tuah is portrayed to have, demands introspection and battle with the self, as well as great vigilance of mind and spirit. Furthermore, this is a spiritual trait which is a constant adjunct to the act of putting the other before the self, or even viewing the other as the self. This applies to both Hang Tuah the character as well as the worldview of the *empunya ceritera* or the "owner of stories" of classical Malay texts whose worldview Hang Tuah characterizes and personifies.[xvi]

To continue with the issue of an affirmative Malay view of Indians, the attitude displayed takes the mission of Hang Tuah beyond a diplomatic mission per se. The term *Benua Keling*, meaning the Indian Continent, indicates a positive view. The word "Continent" (rather than state, or region of Bijaya Nagaram), indicates an outlook of a geographically vast, as well as politically powerful, entity. The word, *Keling* in classical Malay texts in all probability originates from the ancient empire Kalinga on the Coromandel coast of India, and to traders from that area. Thus *Keling* refers without any negative connotations, to Indians from the south. It is also associated with Kalinga, an ancient Indian tribe that fought alongside the Kauravas in the illustrious Battle of Kurukshetra, richly portrayed in the *Mahabharata.* It is mentioned in the *Mahabharata* that the Kalingas are *highly blessed, know what the eternal religion (sanatana dharma) is* (8:45), and that during his 12-year pilgrimage, Arjuna, charioteer of Krishna in the *Bhagavad Gita* (popularly known as the *Gita*), a foremost scriptural source of Hinduism, *visited all the regions of sacred waters and other holy places in Kalinga, travelling the whole of ancient India* (1:127). In the period of the Islamisation of Southeast Asia, and in the context of the Melaka Sultanate, *keling* refers specifically to Indian Muslims. Today, the terms *keling/kelinga*, in Malaysia draw different responses: on one hand, some Malays are proud of it,[xvii] in some cases it is neutral.[xviii] However for the most part, it has degenerated to a pejorative term, to refer especially to Indian Tamils. Tamils take a certain degree of offence to this label, as it carries connotations of poor, uneducated, downtrodden workers from the estates. The Malay idiomatic expression, *karam keling* for example, is a disparaging form of reference to Indians, indicating noisy, unruly, melodramatic behavior and speech. This is certainly a far cry from the noble heritage of the past.

Apart from the apparent historical, geographical or political associations, the assumption may be made that culturally, the Malay-Muslim Ruler of Melaka has no hesitation or bias in establishing his kinship with an Indian-Hindu king. Admittedly the Ruler of Melaka is motivated by a desire to align himself politically with the Indians, but it is interesting that the connection forged is on a basis of immediate kinship, and not as ally or associate or friend, or any of the "unholy alliances" customarily formed for fulfulling diplomatic agendas as such. Specifically, the Indian king is "our relative" (*saudara kita*) (410). When *saudara* is phonetically associated with *se-darah* (*se-* meaning the same, or similar) it means of or from the same blood. According to the narration in HHT, the Sultan of Melaka and the Ruler of Benua Keling, Kisna Rayan are siblings from the same father who is in Bukit Siguntang.[xix] However, when they were young, in Melaka, they quarreled and parted ways. The Sultan wants therefore, to restore that sibling relationship. Accordingly, the Malay ruler says, "we want to send an envoy ... to our noble younger brother (*paduka adinda*)... the ruler who is a great king" (410).

In this instance, the fraternal relationship of "the self" with "the other" is evident, as is the affirmative view of "the other", deemed "a great king".[xx] At a deeper level, the sentiments expressed hint at the original kinship of all humans, or the human race, as articulated in the *Manu Dharmashastra,* the Hindu scriptural authority of righteous human conduct. Then again, perhaps in his quest Hang Tuah has mastered that eternal "language of languages",[xxi] the spiritual means of expression that unites mankind. This assumption is based on the fact that Hang Tuah learned (*mengaji*) the Keling language from a religious teacher. The term *mengaji* is used in the original Malay text in the context of learning the language, whereas it means to read the Quran; to study; to learn knowledge. Thus all of Hang Tuah's learning is seen to be centred on a specific, religious context, opening a portal to the mystical dimensions.

A letter to the Indian king is composed in an enchanting "garland of words" (*mengarang surat*) expressing the purpose of the mission in the following terms:

> ... because your elder brother misses you extremely, and has pent up yearning (*rindu dendam*) to hear from you and from your esteemed pen (*kalam yang muazam*) ... and between Melaka and Benua Keling there should rightly be closeness and there is no artifice in that (411).

By way of explication it may be said that when a connection exists between "blood brothers" there is indeed no artifice in cultivating it. Therefore the deliberate emphasis on elements of brotherhood and benevolence vis-à-vis the relations between Melaka and India sets the tone for a journey that goes beyond artificial and superficial bonds. Yet, it is a bond that is at the same time, necessarily cross-cultural in nature.

Of immense significance in terms of inter-cultural harmony, as well as cultural plurality are the historical facts concerning Vijayanagar, an empire of southern India of the 12th and 13th centuries, and the Bijaya Nagaram of Hang Tuah's mission. According to sources,

> Vijayanagar became the greatest empire of southern India. By serving as a barrier against invasion by the Muslim sultanates of the north, it fostered the reconstruction of Hindu life and administration after the disorders and disunities of the 12th and 13th centuries. Contact with the Muslims (who were not personally disliked) stimulated new thought and creative

> productivity. Sanskrit was encouraged as a unifying force, and regional literatures thrived. Behind its frontiers the country flourished in unexampled peace and prosperity (Brittanica On-line 2007).

Of special interest here are the facts about the empire of Vijayanagar: firstly, the fact of conflict, the Muslim invasion, and that Vijayanagar served "as a barrier against" it; secondly, the fact of harmony, that "contact with the Muslims stimulated new thought and creative productivity". Between these two facts, language (Sanskrit) served as a unifying force. This concurrence of discord *and* accord between the Hindu and the Muslim cultures reflects the well-established view about the nature of centuries of Moghul rule in India, illustrating the remarkable possibilities of not just coexisting in peace *in spite of* differences, but thriving as *a result of* them. The facts encapsulate the view in the fiction with regard to the Malay perspective of the Indians. Evidently Hang Tuah's mission goes beyond "tolerance", and beyond a visit, a mission, or any label that may be appropriately diplomatic in tone. Rather, it embodies the principles of engagement and encounter. The truth of this claim will be intensified further with regard to details of the voyage *to* India, and an event *in* India.

Voyage to India

Principal facets of the voyage are the ubiquitous numbers, signs and personae featured. It is narrated that the mission comprising 12 vessels sails with *laksamana* aboard the Mendam Berahi for seven days and seven nights, steered by a pilot who is also competent in understanding signs (*melihat alamat*) (414). In this narration, *mendam berahi*, an archaic Malay expression, may be translated as *penahan nafsu* which literally means "suppressor of lust". Thus the voyage to India is on one level, a physical (sensual and sexual) test of endurance. On a spiritual level the endurance serves as and contributes to the purification from sensual and earthly desires, a crucial process in the spiritual life. The transformational power of water is a well-known metaphor of spiritual purification. Besides, on a metaphorical level the journey is a *kembara*, a centrifugal wandering forth in quest of meaningful encounters with the other or that which is strange and alien. Also metaphorically, "to sail the seven seas" may refer to the charting of new waters, a quest for the unknown. Symbolically, the vessel may be seen as the body and the sea as life experiences and challenges one engages in. On a metaphysical level it is an advancement inwards, an introspection, a journey of coming to know the self. Each one of these levels of understanding point to a harmony of intention and action, with one's environment, physical or otherwise.

The voyage takes 7 days and 7 nights for the stops on the way. The number 7 has a sacred significance in both the Indian and the Malay cultures, being invested with holy attributes (*keramat*). The journey of the ascent (*mikraj)* of Muhammad, the Prophet of Islam, passed through the 7 heavens. Equally important, during the Muslim pilgrimage to Mekah (*haj*), a pilgrim circumambulates the Ka'ba 7 times; and casts 7 stones at the Devil. Religious significances also hold in the Hindu religion. There are 7 levels of earth (*bhumi loka*) and 7 levels of heaven (*swarga loka*); in a happy marriage one hopes to be reincarnated in 7 lives with the same spouse etc. The narration of the total number of days taken, including stopping at places on the way (the island, the colonised territories (*jajahan*) of Benua Keling, the river mouth) is 18 (or 7+1+3+7) (413-4). In the Hindu system of numerology, the number 18 is represented thus: 7+1+3+7=18=1+8=9, with 9 being the highest possible prime number. Thus it is a celestial number – there are nine

celestial spheres, and nine degrees in the hierarchy of the angels, and nine corresponds, geometrically, to the circumference of the circle (Lings 1991). Allah provided Moses with *Nine clear Signs* of His power to show Pharaoh (xvii:101). Therefore it may be said that the numbers in the narration are not incidental or inadvertent, but a deliberate choice.

When asked by the admiral how much longer the voyage would take, the pilot of the ship replies: "until we see the signs" (414). This evokes the Qur'anic verse: *We shall show them Our signs on the horizons and in themselves* (xli:53). The persona of the pilot, in charting the journey and guiding the ship in consonance with "signs", also allows a religious application. God gives man His signs (*ayat*), for example through the elements, nature, and so on. The crossing of the waters (the seas) is a well-established feature of major religious traditions of the world as a symbol of transformation and purification. Besides, the voyage may be associated with an inward journey, as the word used for pilot, *mualim,* also includes the religious sense of the word to mean religious scholar. Esoterically, one can describe the voyage thus: the religious instruction is a preparation or purification for a spiritual path to a spiritual destination. This interpretation sees Hang Tuah as one who is well-versed in his religion. This is a fundamental prerequisite in moving upwards, or inwards to a subsequent spiritual station (Ar. *maqam)* on the path to God (Ar. *tariqa*).

Briefly, it may be said of the discussion in this section that elements regarding the mission from its initiation to the voyage itself, point towards a different, and deeper, dimension of the narrative than a purely political or secular aspect. It should be noted that all the aspects of the voyage *to* India are in fact, preparation, in terms of spiritual purification for the enormous event of Hang Tuah's meeting with his spiritual master in the person of a saint of the highest order in the Sufi tradition. Khidir, assuming the role of the master appears to him (referred to as Nabi Khidhir in the narrative) (414). The discussion of details which allows deeply religious and mystical interpretations of this encounter between *murshid* and *murid* (spiritual guide and pupil) is beyond the scope of this paper. It is sufficient to mention here that India has been called the spiritual home of the major religious and mystical traditions of the world because it has witnessed and nurtured the flowering of both indigenous (Hinduism, Buddhism) and alien (Christianity, Islam) religious systems on a sustained basis. In this connection, Hang Tuah's encounter may be viewed as testimony to the participation of the Malays in a universal belief system that was shared by cultures spreading from India, through to the Middle East and Southeast Asia. In this context the HHT contributes significantly to the innate cross-cultural harmony that existed in its time and in its originating society.

The Mounting of the Giant Horse

The idea of Hang Tuah's connection to India being of spiritual significance may be further illustrated and applied in the discussion of an event that occurs *in* India. To situate the event of the horse ride appropriately, it needs to be known that during Hang Tuah's stay in Bijaya Nagaram, he engages with Kisna Rayan, the great Indian king, Nala Sang Guna, a member of the royal entourage, and the Indian subjects, on myriad levels throughout the duration of his stay. To name only a few, the consequences and influence of the extraordinary characteristics and personality of Hang Tuah on the Indians, his materialising of an enormous tree, his unforeseen appointment as India's envoy to China, his respectful preoccupation in visiting a Hindu temple, his influence in the bearing of a

child to the childless Nala Sang Guna, his solution to the alarming problem of the shortage of firewood for cooking.

Having established his position and endeared himself to the Indians, on one occasion Kisna Rayan challenges Hang Tuah to display his skills in horsemanship. Again, beyond the apparent challenge and the display, the occasion allows interpretation of rich essential significances. Says Kisna Rayan: "Hey admiral do you know how to mount a large swift steed (*kuda tezi*) ... there is a horse of ours ... it is extremely fine, there has never been one who has mounted it" (426). This description foreshadows the skittish nature of the horse. What follows is described in the extract below:

> So the admiral bowed in obeisance (*menyembah*) saying, 'Long live my lord, your slave requests forgiveness and favour from the Dust of the Feet of your Most Noble Highness (*ke bawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia*). I know how, but only if it is on the royal command of Syah Alam (Lord of the World) is your slave bold enough to mount (426).

From the diction in the above extract it is clear that Hang Tuah communicates in deferential gestures and speech. The concept of *menyembah* applies to a physical act of deference at many levels - ordinary human, royal, or divine. The same may be said of his utterance of utmost verbal deference. The cross-cultural integration in the phrase *ke bawah Duli Yang Maha Mulia*, is displayed in the literal English translation above, of a formulaic utterance by the Malay soceity. In the traditional Hindu practice, it applies both in the royal and divine contexts, in accordance with the concept of god-king (*deva raj*). In this worldview, kings are God's representative on earth, of divine descent, and regarded as beings above ordinary mortals. In this context, a bearing and conduct of highest honour (*maha mulia*) is incumbent on royalty, and accordingly complemented by the subjects in terms of deference shown. Thus the language and the act places the whole interaction on a religious basis. The gesture and the speech is a shared practice in both the Indian and the Malay cultures of the past, and traces of it still linger in certain contexts of contemporary Malay society.

And so the command is decreed and the horse brought before the royal assembly hall. The depiction of the horse is as follows:

> ... the horse was 6 *hasta* in height.[xxii] And it appeared to be shining and as green as a beetle's wings and its bearing was as if it did not tread the earth and its disposition was that of an excited lion (426-7).

The hyperbolic and superlative description of the sight of the horse effectively conveys the picture of an exceedingly large, extraordinary animal. At a deeper level, the ferocious shining steed whose feet do not tread the ground, conveys the image of a super-normal, creature with mythical and theological connotations. The horse is a symbol of amplified energy , and has as its purpose the empowerment of the ruler as a universal monarch. Tamed, the horse symbolizes forces that can be controlled to benefit society.[xxiii] Hindu mythology is rich with the glory of horses. In the *Puranas*, the horse Vivasvat (also known as Visvakarman, Architect of the Universe) is a solar stallion, pulling the sun. According to the *Vishnu Purana*, at the end of time (*Kaliyuga*) the final incarnation of Vishnu (Kalki) will appear riding a white horse named Devaduta (Ambassador of the Gods). In the Islamic tradition, the *buraq, a* human-faced, winged horse sped the Prophet

through the seven Heavens. In this context, it may be said that in the king's challenge to Hang Tuah to tame this horse lies a much more profound significance than merely a test of his prowess as a horseman. It may be related rather, to the taming of the ego, through divine grace and intervention.

This may be further substantiated by events that follow, and especially by the diction of the account. The admiral pays obeisance to the king, and adjusts his *keris* (or kris, a double-bladed dagger) to the fore in a symbolic gesture of acceptance and preparation. Approaching the horse he takes hold of the reins and whispers to the keeper of the horse to teach him the secret to the mounting of the swift steed (427). Here again Hang Tuah finds recourse in the subtle and spiritual realities. Firstly, in the Malay culture, the kris of Hang Tuah, *Taming Sari*, is an illustrious emblem of the Malay race, believed to possess *sakti* (energy and power) and *keramat* (sacral attributes). Secondly, the whispered request and instructions between Hang Tuah and the horse keeper is suggestive of a spiritual method, the whispered instructions of the *murshid* to his *murid* in revealing the secret of the invocation of the Supreme Name. It may also refer to a divine self-Disclosure by God to a purified and beloved servant (Ar. *al-sirr*, secret; Skt. *guhya-tamam*, confidential knowledge). Thirdly, the word *syarat* in the text, apart from the mundane meaning of "condition", has many other senses: stipulation, assurance, requirement, fees given to martial arts teacher or shaman, and thus means more than a physical method of riding a horse. All the elements mentioned provide a deeper dimension to this action of Hang Tuah.

Besides, the word *tezi/teji* in Malay (describing the horse) may be etymologically related to the Sanskrit term *tej* or *teja*, a concept which has spiritual associations. *Tej* means sharpness. In the spiritual context this relates to spritual discernment or discrimination between the Real and the unreal, and *tejas* is splendour, brilliance, light, energy, spirit, spiritual or moral or magical power or influence, majesty, dignity, glory, etc. In the *Rig Veda* it is fire. In the context of commencement of instructions from a guru to his student, a line from a well-known *sloka* (verse) of the *Katha Upanishad* includes the petition, *may we acquire the capacity for brilliance* (*tejasvina vadhitamastu*). In the Gita, a reference to Krishna's power is referred to as *tejomayam visvam*, meaning, My universal divine splendour (11:47). Thus the spiritual associations are copious, and consistent with the symbolism of the horse as discussed above.

Once he has received the special instructions for mounting the horse, the admiral leaps onto its back and speeds away. What follows of the horse-ride is described thus:

> ... the horse jumped like lightning, moving as if it did not touch the ground. And the garments of the admiral were rent to shreds, flying in pieces behind him. Then the admiral remembered what had been taught by his *guru* the keeper of the horse (427).

Whereas on the surface this is apparently a description of a man riding a very fast horse, esoterically interpreted it yields different levels of meaning. The association of the horse's movement with lightning heightens the image of swiftness as well as indicates immediate participation in the elements and/or nature. The description of the horse not touching the ground amplifies the surreal effect of speed of the event, indicating acceleration and force in a spiritual context. This is associated not with temporal speed but rather suggests a "quantum leap" from the physical context of time, into the "time

warp" of physics, that corresponds to the metaphysical context of eternity. Thus Hang Tuah participates in the subtle realities where "time" is "timeless". Hang Tuah's clothes being rent is evocative of the Sufi concept of rending of the garments as a metaphor for the shredding of the ego (*nafs*) in purification for union with God, or shedding of personal vanity. This is further intensified with the information that pieces of his garments are flying behind him, interpreted as symbolic of the leaving behind, or shedding of, the last vestiges of the "self" or the individuality of Hang Tuah, to attain awareness of his state of annhiliation (Ar. *fana*) or nothingness before God. Finally, the mention that he "remembered" what he had been taught by the *guru* evokes the mystical practice of *zikir*, the remembrance of God through the unceasing recitation of the Divine Names as practiced by the Sufis. The fact that Hang Tuah "remembers" the "teachings", with specific mention of his "guru" or spiritual teacher, situates the incident equivocally and expressly in mystical circumstances.

To summarise, this act of Hang Tuah's, as well as all the other aspects of the event of his victory over of the great horse shows clearly that it is more than a proof of his manliness, or horsemanship, or heroism – it is a spontaneous reflection of his religiosity, and the centrality of God to his every act. Hang Tuah is a traditional man for whom every act is an act of worship and every human endeavour a remembrance of, and praise of, his Creator. This view or interpretation harkens back to the original premise of understanding of the text in this paper, "Believing is seeing." This is associated with the reason for Creation, expressed in the beautiful "holy utterance" loved by Sufis: *I was a Hidden Treasure and I loved to be known, and so I created the world* (in Lings 1991). In a similar metaphor of treasure the Gita expresses the purpose of man's existence, that is, to gain spiritual realization in the knowledge that: *Of the splendid I am the splendour/ ... of the Pandavas I am the winner of wealth* (10:36-7). The view of the purpose of life for traditional man mirrors the Qur'anic verse: *The seven Heavens and the earth and all that is therein glorify Him, nor is there anything but glorifieth Him with praise; yet ye understand not their glorification* (xvii:44). A correspondence in the Hindu scripture is not difficult to find: *Whatsoever being there is, endowed with glory and grace and vigour, know that to have sprung from a fragment of my splendor* (10:41)

CONCLUSION

By studying a text in that is set in traditional Melaka and India, and in the mythical past rather in the contemporary world, it is possible to contextualise the principle of harmony with a certain detachment and objectivity. Certainly it is admitted that in current times conditions have changed that perhaps make it too challenging to practice or foster harmony at a level and scale that has been shown to exist in HHT. Be that as it may, the wisdom of the past gives us a template for observing principles that are immutable, as well as for practices that are certainly adaptable to suit the contemporary milieu.

Based on the textual study and interpretation, the insights gained into the worldview that is embodied in the character of Hang Tuah and in his deeds, argue for the wisdom of the past and the traditional realities. If this dimension is not addressed, the fullness of the text is bound to be overlooked, and the richness of the work undermined.[xxiv] Besides, as far as the harmony of cross-cultural relations is concerned, the overall portrayal and the diction spell an inherent accord. The nature of this accord between two different cultural and belief systems, the Indian-Hindu and the Malay-

Muslim, is not incidental or accidental or even coincidental. Rather it is spontaneous and unconscious, lending itself easily to the identification of valid parallels, and having much to show us of the way to unity and accord that has been forgotten. Ultimately it epitomises the profound truth that the Traditionalists call the transcendent unity of religions.

ENDNOTES

[i] In Kassim Ahmad 1992.

[ii] All the extracts used in this paper are taken from Kassim Ahmad's transliterated Malay version of the text of the HHT in the Jawi script. I have translated them into English deliberately to preserve and reflect the worldview and language in the original Malay text. The innocence and simplicity of the society is mirrored in the unconscious artlessness of the language of the period. There is currently no English translation of the work published as yet, although Malaysian National Laureate, Muhammad Haji Salleh has recently completed translating the text of HHT into English. The *Kamus Perwira* Malay-English Dictionary (1998) was consulted for translating the extracts for this paper.

[iii] An approximate time frame of the society portrayed is the "Golden Age" of Melaka, c.1456-1511 (Kassim 1992).

[iv] The explanation in the following paragraphs is extracted from the author's upcoming book, *Unveiling the Garden of Love: Mystical Symbolism in* Layla Majnun *and* Gitagovinda, currently in press with World Wisdom publications, Indiana U.S.A.

[v] See, Coomaraswamy, 1989, p.131. For an excellent elucidation of the particularity in meaning of sacred symbols, see Ghazi bin Muhammad 2001.

[vi] In Sanskrit, *Adi* meaning First or Foremost, and the Hindi/Urdu *aadmi* meaning man or person, have equivalent semantic significance.

[vii] All definitions in English are extracted from a digital version of the New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary, January 1997. Version 1.0.03. Oxford University Press, London, and Electronic Publishing B.V. Rotterdam, The Netherlands.

[viii] This discussion draws heavily from Md. Salleh Yaapar's essay (2007).

[ix] The Sultan of Melaka is the son-in-law of the Ruler of Majapahit; the ruler is angry because the sultan has taken another wife, Tun Teja of Indrapura/Pahang.

[x] As referred to in the text. Bijaya Nagaram refers, in all probability, to Vijayanagar, (previously of the Mysore kingdom), a city of great ruins in present-day Andhra Pradesh, south India. See "Britannica Online Encyclopaedia", http://www.britannica.com/ eb/article-9075336/Vijayanagar (accessed on 25 September 2007).

[xi] All further quotations from the text of HHT will state only the page number in brackets.

[xii] Special thanks to my mentor and friend Professor Md. Salleh Yaapar for his unreserved generosity in sharing ideas and for the enthralling discussions on relevant cross-cultural significances.

[xiii] http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lakshmana (accessed on 25 September 2007).

[xiv] Laksamana Abdul al-Jamil, the powerful Johor courtier who in retaliation captured the capital of Jambi in 1679, is possibly a model for the character of Hang Tuah (quoted in Md. Salleh 2007).

[xv] All terms in Sanskrit are quoted by reference to the "Cologne Digital Sanskrit Lexicon." http://sanskritdocuments.org/dict/ (accessed 24 September 2007); specific Islamic terms or those of spiritual significance in Malay, where synonymous with the terms in Arabic, are from the *Kamus Dewan* (1989) Malay dictionary. If they are not found in this dictionary, Arabic terms are used as they appear in the different sources of reference.

[xvi] The HHT originates from the oral tradition of the Malays.

[xvii] Some have it as part of their names, e.g. Professor Zainal Keling.

[xviii] As place names, e.g. Tanjung Keling.

[xix] Referring to Siguntang mountain as well as the mythical, sacred Mount Mahameru, which symbolizes the divine origin of Malay kings.

[xx] The use kinship terms as deferential terms is reciprocal between the Indians and the Malays and prevalent in the speech of all the characters. For example, at the level of the commoner: "...the admiral conveyed his respects, invited the harbour master to sit down '... you are like a father to us, your slaves.' And the harbour master felt love for the admiral for he spoke so humbly and words that came forth from his lips were so sweet. The harbour master said, 'what would be wrong if my children were to accept me as your father. It is true these children are my children'" (415). Higher up the social hierarchy, Nala Sang Guna's wife says to Hang Tuah's men 'these sir, are a mother's gift of outfits. Make no mistake; it is nothing but as a sign that mother takes you sirs, as children, because father and mother do not have children; sirs will be our children." To this, the admiral replies: 'In the heart of this enslaved one (*diperhamba*) it is the same; the father of mother, in the afterlife is the father of this slave, there is no doubt, in the name of Allah!" (426). At the level of royalty, Kisna Rayan says: 'Hey admiral, what news of my father in Mount Siguntang and my royal elder brother in Melaka?' (423).

[xxi] In the ancient civilizations referred to as "green language" and the "language of the Birds." It refers to the oblique writing styles used by alchemists, magicians, and other mystical initiates to communicate with one another publicly while 'concealing' the information from the hostile or unworthy. In the Christian tradition it appears in the following context: And how hear we every man in our own tongue, wherein we were born? (King James 2:8). http://altreligion.about.com/library/glossary/symbols/bldefgreenlanguage.htm (accessed on 30 September 2007).

[xxii] One *hasta* (from elbow to tip of middle finger) is approximately 20 inches, which makes the horse about 10 feet tall.

[xxiii] In physics, using the British system, the unit of work is HP, horse-power. http://www. khandro.net/ animal_horse.htm (accessed on 20 September 2007).

[xxiv] In this context I disagree with Kassim Ahmad, eminent Malay scholar, that: "We certainly do not intend to compare those great epics (the *Illiad* and the *Odessey*) with this simple Malay epic".

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SESSION 3
Religion and Ethnicity

Chairperson: Dr.Wariya Chinwanno

1. Religious Tolerance in Multi–Ethnic Malaysia. - *Jayum A. Jawan, Zaid Ahmad, Mohd Mahadee Ismail* & Ahmad Fauzi Hj Morad

2. Challenges to Ethnic Harmony in Burma: A Historical Overview. - *Marja-Leena Heikkilä-Horn*

3. Marginalization as a Result of Statelessness: A Case Study of the Thai Undocumented People from Rom Thai Village. - *Thanida Boonwanno*

4. Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand. - *Patise Chuaykunoopakan*

Paper 1 Religious Tolerance in Malaysia: A Case Study in the Peninsular

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Abstract

Religious Tolerance: A Case Study in Peninsular Malaysia is a two-year, national research project sponsored by the Federal Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment (MOSTE), Malaysia. The research attempted to gauge the level of understanding as well as the degree of tolerance among the various ethnic communities towards each other's religions and religious practices. In this respect, the study is a pioneering attempt to measure the level of understanding and degree of tolerance in the Peninsular. Previously, literature on and opinion expressed by various quarters on this subject have largely being based on general, isolated empirical evidences. In most instances, the general conclusions have been that there is a certain degree of tolerance among the various multi ethnic societies of Malaysia. But, on the continuum or scale of 0 to 10, where zero signifies the absence of tolerance and 10 being most tolerance, where exactly would the various ethnic communities be in that scale? This is the major question that this research addressed.

INTRODUCTION

The peoples of Malaysia are noted for being tolerance. This is one of a few characteristics that have frequently been ascribed to the Malay, Chinese, Indian, Kadazandusun and Dayak peoples that have helped them to peacefully live side by side since the formation of Malaysia in 1963.[1] As mobility and inter-connectedness increase as the year goes by, various incidents have from time to time flared up to challenge this basic assumption. Are contemporary Malaysians really tolerance as their forebears have been? Have this character waned as the degree of inter-connectedness increased? These are the basic questions that guide the formulation of this research.

This paper presents an extract of a result of a two year nationally-funded research on "Religious Tolerance in Malaysia". The case study was based on samples drawn exclusively from the Peninsula. The presentation of the study is organised into four sections. Firstly, the next section discusses some conceptual matters, including identifying the need of the study and discussing some concepts related to the study. In this section, the objectives of the study are also outlined. Secondly, the paper briefly discusses the research design that guided the collection of primary data especially. This

[1] Terms of the "Social Contract" of the Federation of Malaya (1948 and 1957) can attest to this, as well as the Malaysia Agreements that formed a unique federal state. For same details see Zaitul Himmah Adnan. 2006. Kontrak Sosial dan Perlembagaan Malaysia (Chapter 5) and Jayum A. Jawan. 2006. Perjanjian Malaysia dan Perlembagaan Malaysia. Both in Jayum A. Jawan & Zaid Ahmad (ed). Hubungan Etnik: Panduan Pengajaran & Pembelajaran. Serdang: Jabatan Pengajian Kenegaraan & Ketamadunan.

was the core of the whole study as the findings were based on them. Thirdly, the paper discusses some of the main findings related to religious tolerance among the three major ethnic groups in the Peninsula.

NATURE OF THE STUDY

This section discusses the basic concept of tolerance that is the central theme in this study. This is to clarify the concept so that the formulation of questions to be administered to randomly selected respondents may be done accordingly.

The Concept

What is Tolerance?

The term "tolerance" is too frequently used to describe perceptions and reactions of one ethnic community toward another. Malaysia prides itself in the fact that there is some degree of tolerance that has been exercised by one ethnic community towards another, be that among the Malay toward the Chinese or Indian and vice versa. In this context, tolerance is therefore associated with the withholding of some outbursts or objections at the way the other ethnic person or community do things that the former finds highly objectionable or even repulsive. The objection or repulsiveness could be associated with the ways one ethnic person or community does things, religious, cultural or political.

Religious Tolerance

Religious tolerance is one specific dimension of tolerance. It is about tolerating or the withholding of direct outburst or objections to those practices related to a particular religion. A resident may find objectionable his neighbour's practice of erecting a huge shrine in his lawn, but does nothing about it-i.e. does not complain. A resident's practice of holding feast outside his or her home in a residential area may be objectionable as it normally span several lawn areas and directly encroaching into frontal portion of his or her neighbours' spaces. Rearing of animals as pets such as dogs and cats can also be quite religiously sensitive to some people.

Religious tolerance study looked at these dimensions of behaviours, instead of the general tolerance of a non-specific nature.

The Problem

Religious tolerance is part of the overall problem and challenge relating to the question of nation building, integration and unity in plural Malaysia. In fact, it is one of the more important components that contribute to social harmony necessary to generate political stability that would continue to ensure economic prosperity. Understanding the nature of this problem is very important as a pre-condition to be able to better manage the delicate problem. The stakes, social harmony, political stability and economic prosperity, are too high not to undertake to better understand this problem and challenge.

The Nature of the Problem

The basic problem relating to religious tolerance, like other related problems of nation state building in Malaysia, is that Malaysians do not know precisely the nature and extent of the problem. Neither do they really know where their nation state stands in term of the degree of religious tolerance. This is in spite of the fact that this problem is fundamental to the very existence of the plural nation state.

For example, on a scale of 0 to 10 ("0" representing absolute absence of and a "10" a state of perfect religious tolerance), where do Malaysia and its plural society stand? Are Malaysia and its peoples merely hovering just above the minimal mark or level? If different opinions about Malaysia's state of affairs relating to nation building processes are any indication, then the situation is not that rosy.[2]

The Objective of the Study

This study is attempting something bold, that is, to measure the state of religious tolerance among the diverse ethnic communities in Malaysia. For a start, the study is confined to the Peninsula. More specifically, the study sought to measure (1) the level of understanding (knowledge) of selected respondents (a) about their own respective religion, (b) as well as religion of others, and (2) the level of religious tolerance of one ethnic community of the religious practice of another.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This research utilises quantitative approach – which requires survey to be carried out among respondents using close-ended questionnaire. There were a total of 90 questions to be answered by respondents. Apart from answering close-ended questionnaires, an in-depth interviews and observations were also carried out among selected informants from the samples.

Population, Location and Sampling

In this research, the target population is the whole peninsula population. Altogether, there were 743 respondents randomly selected as samples (refer to Table 1).

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[2] See for examples, Jayum A. Jawan. 2006. Perpaduan Masyarakat Pelbagai Etnik dan Kesejahteraan Sosial. Paper presented at the Konvensyen Kebangsaan Pembentukan Masyarakat ke arah Masyarakat Sejahtera dan Saksama. Jointly organised by Institut Sosial Malaysia & Universiti Sains Malaysia, Prince Hotel, KL, 1 -2 June 2006, and "The Lonely Bridge Builder", New Straits Times, 19 February 2006 in which Khoo Kay Kim, a leading historian was reported to have said that the current state of affairs relating to inter-ethnic relations in Malaysia is "deplorable" especially in comparison before.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by State/ Region

State/Region	Population ('000)	Estimated Sample (%	Estimated Respondents	Actual Respondents
Johor	3101	4	119	89
Kedah	1848	4	72	31
Kelantan	1506	4	57	61
Melaka	713	4	28	31
Negeri Sembilan	946	4	38	26
Pahang	1427	4	56	49
Perak	2256	4	89	106
Perlis	225	4	9	30
Pulau Penang	1469	4	57	35
Selangor	4736	4	181	181
Terengganu	1017	4	39	38
Kuala Lumpur	1556	4	60	66
Total	**1585**	**48**	**805**	**743**

Source: Survey Data.

Samples were collected from both urban and rural areas. Particular attention was paid to the fact that priority of areas selected for the study was mixed residential ones. Areas selected and respondents targeted were based on a number of methods such as random sampling that was also supplemented by snowballing technique.

Field Work

Main data were collected using a set of questionnaire that were tested prior to the real/ actual data collection. In many instances, enumerators were hired. All were trained before being sent out to villages throughout the Peninsula. Random supervisions were carried out among all enumerators. This was done to ensure that they were doing their work according to briefing as well as schedule and pace that have been set for them. Furthermore, the appearance and involvement of research in fieldworks also contributed to respondents' responsiveness as the latter knew that they were dealing with peoples from the university. Furthermore, researchers were also interested in in-depth interviews among selected respondents in order to extract more details about personal experiences relating to the subject matter.

Analysis

The study set out to be a simple one and at best exploratory in nature. This was bearing in mind that this study was probably one of a few pioneering ones dealing with the "highly" sensitive issues in ethnic relations in Malaysia. Hence, the analysis was basically confined to the analysis of responses in term of percentage or frequencies.

The standard Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) programme was used to manage and analysed the data. It is from this analysis that responses in the form of frequencies were extracted and presented in the section on findings.

FINDINGS

Selected findings of the study are as presented below and under separate headings. These are extracts, and the full research findings may be referred to from the report already submitted to Universiti Putra Malaysia and the Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment, Malaysia.

Knowledge of Own Religion

According to the survey, the majority of West Malaysians know about their own religion, whether that is of Islam, Christianity, Hinduism or Buddhism. The survey found that about 49% of the respondents confessed to having high level of knowledge of their own religion, while another about 44% to having an average level of knowledge. Only about 7% .31 admitted that they knew very little about their own religion.

Selected Indicators of Religious Tolerance

This sub-section presents selected indicators of religious tolerance. Understandably, these indicators will be subjected to debate. Nevertheless, they do provide some basis for initial discussion before more concrete ones may be acceptable and be able to contribute to better understanding this phenomenon in Malaysia.

Open House

One's willingness to attend open houses held by people of another religion is in fact a good first indicator to measure his or her tolerance of other religious practices. In this aspect, Malaysians have generally been quite a tolerance lots. A majority of about 62% of the respondents said that they were willing to attend open houses held by peoples of other religions, especially those celebrations held by their friends, colleagues and family members (Table 2). Only about 15% expressed strong feeling that they would not participate in such activities.

Table 2: Open Houses

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	126	17
Agree	334	45
Uncertain	171	23
Disagree	59	8
Strongly Disagree	52	7
All Responses	**742**	**100**

Source: Survey Data

"Open houses", a uniquely Malaysian tradition, is definitely a good start to promote better religious understanding, not just religious tolerance. Since early 2000s, the federal government has taken this tradition a step further when it decided to host them at federal level. This federal government's move was soon followed by some state government. It augurs well for not only religious diversities, but also cultural plurality that existed in contemporary Malaysia. However, lately, this tradition could have suffered a major setback when a Conference of Ulama (religious scholars) called for its review,

especially the 'Kongsi Raya" celebration[3]. The call for review would affect not only Kongsi Raya (shared celebrations), but others such Deepavali, Christmas, Gawai Dayak & Tadau Kaamatan as open celebrations celebrated by Malaysian of all faiths.

Inter-ethnic Relations

"Love is blind" says an adage. Well, how blind is it for Malaysian? At least 64% of the respondents said that they were willing to build friendship across the ethnic divide (Table 3). Only about 2% said that they would certainly not, while another 28% were undecided or unsure if they would. This is rather encouraging considering the facts that the various ethnic communities in the Peninsula have been divided during the long colonial rule and that inter-ethnic relations were harmed by numerous unfortunate incidents during the immediate pre-independence period-e.g. the Malayan Union, the communist insurgencies of the late 1940s, the emergency of 1948 and the ethnic riot of 1969.

Table 3: Acceptance of Friends from Other Religions

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	208	28
Agree	475	64
Uncertain	44	6
Disagree	14	2
Strongly Disagree	0	0
All Responses	**741**	**100**

Source: Survey Data

Ready to Discuss Religious Matter

The survey shows that the majority of the respondents indicated that they were not ready to openly discuss matter relating to religion. Only about 41% of the respondents said that they were ready for the open discussion about religion, while about 21% were certain that they were not ready then (Table 4). About 29% were unsure if they were then ready to take up the issue. Many cited that the matter was highly sensitive and that rationality may not rule the day although the intention may be good in wanting a religious dialogue between various followers of different religions.

[3] "Ulamas want kongsi raya celebrations reviewed", The Star, 14 June 2006. "Ulama (Islamic Scholars) Conference 2006" working committee chairman, Harussani Zakaria was reported to have said that "kongsi raya" celebration needed to be reviewed because the National Fatwa Committee had decided that celebrating the festivals of other religions could erode the faith of Muslims and that could lead to blasphemy. The Fatwa Committee's decision, however, was then still in its written form and has yet to be forwarded to the Government for action. The conference also came up with 22 other resolutions which would be presented to the Sultan of Perak, state government, Federal Government and the Council of Rulers. Harussani, who is also the Perak Mufti, said that the resolutions passed included asking all state Fatwa Councils to set up their respective action committee specifically to respond to views put forward by practitioners of liberalism and pluralism, which, he argued, attack the faith of Muslims.

Table 4: Readiness to Discuss Religious matters

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	67	9
Agree	297	40
Uncertain	215	29
Disagree	104	14
Strongly Disagree	52	7
All Responses	**735**	**99**

Source: Survey Data

However, while majority felt that religion can be discussed, many also felt it at the same time that the subject is rather too "sensitive" to be openly discussed. About 68% of the respondents were of the opinion that religious matters were too sensitive for open discussion (Table 5). Only a small proportion of about 13% felt that they are ready for the open dialogue on matters pertaining to religion. This finding appeared to contradict their earlier sentiment that it was alright to have some discussion over them.

Table 5: Religion too Sensitive for open discussion

Responses	Number	Percentage
Strongly Agree	223	30
Agree	275	37
Uncertain	141	19
Disagree	67	9
Strongly Disagree	30	4
All Responses	**736**	**100**

Source: Survey Data

The general findings indicate that the level of religious tolerance is not that high up on the scale. Feeling of "openness" is one thing but that feeling is not matched by overt action or behaviour of tolerance. Undoubted, it can be argued that there is a general all round tolerance among the various ethnic communities on various issues ranging from politic to economic as well as socio-religious ones. But until they are discussed, tolerances of them merely represent the suppression of these contending and contesting problems. It is not their solutions.

PERSISTING CHALLENGES

The major challenge in promoting religious tolerance and therefore understanding must be in the promotion of open and matured dialogues between relevant segments of the multi ethnic society. This is normally easy said than done. On one hand, when asked many Malaysians would readily admit that there is much to be done in this area. But when it comes to the unravelling and the promotion of dialogues, very few would think that such encounters could reasonably come about. Respondents' receptiveness to open dialogues between religious divides were rather high but on the other hand they also felt at the same time that the time was probably not fitting yet to hold one. After 43 years of Malaysia, when would then time be ever suitable and appropriate? The answer to this is held by Malaysians of various faiths. Are they really willing to come together to talk?

CONCLUSION

Religious tolerance is one cornerstone of the formation of the Federation of Malaysia. Before that, it was also important factor in the formation of the Federation of Malaya. Until religious understanding is promoted and valued as well as practiced by Malaysians of all faiths, religious tolerance is the next best guarantee of a religious harmony for the multi ethnic, multi religious Malaysia. This value will continue to be nurtured, although religious understanding would have been the natural progression of tolerance. Malaysia's propensity to withdraw or retreat from religious discourses can be seen in the exercise of moderation that is generally held by the majority. For example, when "Kongsi Raya" emerged recently to become a potentially divisive issue, it was the quick response from the "moderate" leaders of the federal government that put the matter to rest. If the action of the federal government do not amount to closing the issue altogether, the former certainly succeeded in putting it to rest for now.

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[i] Note: The full research team of this MOSTE-sponsored project were as follow: Ahmad Tarmizi Talib (Project Leader); Jayum A. Jawan (Project Advisor); and Zaid Ahmad, Hj Ahmad Fauzi Hj Morad, Mohd Mahadee Ismail, and Mohammad Agus Yusoff (Project Members). Except Mohammad Agus who is from Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia, all others are from Universiti Putra Malaysia. The project runs between 2004-2006. A full report has been filed with UPM and MOSTE.

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Paper 2 Challenges to Ethnic Harmony in Burma: A Historical Overview

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Abstract

Burma faced independence in 1948 as a deeply divided country. The British had ruled the area, which now was declared as "Union of Burma" in two entirely different administrative systems. The southern parts of the country were taken over gradually after the wars in 1824-1826 and 1852, and became the main geobody of "Burma Proper" or "Ministerial Burma". The rest of the country was taken over in a war in 1885-1886, and much of this area was administered indirectly through the local Shan and Kachin chiefs as an administrative entity known simply as "Frontier Areas" or "Scheduled Areas". Like in the Indian Subcontinent and in the Malayan Peninsula the British administrative arrangements created a serious challenge to the leaders of the new independent country.

Burma Proper was basically populated by the ethnic Burmans, Arakanese, Mons and Delta Karens, whereas the Frontier Areas were populated by the Shan people, Salween Karens, Kachins, Karennis, Chins and various subgroups of the aforementioned. The same year, as the independence was granted, the Union of Burma plunged into a civil war, which still continues.

This paper discusses the ethnic categories created by the colonial authorities and it looks into how these ethnic categories have been – and continue to be - imagined, invented, manipulated and politicised for economic purposes. The paper is mainly a historical overview but points out a few continuities to the present time. The paper looks into how the Burmese authorities dealt with the ethnic diversity in the first constitution of 1947 by dividing the country into ethnically based "states" and "divisions", and how the international community of today continues supporting these ethnic categories.

1. Introduction

The British had geographically and ethnically divided the area, which later was to be known as Burma.

The area was occupied gradually as a result of three Anglo-Burmese wars – which all were won by the British – and within this time range from 1824 to 1886, the British started the mapping of an administrative unit, which later was added to the British Indian empire under the name Burma.

What the impact of this gradual colonisation of the area was, needs to be reassessed in relation to the fact that the central government of the Union of Burma has never been able to fully control its present geobody, particularly its border areas, and some ethnic groups have been fighting against the central government since 1948.

This article uses contemporary government sources, such as the Census of India, compiled by the British every ten years while ruling the Indian Subcontinent. The Census divides British Burma into arbitrary ethnic, geographic and administrative units when imagining Burma. These divisions remain a major obstacle for the unity of independent Burma. The Burmese continued the tradition of compiling censuses, albeit somewhat less efficiently. In 1953 and 1954 two volumes of censuses were published, both covering some of the same issues as the original British Indian Censuses. Another useful source is the bilingual print called "Constitution of Union of Burma" from 1947.

2. Mapping the Geobody of British "Burma"

In the Census of India 1931, the area known as Burma was divided geographically into different "divisions". The primary division was "Burman Natural Division" which included four different geographic areas: Delta, Coast, Centre and North.

The Delta area included the that-time capital city Rangoon and the surrounding areas such as Insein, Hanthawaddy, Tharrawaddy, Pegu, Toungoo and Thaton. The interesting thing with this geographic division is, that it regards non-Burman areas as Burman. Insein is a northern suburb of present-day Rangoon, and is well known as a home to tens of thousands of ethnic Karen. Several Christian churches can be found in Insein, most of them built during the colonial era. A seminar for aspiring Karen priests known as Burma Divinity School, established in 1927, was located on the Seminar Hill in Insein[1]. Despite the ethnic composition of the population in this area, it was included in the "Burman" division. This decision further complicated the remapping of Burma in the eve of independence.

Pegu is a well-know centre of the proud Mon kingdom known in history as Hamsavati. Thaton is another famous centre of early Hindu-Buddhist civilization, which, usually, in the colonial scholarship, has been branded as "Mon", and not "Burman".[2]

The "Coast" as an administrative, geographic unit, included cities such as Akyab, Sandoway, Amherst, Tavoy and Mergui. These were the first possessions that the British gained after the war 1824. Above-mentioned areas have been populated by people regarded as non-Burmans, i.e. the Arakanese and the Mon. Akyab is located in northern Arakan and populated by Arakanese, whereas Amherst – with its rather British name - was an important centre for the Mon. Tavoy is a mixed Burman and Mon city, whereas Mergui is generally regarded as being "Burman".

The geographic "Centre", according to the British mapping, included Prome, Pakokku, Magwe, Mandalay, Shwebo and Sagaing, which, indeed, until very recently, have been regarded as the heartlands of Burmese culture and monasticism.

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[1] The origins of Christianity amongst the Karen groups can be traced back to the introduction of Christian beliefs by Adonikam and Ann Judson from the American Baptist Mission in 1813. Nowadays approximately 20% of Karen are Christian.

[2] See Michael Aung-Thwin's controversial thesis according to which, the colonial scholars, particularly Gordon Luce exaggerated the role of the Mons in early Burmese history. Aung-Thwin 2005.

The category "North" in the British mapping of Burma is baffling; the "North" includes cities like Bhamo, Myitkyina, Katha and Upper Chindwin. Myitkyina is an important centre for the Kachin people, albeit the character of that city may have changed through the years.

One is tempted to draw the conclusion that most of the geographic "Burman Divisions" were far from being Burman, but at the eve of independence in late 1940s the Burmese anti-colonial nationalists simply followed these colonial divisions created some 60 years earlier.

The other geographic divisions outside the "Burman Natural Division" were called Chin, Salween and Shan, a mish-mash of ethnic and geographic definitions.

Chin Division included the districts of Arakan Hill Tracts and the Chin Hills. These areas were populated by both Arakanese and Chins.

Salween is the name of a river at the present Thai border, and not of an ethnic group, but, according to the British colonial administrators, Salween division included the river district and an ethnic Karenni district. Geography and ethnicity had again been intertwined in a fatal way.

The fourth division was called Shan, and was divided into Northern Shan State and Southern Shan State. The ethnic Shans predominantly populate the Shan states, but there are also numerous smaller ethnic groups in the Shan states.

The British used partly geographic, partly ethno-linguistic names when mapping Burma. The original purpose of this might have been entirely practical and totally apolitical. At the same time, however, the British colonial administration was carefully categorising the population into different ethnic groups and openly favouring one ethnic group against another. The categories thus became highly politicised.

3. Creating the racial categories

Additionally to the "natural division" of the administrative entity, the population was also classified according to different "races" invented by the Census compilers. The British divided the population of Burma into nine different races: Burmese; other indigenous races; Chinese; Indians born in Burma; Indians born outside Burma; Indo-Burman races; Europeans and allied races; Anglo-Indians; and other races.

One can notice that there are four different categories of Indians, which one could interpret as reflecting the importance of the people classified as Indians in the British administration and in the overall colonial economy.

The Census of India from 1931 compares the figures of same ethnic or racial group each decade starting from 1901. It is obvious that the number of Chinese had doubled from 1901 to 1931, whereas the number of "Indo-Burmans" had quadrupled from 1901 to 1931 from 0,3% to 1,24%. (Census of India 1931, 224)

The largest racial group is the "Burma group" with 65% of the entire population. The second largest is the Karen group with 9,3%, the third is "Tai" with 7%, and the fourth is Indian with 6,9%. Among the smaller groups there are Mon with 2,3%, Indo-Burman, Chinese and Kachin groups each with about 1,2%.[3]

The Census of India 1931 discusses in detail how some of the changes in the numbers of different racial groups might have taken place. The Arakanese Muslims for instance have been added into the category of Indo-Burmans in the Census of 1931. In 1921, the Arakanese Muslims had declared themselves as "Indians", but were now transferred by the British to another category. The number of the Indian population had rapidly increased from 881.357 in 1921 into 1,017.825 in 1931. (Census of India 1931, 224) The British compilers might have felt that some of the "Indians" needed to be disguised as "Indo-Burmans" in order not to alarm the Burmese. This decision, however, has haunted the Arakanese Muslims since the independence.

The geographic division of the Indian immigration inside Burma is also detailed; largest numbers of Indian immigrants can be found in the "Centre", but also the number of Indian immigrants into the Shan States doubled from 1921 to 1931, i.e. from 16.733 to 32.604. According to the Census, many of the Indians who moved to the Shan States are Gurkhas[4]. (Census of India 1931, 226)

The British compilers of the Census admit, that they have struggled with the concept of "Indians" for decades, ever since the work was started in 1891. In the earlier censuses, the Hindus had been classified by caste, whereas Muslims had been classified by tribe. This, according to the compilers, was not "satisfactory"; consequently in the Census of 1931, Indians are classified by "race". (Census of India 1931, 228)

Earlier, Chulias had been classified as a Muslim tribe, whereas according to the new system, Chulias would be classified as Tamils. The "cloth-selling moneylenders known as the *Kabulis*", have been now included in the figure of Pathans. (Census of India 1931, 229)

The group now known as "Rohingyas" is an interesting case, as according to the British, the Chittagonians could have been included in the group of Bengalis, but for the British there was "no harm done by giving separate figures of the Magh" – one name the Chittagonians are known by in Burma. According to the Census compilers, Magh are "Buddhist cooks from Chittagong", whereas in Bengal language "Magh" is a word for Arakanese. (Census of India 1931, 229)[5]

Christian denominations were also broken down by the Census compilers, thus emphasising, for instance, that the largest numbers of Christians in Burma were Baptist – over 200.000. The second largest Christian group was the Roman Catholic

[3] These figures are based on the Census of India 1931, Table 2, where the number is given of " persons belonging to each race group in 10.000", i.e. Burma group 6.500, Karen group 934 etc.

[4] Gurkhas or Gorkhas as an ethnic group are regarded as an "imagined community", invented by the British.

[5] According to Jacques Leider, "In many older writings, the Arakanese are called Magh, an injurious term of uncertain origin, used in Bengal to refer to the Arakanese pirates". Leider 2002, 53.

with some 89.000 parishioners. (Census of India 1931, 214[6]). The table also pointed out that the largest congregation i.e. the Baptist is dominated by ethnic Karen with some 168.000 members. Only some 41.000 Karens are Roman Catholic. Indians were the second largest group of Roman Catholics in Burma. (Census of India 1931, 214)

Linguistically the "Burma group" and the "other indigenous group" can be divided into smaller subgroups. The Census shows that the Burma group includes 16 different linguistic subgroups, the largest of which was the "Burmese" – i.e. people speaking Burmese. The other languages in the Burma group included for instance Arakanese, Tavoyan, Merguese and Intha. (Census of India 1931, 202-203)

The Karen group is also divided into following linguistic subgroups: Karen, Sgaw, Karenbyu, Pwo, Padaung, Karenni and Talaing-Kalasi. The last group is quite a hybrid, as Talaing[7] in the same Census is classified as a linguistic subgroup of the Mon, i.e. a Mon-Khmer language group. (Census of India 1931, 204)

According to the Census of India 1931, "Sgaw, Pwo and Paku Karens are very different from Karens who live in the hills and from a racial point of view one could place the remaining Karen races in the Palaung-Wa group."[8] Sgaw, Pwo and Paku Karen comprise 74% out of the total number of Karen. (Census of India 1931, 192-193)

4. Impact of the racial categories on Burma

The race and language theories presented by the Census compilers in 1931, have had an aggravating impact on the social and economic stability of independent Burma. Due to the colonila legacy, the idea of "Burma" is still in turmoil.

Particularly, the identity of the "Rohingyas" is problematic. There is a heated discussion going on among academics and activists, who the Rohingyas are, whether they are Burmese or Bengali/Chittagonians with deep roots in Burma, or possibly more recent Bengali/Chittagonian immigrants escaping the economic and political instability of East Pakistan/Bangladesh as the military government claims.

The many subgroups of Karen community is another issue that still engages the academic community to discuss whether the Karen should or should not be regarded an "imagined community". The border-based aid community usually rejects this entire discourse, as for them, all Karen are regarded as a monolithic "Karen", and by some donors even regarded as an all-Christian group, and *therefore* brutally repressed by the present military government.

The Burmese at the independence 1948 inherited the British beliefs in racial categories. The country was – by the Constitution 1947 – divided into four different

[6] Table 12, Christians classified by race and sect. Census of India 1931.
[7] The word "Talaing" nowadays is regarded as an old term for the Mon.
[8] Palaung-Wa group, according to the Census includes the Wa, Tai-Loi, and Palaung (Census of India 1931, 204) This racial engineering has led to some academic speculation on the origins of the Karen, a group which nowadays often is regarded as an "imagined community" *par excellence*. See Renard's article "Studying peoples often called Karen" in Delang 2003. See also Mikael Gravers 2007.

ethnically based states Kachin, Chin, Karenni and Shan states, into which later Karen, Arakanese and Mon states were added.

Burmese authorities inherited the British belief in the importance of Censuses. By 1953 the Burmese were able to produce a rather similar Census that the British had routinely been producing since the inclusion of Burma in the British Indian empire.

The Burmese census was called "First Stage Census 1953" and was followed by "Second Stage Census 1954". After the military *coup d'état* by General Ne Win in 1962, more censuses were compiled, but those are regarded as considerably less reliable than the censuses compiled during the civilian administration of Prime Minister U Nu.

The First Stage Census of 1953 was compiled in the urban areas, and the results there, in terms of ethnic categorisation, indicate that 75,8% of the population were Burmese, and only 8,3 % belonged to other indigenous races such as Karen, Shan, Chin, Kachin and Kayah (former Karenni). The Census 1953 continued including "Foreign races"; 9,8% of whom were Indian, and 5,7% were Chinese. (First Stage Census 1953, xxv)

The Second Stage Census of 1954 was compiled in the rural areas, where Burmese constituted 87,3% of the entire population, and other indigenous races 9,7%. A lesser number of foreign races resided in the rural areas; 2,3% of the rural population were Indian, and 0,5% were Chinese. (Second Stage Census 1954, 3)

Concerning religions practised in independent Burma, the census indicated that in Arakan 70% of the population were Buddhist and 22% were Muslim. These figures are from the First Stage Census from 1953 and apply to the urban areas. (p. xxvi) According to the Second Stage Census of 1954, compiled in the rural areas, 41,7% of the population was Muslim. (Second Stage Census 1954, 4)

As a conclusion, one can notice that statistics throughout the colonial period, as well as, in the first decade of independence, were extremely detailed and hence give an impression of accuracy, even if one may argue that many of the categories are "imagined". Consequently the main legacy of these detailed, racial statistics is that they are extremely divisive and manipulative, and can easily be politicised.

5. Implementing the racialisation into politics

The Constitution of Burma from 1947 tried to tackle the colonial divisions by creating a Union of Burma from the areas, which didn't necessarily have much shared history[9] with the pre-colonial Burmese kingdoms. This, however, became the pattern of creating the post-colonial states also in India, Indonesia and Malaysia.

According to the Constitution of 1947, the Union of Burma would comprise the whole of Burma – which in the colonial parlance referred to the Ministerial Burma

[9] According to Renan from 1882, "a heroic past" is "the social principle on which the national idea rests". Reprinted in Hutchinson & Smith 1994.

or Burma Proper. This was extended by clauses stating that the Union of Burma would include all territories that had been governed by "His Britannic Majesty through the Governor of Burma", and included directly to this was the Karenni State, an area which had become the borderland between the Burmese kingdom centered in Ava and the British-occupied Lower Burma as a result of the Second Anglo-Burmese War. A treaty had been signed in 1872, stating that "the State of Western Karenni shall remain separate and independent", and that no sovereignty or governing authority of any description shall be claimed or exercised over that State". In fact, the Karenni chiefs were appointed by the British ruler and they were "advised" by the British residents; same administrative pattern as was in practice in the Shan States.[10] (Maung Maung 1961, 169-170)

The new Union of Burma should also include territories earlier known as Federated Shan States and the Wa States, which together should be called the Shan State.

The smaller separate areas in the far north, Myitkyina and Bhamo, should form a constituent unit and be called the Kachin State.

The territory earlier known as the Karenni State, *viz.* Kantarawaddy, Bawlake and Kyebogyi shall become Karenni State. (Constitution of the Union of Burma 1947, Chapter I)

The Constitution hence decided to create four separate autonomous states out of the former British Frontier Areas, these four states were the Shan State, the Kachin State, the Karenni State and a proposition was given in the Constitution to create also an autonomous Karen State. The former Chin Hills District from the British Frontier Areas would become a Special Division of the Chins.

The Panglong Treaty of February 1947 had united the ruling elites of Shan, Kachin and Chin from the Frontier Areas. According to the joint declaration of the hereditary chieftains of these areas, the main rationale behind joining the Thakin leaders of Burma Proper had been that "freedom will be more speedily achieved by the Shans, the Kachins and the Chins by their immediate cooperation with the Interim Burmese Government". (Panglong Agreement as cited in Maung Maung 1961, 229)

According to the Constitution, the Shan State would simply include all the Shan States, and should be represented by the hereditary rulers or *Saohpas*. (Constitution 1947, Chapter IX, part I)

The Kachin State was recognized to actually be multi-ethnic, and hence a clause was added that the Kachin State should be represented in the Chamber of Nationalities by six Kachins and six non-Kachins from the Kachin State. (Constitution 1947, Chapter IX, Part II)

[10] According to Maung Maung, "To avoid skirmishes and border disputes it was agreed between the King and the Viceroy of India that the Karenni State should be erected as a buffer state, enjoying independence." (Maung Maung 1961, 169)

6. Territorial challenges to the politicisation of the racial categories

The Karen state was a more complex affair. According to the Constitution, "the following areas, *viz.* the Karenni State, Salween District and such adjacent areas occupied by the Karens as may be determined by a Special Commission to be appointed by the President shall, if majority of the people of these three areas and of the Karens living in Burma outside these areas so desire, form a constituent unit of the Union of Burma to be known as the Karen State." (Constitution 1947, Chapter IX, Part III)

This reflects the reality of Karen people being dispersed in various parts of the territory now becoming the Union of Burma. There was a heavy concentration of diverse Karen groups in the Salween area. "Delta Karens", however, lived in the Delta area, and many of the western-educated Karens lived in Insein, a northern suburb of Rangoon.

Until the Special Commission would be able to decide whether a state called Karen State could be formed, an area known as "Kaw-thu-lay" comprising the Salween District and such areas occupied by Karens as may become the Karen State shall be a "Special Region". When the Karen State will be established, it will have same status as the Shan State. (Constitution 1947, Chapter IX, Part III).

The Constitution continues imagining the Karen State, "if the Karen State will be created, then the Karenni State needed to be reorganised. The territory known as Mongpai in the Federated Shan States shall be acceded to the Karenni State, if the majority of the people of the territory so desire. Until the Parliament otherwise provides, the *Sawphyas* of the three special districts that had formed the British buffer Karenni State Kantarawaddy, Bawlake and Kyebogyi shall represent Karenni State in the Chamber of Nationalities. The *Saohpa* of Mongpai shall also become a representative of the Karenni State in the Chamber of Nationalities after the accession of Mongpai to the Karenni State." (Constitution 1947, Chapter IX, Part IV)

The Special Division for the Chins would include the two special areas separately administered by the British during the colonial period, i.e. Chin Hills District and the Arakan Hill Tracts. (Constitution 1947, Chapter IX, Part V)

The Karen State was subsequently formed by an amendment to the Constitution in 1951. The territory earlier known as Salween District was to be known as the Karen State. The Karenni State simultaneously changed name to "Kayah State".

Conclusion

The leaders of an independent Burma inherite,d as a colonial legacy, a wide territory that had been administered, either directly by a British governor, or indirectly by a British resident as an adviser to the indigenous hereditary chieftains. This division could not be bridged in the new state of Burma, but needed to be addressed by granting high level of autonomy to the former British Frontier Areas. The "states" would be autonomous in terms of agricultural production, "markets and fairs, public order, village police and prisons, education and public health". The Government of

Union of Burma would be responsible for defence, external affairs, communications, finance i.e. taxes and duties. (Constitution of 1947, Third Schedule, Legislative Lists I and II)

State revenues would come from the land revenues, from royalty on petroleum, royalty on minerals and taxes on mineral rights, royalty on rubber, opium, forests, and irrigation dues. (Constitution 1947, Forth Schedule, State Revenue List)

Despite the theoretically relatively autonomous position of the states, some of the ethnic leaders started an insurrection immediately after the independence. The first ethnic group to start the uprising, was the Karen in July 1948, closely followed by the Mon. (Burma and the Insurrections, 1949) The insurrection was fuelled both by economic interests of the local rulers, particularly in the former Frontier Areas, and by the Cold War strategies.

Epilogue

The international community continues imagining Burma according to the racial and ethnic categories, created by the British Census compilers for colonial administrative purposes.

After the failed democracy uprising in 1988, Burmese politics has attracted more media attention in the Western hemisphere than before the 1988. A number of Western governments and organisations have established special funds to support the struggle for democracy – or struggle against the military junta – inside and outside Burma. The global media became suddenly aware of the decades-old civil war in the Burmese jungles, particularly, when scores of urban student activists escaped to the jungle to join the ethnic guerillas, a positive global media attention was guaranteed.

During the early 1990s the military junta signed a cease-fire with 17 armed groups, now known as "cease-fire groups". There are still a handful of armed groups continuing a low-intensity war against the central government – and against the cease-fire groups. The international community continues financially supporting many of these ethnic communities at the border areas, particularly at the Thai-Burma border areas.

A powerful US non-profit organisation, established by President Ronald Reagan in the early 1980s, National Endowment for Democracy (NED), supports 35 different Burmese groups "dedicated to bringing democracy to their country". Among these organisations are the main opposition party National League for Democracy (NLD) led by Aung San Suu Kyi, the government in exile in Washington (NCGUB) led by Aung San Suu Kyi's cousin Dr. Sein Win, the Oslo-based radio station Democratic Voice of Burma (DVB), and the Chiang Mai- based monthly magazine "Irrawaddy".

Rest of the money, alltogether over 2,5 million USD a year[11], goes to the refugee organisations at the border areas: "The Endowment believes it is a priority to support the development of ethnic organizations so that they are better able to participate as equals in the discussions regarding the future political structure of Burma. Grants to ethnic nationality-based organizations allow them to solidify their core operations, reach more people through increased training programs, and distribute their literature to a wider audience. Assistance to ethnic groups will also complement the prodemocracy movement's efforts to build solidarity between the prodemocracy groups, most of whose members are ethnic Burmans, and the ethnic nationality forces."

The international community continues imagining Burma along the racial categories created by the British Census compilers, thus challenging the ideal harmony of Burma imagined by Aung San and other leaders of the Burmese independence movement. The Burmese independence leaders acknowledged that Burma was *de facto* multi-ethnic, but simultaneously they envisioned a unity between the ethnic groups. To quote Aung San: "A nation is a collection of many peoples, many races."[12]

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[11] Information is from the year 2003. www.ned.org/publications/staffDocs/bJoseph071803.html. Similarly Prospect Burma and Open Society Insitute have been supporting refugee students from Burma with scholarships since 1994. Preference has been given to ethnic minorities.

[12] From an address to the Supreme Council of the AFPFL, August 1946. Reprinted in Maung Maung 1962.

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Paper 3 Marginalization as a Result of Statelessness: A Case Study of the Thai Undocumented People in Rom Thai Village

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Abstract

A Thai citizen is a person with Thai nationality and with the basic civil rights required for a livelihood and access to national resources, whereas a non-Thai citizen is a person without Thai nationality and without the right to access government services. Nationality is a powerful instrument to determine who is an appropriate person to get public services and to exclude others from Thai society. If the excluded people are migrants, the problem of exclusion through nationality is not so severe. But if the excluded are Thai people born on Thai soil of Thai parents, the use of nationality to deny them Thai identification cards and Thai house registration may violate their rights.

Undocumented Thai people, meaning those people born in Thailand with no Thai documents, constitute a problem for the Thai state because there is an absence of any concrete policy or solution. The case of the undocumented Thai people in Rom Thai village, Thaton Subdistrict, Mae Ai district, Chiang Mai province, waits for the state's response to rectify their status from aliens to Thais in their legal documents such as identification cards and house registration certificates. The main reason the villagers became undocumented is that in the past they left Thaton to earn their living in agriculture at Sobyawn. The villagers perceived or imagined Sobyawn as part of the 'Thai nation' and other nationalities, particularly Burmese, did not appear there. However, Sobyawn has historically been a place of border drawing disputes and is now officially part of the Burmese state. Starting about twenty years ago, the villagers were forced to return from Sobyawn to Thaton by several confrontations between the Burmese military and ethnic minority groups. Because they left Rom Thai village before the Thai state started issuing identity cards and house registrations and because they returned at the same time as an influx of Burmese refugees, the Mae Ai district administration may have been confused or uncertain about their identity. Therefore, they issued them identity cards as displaced Burmese.

The undocumented Thai people holding cards for displaced Burmese nationals therefore face marginalization. They are marginal people not only in a geo-political dimension, in the sense that they are remote from central state power or at the margin of the country, but also because they are denied access to government social services and rights such as the right to free medical care, the right to education and scholarships and the right to practice professions. Even people born on Thai soil of Thai parents can be excluded as the 'others' in Thai society unless they are formally recognized through documents such as Thai identification cards and Thai house registration certificates.

Background: Marginalization and Statelessness

Marginalization refers to "the overt or covert trends within societies whereby those perceived as lacking desirable traits or deviating from the group norms tend to be excluded by wider society and ostracized as undesirables."[1] The idea was amply expressed by Louis Wirth speaking of a minority group as: *"a group of person who, because of their physical or cultural characteristics, are singled out from the others in the society in which they live for differential and unequal treatment, and who therefore regard themselves as objects of collective discrimination."*[2]

John Scott and Gordon Marshall in the Oxford Dictionary of Sociology explain that *"marginalization is a process by which a group or individual is denied access to important positions and symbols of economic, religious, or political power within any society"*. In Scott and Marshall's definition, persons who have undergone a process of marginalization are called marginal groups. However, a marginal group is not necessarily a minority group. A marginal group may actually constitute a numerical majority, as in the case of Blacks in South Africa, and should perhaps be distinguished from a minority group, which may be small in numbers, but has access to political or economic power.[3]

Terms related to marginalization include marginal area, marginal group and marginal man. According to George A. Theodorson and Achilles G. Theodorson in A Modern Dictionary of Sociology, marginal area refers to territory at the periphery of a 'culture area' where two or more cultures meet, and where culture traits of the neighboring cultures are to be found. Marginal areas are the farthest areas one can possibly include within a particular culture area. **Marginal group** means a culture group that has relinquished some of its traditions and separate identity and partially accepted the values and way of life of a culture it is in the process of adopting. And marginal man is a concept first formulated by Robert E. Park and later revised by Everett C. Hughes[4]. **Marginal man** is a person in a dilemma, or state of mental conflict, by reason of his participation in two different, distinct cultural groups. He is not fully loyal and committed to the values and standards of either, nor is he fully acceptable to either of the groups with which he identifies. Moreover, the two groups may have certain conflicting values or norms, both of which the individual accepts to some degree.[5]

In geographical terms, the marginal man or the marginal person must often move from their place of origin for natural, economic, political, cultural or social reasons. They are always denied access to limited resources and they are always excluded by the majority who has lived in that society before. In socio-cultural terms,

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[1] "Marginalization", Available from www.wikipedia.org

[2] Louis Wirth, The problem of minority groups, 1945, pp. 347-372. Quoted in "Marginalization", Available from www.wikipedia.org

[3] John Scott and Gordon Marshall, Oxford Dictionary of Sociology, 2005, p.380.

[4] Encyclopedia of Sociology, 1974, p.165.

[5] George A. Theodorson and Achilles G. Theodorson, A Modern Dictionary of Sociology, pp.242-243.

the marginal person's culture is not accepted by the people in the cultural mainstream. Thus, marginal persons must adapt and fight for survival in a marginal context.[6]

In this study, stateless persons form one category of marginal persons. A stateless person is "someone who, under national laws, does not have the legal bond of nationality with any state."[7] Stateless people are defined as marginal people because they lack a crucial tool to access basic human rights. That tool is nationality. Nationality is an important instrument to integrate a homogenous people while classifying people of different race, ethnicity, or religion as others. Daniel Levy and Yfaat Weiss state that "citizenship legislation may thus be viewed as a pervasive system of classification, organization society into 'us' and 'them'."[8] According to Engin F. Isin and Patricia K. Wood, citizenship can be described as "both a set of practices (cultural, symbolic and economic) and a bundle of rights and duties (civil, political and social) that define an individual's membership in a polity."[9] Aspects of citizenship should be recognized both as practice and as status. Without the latter, modern individuals cannot hold civil, political and social rights. This study links sociological concept and legal concepts because 'citizenship' is neither a purely sociological concept nor a purely legal concept. From the sociological point of view, citizenship can be defined as competent membership in a polity. But those who do not posses the civil political and social rights would be denied the chance to "become such a competent and full-fledged member of the polity in the first place."[10] A stateless person must face a plethora of problems. The stateless person falls into a condition of double marginality. To lack a nationality means not only that a person is not the citizen of any country, but also lacks the basic rights which are important for their livelihood. Stateless persons cannot vote, they cannot get jobs in many professions, and they often cannot own property or travel outside a restricted area. Stateless people also face discrimination, sexual and physical violence and socio-economic hardship. Often they are denied access to health care and education.[11]

Rom Thai Villagers and Statelessness

Rom Thai is located in Moo 14, Thaton subdistrict, Mae Ai district Chiang Mai province. The former name of Rom Thai village is Nam Yawn because most of the villagers came back from Sobyawn[12] where the Kok and Yawn rivers join. Sobyawn was previously called Nam Yawn when there had been a community in the Kok river basin. Sobyawn or Nam Yawn community is situated on both sides of the Kok and Yawn rivers. The Thaton villagers, in the past, went to set up home and farm at Sobyawn. Often, they floated rafts down the river to Thaton to trading with Thaton

[6] Surichai Wun'Gaeo, Marginalization, 2001, p.10.
[7] Lynch, M., Lives on hold: The human cost of statelessness, 2005, p.3.
[8] Daniel Levy and Yfaat Weiss, Challenging Ethnic Citizenship: German and Israeli Perspectives on Immigration, 2002, p.1.
[9] Engin F. Isin and Patricia K. Wood, Citizenship and Identity, 1999, p.4.
[10] Engin F. Isin and Patricia K. Wood, Citizenship and Identity, 1999, p.4.
[11] Maureen Lynch, "The people who have no country", Available from www.globalpolicy.org
[12] Before B.E 2499, Rom Thai villagers went to Sobyawn for seasonal work. At Sobyawn the people could grow their crops and earned a good living. Sobyawn is on a plain where the Kok river joins the Yon river which makes the land very fertile. In the past there was no clear evidence whether this place belonged to Thai or Burma. However, today Sobyawn is in Burmese territory 10 kilometers from Rom Thai village.

villagers. Sobyawn was assumed to be just a second home of Thaton villagers. In the case of the Rom Thai villagers, the important problem is statelessness. Statelessness may arise from many factors. But the origin of the stateless problem in Rom Thai village began with a mistake of civil registration.[13] In 1956, the state made a population census and house registration throughout the country. Some of the Rom Thai villagers missed this census because they went to work at Sobyawnwhich the villagers understood to be Thai territory. The Rom Thai villagers at Sobyawn were not informed about this survey. As a result, they missed the population census. 1963 was the year when identification cards were issued, and many Rom Thai villagers missed the chance to have their identification cards made. Since most of them did not realize the importance of identification cards, as a result they did not travel from Sobyawn to get their cards made. As a result of a skirmish between ethnic minority groups and the Burmese army at Sobyawn, the villagers felt their lives had become unstable and insecure. Many villagers thus took refuge back in Thaton while some of the Burmese minority group moved to Thailand as well.

In 1971, many displaced Burmese immigrated into Thailand to escape the conflict between the Burmese army and minority groups. The Thai state deicided to identify and issued pink cards to them.

Unfortunately, the villagers of Thaton who were Thai citizen but have never been registered were forced by the district officials to take the displaced Burmese cards (pink cards). The villagers were threatened with expulsion from the country if they did not consent to take the pink cards. Out of fear, they took the cards. Because of their illiteracy, they did not understand that the pink cards are for displaced Burmese. Should this blunder be attributed to the district officials or to the villagers who took the cards? The failure to report for civil registration not only made the villagers stateless, but also resulted in their children becoming stateless. Even though the villagers have tried to prove that they are Thai-born citizens through community witnesses, their pink cards officially identify them as displaced Burmese and state officials have accepted the pink cards as the main evidence. In the case of Rom Thai village, most villagers who still do not have Thai nationality hold a color card as their identity card. Some people hold orange colored cards to identify them as Thai Lue. Some of them hold green colored cards with red edges to identify them as member of a highland community. Some of them hold the blue cards of highlanders. The newcomers who have migrated from Burma hold orange or purple cards of Burmese illegal migrants. However, the majority hold the pink cards of displaced Burmese.

Thai-born people who missed the population census and house registration, are not identified as Thai citizens. Even though they hold pink cards, the Thai state cannot escape from the reality that those people have their origins in Thai territory. Moreover, the Thai state has no right to identify Thai-born people as displaced

[13] Civil registration constitutes fifteen categories of registration and identification cards which are issued by the Department of Local Administration. District and Subdistrict Registration Offices provide civil registration services such as house registration, birth and death notification, change of residence, copying and authentication of personal records, adding and removing names on house registrations, revision of registration information. They also issue identification cards, copy and authenticate identification card documents. Moreover, they register marriage and divorce certificates, name and family registration. Quoted in Opas Kaewkao, "Thailand Civil Registration in Thailand", 17-20 November 1999.

Burmese. Marginal people in this study means people who have long been living in Thailand but are not yet considered as Thai because they missed the population census and house registration. They are not accepted as Thai citizens, neither are they Burmese because the Burmese state does not recognize these people as its citizen. Stateless Rom Thai villagers lack basic civic rights which are important for their livelihood. They do not have the right to vote, having little chance of education, the right to health care insurance and the right to restricted occupations. The majority of the undocumented people are elderly whose first identification card was one for non-Thai citizens. For more than 20 years, they hold colored cards as their identity cards. For more than 20 years, they have earned their living as non-Thai citizens. For more than 20 years, they have been marginalized.

The Marginalization of Undocumented Rom Thai Villagers

1. The legal dimension.

Civil registration is a process of recognition of the existence of people. Data on citizens is recorded such as house registration or birth and death notification. Birth registration, in the form of a birth certificate is the first process by which the state recognizes that there is a new baby born on its territory, regardless of the nationality of the parents. A person who is registered with a birth certificate and with their name on a house registration certificate has an existence in legal terms. That person can show these documents to access basic civic rights and government services as a citizen. The existence of a person who has no birth certificate and whose name is not on any house registration certificate cannot be recognized. It is difficult to verify such a person's real name or origin. It is hard to be recognized as "human" with "human rights".[14] Thailand has the experience of mistakes in the civil registration system. Nowadays, there are still many people born on Thai soil who missed civil registration. As a result, they earn their living as non-Thais and cannot access civic rights as an ordinary citizen. Most failures of civil registration occur in remote areas where the governmental services or state power cannot reach or are difficult to access.

Legal marginalization, in this study, means that the villagers are marginalized as "the other" of society through a legal process which is expressed by such powerful tools as nationality law, identification cards and house registration certificates. The dominant group creates the discourse and myth through Thai nationality law by using identity cards and house registration certificates to classify a subordinate group as non-Thais. Often, the hill people or the indigenous people are viewed as non-Thais, thus they cannot be granted Thai nationality.[15]

2. Geo-political dimension.

The undocumented stateless people become marginal and are denied basic rights which are necessary to their livelihood. Undocumented people are not accepted as Thai citizen even though they insist that they are Thai-born. It is true that the Thai state believes the legal evidence or legal documents more than community evidence.

[14] Chutimas Suksai, "Why we have to register birth", Plan Organization, 2006, pp.14-15.
[15] Somchai Preechasilpakul, Nitisart Chaikhob, 2005, pp. 30-33.

In this study, at least, the undocumented people are marginal in a geographical perspective. The main factor for Mae Ai villagers being undocumented was their remoteness from central state power.

The marginalization may occur on a geographical dimension. The term marginalization itself refers to the existence of something or someone in an area on the edge/border of a political or geographic entity. In political geography, the concept of border combines two phenomena: boundary and borderland. In "Refugees and the border", Hazel J. Lang explains that boundaries are political territorial lines dividing two contiguous states.[16] In Ladis K. D. Kristof's definition, "the boundary indicates certain well established limits (the bounds) of the given political unit and as such functions to exert an arbitrary limit separating two jurisdictions."[17] In addition, in "Coexistence: Borderlands and Intra-state Conflicts in Mainland Southeast Asia", Carl Grundy-Warr denotes borderlands as "zones or territories flanking and straddling international land boundaries, are a more fluid ecumene, encompassing a confluence of political, military, cultural, and economic interactions."[18]

A map of Siam appeared for the first time after the Paknam crisis of 1893 with the cooperation of Britain, France, and Siam. Thongchai Winichakul shows how Siam escaped colonization by accepting European mapping practices and the colonial alignment of boundaries.[19] The idea of people (chat), and territory (prathet) were created and linked to the people when the boundary of a nation was defined. Thus, map-making was not only a process which demarcated the area of country, but also identified who are its citizen or nationals and who are not. Moreover, maps also classified distinctions of culture, language, or religion between contiguous countries. \

Therefore, it can be said that the Siamese or Thai identity was created when our country was demarcated on a map. Also promoted among all people in the country was a sense of citizenship. This sense of Thai-ness was instilled in the people through the idea of nationalism. However, in some border areas, the boundary of Thai nation was clearly demarcated on the map, but the sense of Thai-ness had still not pervaded there. Thongchai states that "the discursive domain of Thai-ness remains homogenous and unified. In turn, moreover, in the terminology of the geographical discourse, terms such as border become ambiguous. The border of Thai-ness is more limited than its geo-body. The Thai geo-body is not necessarily equal to Thai nationhood."[20]

The Rom Thai villagers have resided near the border of Thailand and Burma. They are at the geographical margin of the country: in other words, they are the marginal in terms of geography. As mentioned above, Thai-ness or the citizenship which was expressed through the registration process and an identification card did not reach Rom Thai village while Thai geo-body was already drawn on the map. The

[16] Hazel J. Lang, "Refugees and the border", Fear and Sanctuary: Burmese Refugees in Thailand, 2002, p.127.
[17] Ladis K. D. Kristof, "The Nature of Frontiers and Boundaries", Annals of the Association of American Geographers49,3, 1959, pp.270-273. Quoted in Hazel J. Lang, "Refugees and the border", Fear and Sanctuary: Burmese Refugees in Thailand, 2002, p.127.
[18] Carl Grundy-Warr, "Coexistence: Borderlands and Intra-state Conflicts in Mainland Southeast Asia", Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography 14,1, 1993, p.45. Quoted in Hazel J. Lang, "Refugees and the border", Fear and Sanctuary: Burmese Refugees in Thailand, 2002, p.127.
[19] Thongchai Winichakul, Siam mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation, 1994, p.128.
[20] Thongchai Winichakul, Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation, 1994, p.170.

villagers did not know of the boundary on the map. They were not aware of the agreement setting the boundary between Thailand and Burma. They crossed the frontier to earn their living in Sobyawn, an abundant area which is an overlapping area of Thailand and Burma. To be at the margin means to be far from the central state power. Often, the government services reach marginal villages slower than core villages.

Marginalization and Implications for Access to Government Social Services

1. Health care

In B.E.2545, the health insurance project issued gold cards (30 Baht cards) to persons without Thai nationality but permitted to reside temporarily, such as persons holding blue card (highland people) because such persons have their names in house registration certificates for persons without Thai nationality (Tor Ror 13). In B.E.2549, the government cancelled this right for persons registered in Tor Ror 13 documents and determined that the right to health insurance must be restricted to persons with Thai nationality.[21] The National Health Security Office (NHSO) announced that those with the right to health insurance must be Thai nationals, so do not include aliens. 'Aliens' in this case refers to 1.a person who is permitted to reside temporarily in Thailand and 2.a person who is not permitted to reside. For this reason, stateless people or undocumented people are not eligible for the governmental health insurance service. As a result, they have to pay all medical treatment fees. Sometimes, to obtain treatment and medicinal drugs, they have no other choice then to go into debt to the hospital.

Sometimes they are sick but they try to recover from illness without treatment. Or they try to think that they do not have symptoms of illness, or that their illness is not so severe and do not need to see a doctor in order to put a burden on their family to pay medical fees. The majority of the undocumented people in Rom Thai village are elderly and face the health problems. Most of them are poor. If they are still strong enough to work, they work as laborers in chili and garlic plantations. They earn little money per day, and it is not enough for medical fees.

Sukkaew Somwandee, an undocumented person was shot near the right eye. As a result, the lens of the right eye was damaged and he became blind. He cannot hear clearly because of a sound like wind blowing in the ears. Sukkaew was once jailed for eleven years. After leaving prison, he married an illegal alien woman. He has no house. His present residence is an area which was once a pigsty. Sukkaew earns his living as a laborer in chili plantation. He gets only 100-120 baht per day. His damaged eye and ear have never been treated in hospital but by the traditional healer. He gives the following reason for this:

> "I want to see if a doctor can cure me. But I don't have enough money. I have to pay all the medical fees if my eye and ear are treated by a doctor in the

[21] Surapol Kongchantuek, "The right to get public health service of non-Thai people", Available from www.statelessperson.com

hospital. My neighbors told me that it is not necessary to go to hospital. They told me that just the community doctor can cure me."[22]

Sukkaew hopes that his eye and ear will recover. Even though he wants to see a doctor, money is the main problem preventing him from going to hospital. In reality, Sukkaew was born in Thaton. His father got a Thai identification card in 1964 when he came back from Sobyawn. In 1969, both Sukkaew and his father came back to Thaton. Sukkaew was granted a pink card by the district office. In 1971, his father's identification card expired, and he asked the district office for a new one but was given a pink card. However, Sukkaew still has the Thai identification card of his father as crucial evidence to prove his status in the future. It is clear that Sukkaew is a Thai citizen by birth. But he was unlucky enough to miss the population census and house registration. Instead he was given a card for displaced Burmese, which classified him as 'the other' in Thai society. Though he is Thai by birth, he is not Thai citizen by law. He cannot access free health care service like other Thai citizens. Furthermore, Sukkaew has no knowledge of his rights. He does not realize his rights and the significance of good health. However, money is the main reason that forces him to forego health care.

Two other undocumented people face health problems. Nae Somwandee and Sangprom Noytha are elderly people who once lived at Sobyawn. Both of them faced the same problem as Sukkaew; they missed the population census and house registration, and got the cards for displaced Burmese which they still hold as their identity cards. Nae Somwandee and Sangprom Noytha complain of muscle or knee pains due to old age.

Nae Somwandee tries to treat herself. She buys drugs at a pharmacy in Mae Ai district and will not go to hospital unless her pain is extremely severe.

"I have pains in my knee but I do not go to see a doctor because I have to pay all of the medical fees."[23]

Sangprom Noytha is 85 years old and cannot work. He depends on money from his children and grandchildren. He has the same symptoms as Nae but more severely. However, unless it is necessary, Sangprom will not see a doctor because of concerns about the treatment fees. Sangprom

"If the pain in my knee is not severe, I will not go to hospital. My grandchild, Phra Mahanikom, pays my medical fees for me."[24]

Responsibility for their medical fees falls on their children or grandchildren. Therefore, both may forego health care because of a desire not to be a burden to their families.

[22] Interview with Sukkaew Somwandee on Wednesday 20 June, 2007 at 15.30, Rom Thai village.
[23] Interview with Nae Somwandee on Thursday 21 June, 2007 at 15.15, Rom Thai village.
[24] Interview with Sangprom Noytha on Thursday 21 June, 2007 at 14.40, Rom Thai village.

2. Education

A cabinet resolution of July 5, 2005, stated that persons with no civil registration and persons without Thai nationality also have the right to education. Previously, Thailand limited educational opportunity to Thais or allowed stateless people access to a limited level of education. Non-Thai children now have the chance to study regardless of level or location of education. (with the exception of the children of illegal migrants resident in temporary shelters, who can study only in the camps). Non-Thai children also have the same right to scholarships as Thais. Stateless children whose right to travel is controlled are given permission to leave their designated area to study as long as the period of study is specified. After stateless children finish their studies, their educational institutions have to issue them with transcripts, which will be marked in red ink to show that they are undocumented. Educational institution cannot therefore refuse an education to stateless children for the reason that the children do not have Thai nationality or civil registration.

However, in practice, the regulation of the Ministry of Education in 2003 concerning the educational scholarship stipulates that the qualified grantee must be a Thai national. Thus, the non-Thai children or the undocumented children cannot be a qualified grantee to educational scholarship.

Even though undocumented young people have a right to study, they still face a marginalized condition, with respect to the right to a scholarship. Neng Naiyod, for example, was born on Thai territory while her mother held the green card with red edges. When Neng was born, her mother did not notify Neng's name on the birth registration. Her mother, Keng Naiyod, was born on Thai territory, but missed the population census and as a result she was given a colored card as her identity card. In 1999, Keng Naiyod was granted Thai nationality and a Thai identification card and, in 2002, she was among the 1,243 Mae Ai villagers who were deprived of Thai nationality. Though her Thai nationality was reinstated in 2005, her daughter's name could not be put into the civil registration system. The Mae Ai official gave as a reason that Keng's Thai status is incredible. Keng's status must be proven again by the Department of Provincial Administration.

Neng Naiyod is marginalized because she cannot get a scholarship for free education. The qualification for a scholarship is not only being poor and good grades, but also Thai nationality.

> "I asked for a scholarship for a poor student and have good grades but I could not get it because I'm not legally Thai. I am poor so I want to help my mother by getting this scholarship. I have the right to study just to Mathayom 6. I have never thought of a university education."[25]

The qualifications for scholarships appear to be another instrument to identify nationality and classify who is 'the other' and to be unqualified to have access to free education. Nevertheless, Neng wishes to study to a high level and get a good job.

[25] Interview with Neng Naiyod on Wednesday 20 June, 2007, at 17.00, Rom Thai village.

> "In the future, I want to be a doctor. My mother is always sick. I want to take care and cure my mother."

However, Neng's dream will not come true if she does not gain Thai nationality. Even if she has the chance of higher education in medical science, she cannot work as a doctor because she does not have Thai nationality. In reality, she was born to a Thai mother so she should have Thai nationality. In practice, state officials still do not accept her status though Neng's mother holds a Thai identification card. Undocumented people believe that they cannot study at a high level. And, even if they study at a high level, they cannot get a good job. Moreover, parents tell their undocumented or stateless children that they should not study much because it is useless and is a burden to the family. Keng Naiyod gave her opinion on her daughter's education.

> "Neng does not have to study much. It is useless to study to a high level as long as she still does not have Thai nationality. No Thai identification card means no right to get a good job. Even if she graduates from school or university, she will have to work as laborer."[26]

Nevertheless, Neng Naiyod still hopes to get Thai nationality. And she believes that Thai nationality will help her study at a higher educational level and get a good job. She also believes that Thai nationality will help her escape from poverty. All her hopes depend on the district officials' decision and practice.

> "I wish to have Thai nationality. I hope the district office will help the poor stateless people."

3. Occupation

Without a chance of higher education, undocumented people cannot get a good job to improve their livelihood. In Rom Thai village, the people without Thai nationality work as laborers in chili and garlic plantations. Although the undocumented people insist that they were born on Thai territory and have Thai relatives, their status is equal to that of aliens with the permission to reside in the Kingdom on special grounds having the status of legal immigrant according to the Immigration Act B.E.2522 (1979 C.E.).

In Rom Thai village, most villagers work as laborers in chili and garlic plantations. Sukkaew Somwandee who is still physically fit for work, talks about his occupation.

> "I am an employee in chili plantations. I am hired at 100-120 baht per day. If I can pick chilies a lot, I will get around 200 baht per day. Someday no one hires me, I stay at home. My wife is an alien who migrated from Burma. She works as laborer in chili plantations as well."[27]

Though Sukkaew was born on Thai territory and has a Thai nationality father, he is permitted to work as an illegal migrant because he missed the census and holds

[26] Interview with Keng Naiyod on Wednesday 2o June, 2007, at 17.00, Rom Thai village.
[27] Interview with Sukkaew Somwandee on Wednesday 20 June, 2007 at 15.30, Rom Thai village.

the pink card. He does not have many alternatives for work. Laboring seems to be the best choice for him because he does not to leave the restricted areas and use a lot of knowledge.

Reasons for Marginalization of Stateless People in Rom Thai Village

The marginalization which happens to stateless people in Rom Thai village can be the result of the followings:

1. Civil registration may not occur as a result of the inefficiency of the civil registration system. Though the Civil Registration Act was promulgated in 1956 and there was the population census and house registration throughout the country, Mae Ai District Office was established only in 1973. Villagers born before 1973 had to register their birth with the village head. The village head then had to travel to Fang District to register the births in the village. Therefore, Thaton villagers born before 1973 had been delayed in notifying their birth or had no identification cards at that time. Moreover, Mae Ai District Office was destroyed by fire in 1976 and legal documents were destroyed. The villagers thus lack legal evidence to prove their personal status. Because of the fire, villagers who had their names in the civil registration system before 1976 became undocumented people after 1976. As a result, some villagers were forced to take pink identification cards for displaced Burmese which were issued under the Immigration Act B.E.2493. These pink cards were given to the immigrants who left Burma and illegally entered Thailand before the ninth of March 1976.

2. Villagers in remote areas may be left out of the civil registration system . People at the geographical margins of country have difficulty accessing central government services. Mae Ai villagers have long stayed on Thai territory far from the core of the country, near the border. The location is distant from the dominant culture in terms of geography, ethnicity, culture, and language. In the past, many illiterate villagers had no concern for Thai citizenship. The villagers did not recognize the agreed boundary of Thai territory. The map-making accessed the villager's area but central state power still did not reach there. The border on the map was not meaningful to the Mae Ai villagers. There is no difference between people on two sides of a river or mountain which divides the two states. It is not the mistake of the villagers to have shifted their livelihood across the boundary of the two states.

3. The indeterminate area between Thailand and Burma is another factor causing the Rom Thai villagers to become stateless. Many Thaton villagers went to work and earned their living in Sobyawn. At that time, Sobyawn was in an indeterminate area where both Thailand and Burma claimed sovereignty beyond that area. Burma understood that the people who were born in that area were Burmese while Thailand understood that they were Thai. The villagers believe that Sobyawn at that time belonged to Thailand. They referred to the historical consciousness that they had never seen Burmese or British soldiers there. But they found a Chiang Saen style Buddha image in Sobyawn.[28]The Burmese-Siam Demarcation Survey may have been

[28] Phra Maha Boonlerd Theerananto, Thaton: The community of Kok river basin, 2001, p.22.

unclear. It is possible that there were too few boundary posts.[29] Similarly, both Thailand and Burma claimed the right to govern Doi Lang and sovereignty power beyond that area. In the past, Mae Ai villagers were often been in trouble with Burmese soldiers. Burmese soldiers would garrison in Doi Lang and impose a tax on Mae Ai villagers. Today on Doi Lang mountain, there are both the Thai and Burma military camps. The problem of unclear borders may result in ethnic minorities along the Thai-Burmese border becoming stateless.

4. Many villagers, particularly the elderly, are not concerned with citizenship. Many undocumented people in Rom Thai village still do not know what nationality means and cannot give a definition. They simply realize that they are Thai because they were born on Thai soil. They know that Thai nationality and Thai identification cards are necessary for their lives. However, they could not reply why Thai nationality and identification cards are indispensable for them. They do not understand how the civil registration and birth registration is essential for their lives. In the past, many children's births were not registered, resulting in these children becoming undocumented even though they have Thai national parents. Some people and the village head mistakenly understand that birth certificates are not necessary because they think that they have a community witness to confirm the birth of their children.[30] However, a witness statement is still weak evidence because it cannot prove how the child is related to the Thai state. Consequently, it may be argued that the child was not born on Thai territory and they cannot prove themselves as Thai if the witness dies.

5. District officials who deal directly with stateless people should have a positive attitude to them. It is true that prejudice can lead officials to make mistakes in their work. Discrimination based on prejudice is a factor marginalizing undocumented people to being in the marginal condition. In this case, discrimination is not expressed in physical abuse, but in terms of negligence, for example, accepting a villager's documents but not processing them. The dominant group, in this case the district officials, applies negative prejudice to discrimination against the subordinate group, in this case the undocumented people, that creates disadvantages for them in many aspects of social, economic, and political life. Discrimination marginalizes the minority, subordinate, or powerless group, who then face denial of access to jobs, housing, health, education, justice, and political participation. Therefore, district officials should not assume that undocumented people are non-Thais as long as their personal status is still not proven.

Harmonization towards the stateless problem: A challenging problem in Thai society.

Although the statelessness lead the people to being marginalized and being excluded to have access the rights, the government sector, non-governmental organization, academia society and the stateless people themselves can find the way to escape or reduce the hardships of the stateless condition, at least by the following processes.

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[29] Sompong Chumak, "Frontier Issues, Disputes Avoidance and Settlement", National Seminar Proceedings on "Thailand's Frontiers and Beyond: Conflict or Confluence?, 1987, p.94.

[30] Pinkaew Ounkaew, "The fact of birth registration of ethnic groups in Northern areas", Plan Organization, 2006, p.40.

1. The basic rights to education, employment, and health care are indispensable for every human being. The stateless people in Thailand should have the same human rights as Thai citizens. It is not necessary that all the rights of Thai citizens should be granted to aliens. But the stateless people are likely to be given at least the opportunity to obtain health care services regardless of ethnicity or nationality and without any distinction between 'us' and 'them'. The government sector should separate between the human rights and the national security reason.

2. Thai state officials should find a solution for the people with no civil registration and faced the problem of statelessness. The first process is prevention. District Offices should record birth registrations for every newborn baby to prevent statelessness. Birth registration is a separate issue from nationality. The Thai state may issue a birth certificate without Thai nationality. The argument that birth certificates give nationality is a misunderstanding. The second process is post-protection or rectification. When villagers have no civil registration, the District Office can help them by delayed birth registration. To add the names of stateless villagers to house registration certificate also helps prevent statelessness.

3. Prejudice and bias may lead officials to discriminate against villagers. The relevant officials should be informed about the community history, and not hold rigid beliefs that villagers holding pink cards are Burmese. If possible, the relevant officials should eliminate prejudicial or negative attitudes and consider the villagers' arguments before determining their status. Official work will then be more reliable and accurate. The advantages are not only to the villagers, but to the officials as well. , the Officials should be more understanding toward history of undocumented Thai people holding colored cards and the reasons why they missed the census and hold cards designating them as aliens. The process of confirming nationality will then be feasible. Officials should make distinction between other aliens holding colored cards and immigrants and solve the problem of true aliens holding Thai identity cards. When prejudice is neutralized, official discrimination will disappear; as a result, villagers' fear of contacting relevant officials may be reduced to some degree.

4. District officials should have enough knowledge pertaining to Thai nationality law and community history through training on nationality law and ethnic history. On the other hand, the villagers should been given basic knowledge concerning Thai nationality law and the rights of aliens. This study found that most undocumented Thai people want to have Thai nationality but cannot explain why Thai nationality is important to their lives. Also they cannot define the meaning of Thai nationality and/or Thai citizenship. A better understanding of Thai nationality law will help villagers to realize their status and rights, and plausibly increase their confidence in contacting district officials.

5. The general idea of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights is that all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights without differentiation of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property ownership, birth or other status. The discrimination practice on ethnicity is equivalent to violation on human rights. The Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand in B.E.2540 and B.E.2550 state that human dignity, rights and freedom must be protected. However, there is still violation of human rights problem concerning ethnic differentiation. This is because those whose rights have

been violated have no lawful status in accordance with Thai law. Thus, it is important that a clear policy to solve the problem of people who do not have legal status should be established.

The National Legislative Assembly Extra-ordinary Commission on Non-legal Status and Rights of Individuals in Thailand led by Tuenjai Deetes was formed. The aims are to identify individuals with legal status problem, monitoring Thai law and related policies pertaining the legal status problems, survey existing support network, and explore possibilities to help people escaping from legal status problem. The target group is not only the hill people, but also composes of people living near the border, people who do not know their origin, people losing civil registration document, and people or refugee escaping from death. However, there are three major factors impede this working team to help the unlawful status and no legal status people in the present Nationality Act and related regulations and guidelines.

Therefore, if Nationality Act can be changed or annulled, many children born with the alien parents will not be aliens who illegally entered Thailand. The relevant officials should determine the obvious regulation or criterion of granting Thai nationality according to the strategy approved by the Cabinet Resolution on 18 January 2005. As a result, the unlawful status and non-legal status people may have more chance to get Thai nationality.

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Interviews

Nae Somwandee on Thursday 21 June, 2007. at 15.15. Rom Thai village.
Neng Naiyod on Wednesday 20 June, 2007. at 17.00. Rom Thai village.
Keng Naiyod on Wednesday 20 June, 2007. at 17.00. Rom Thai village.
Sangprom Noytha on Thursday 21 June, 2007. at 14.40. Rom Thai village.
Sukkaew Somwandee on Wednesday 20 June, 2007. at 15.30. Rom Thai village.

Paper 4 Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand[1]

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Abstract

In the world today, there has been a growing awareness that the so-called 'nation-state' is rarely a true appellation. In fact, only a few states comprise of ethnically homogeneous population, and many of them are diversely multiethnic in composition. Coincided with this evidence, there have been various forms of ethnic rivalries and conflicts as well as ethnic movements. This reveals that ethnic minority groups are active in re-creating and reinventing the meanings and practices associated with the representativeness of their ethnicities or ethnic identities. Consequently, ethnicity has reappeared as a crucial social and political force for the construction of reality. Therefore, it is important to find appropriate method(s) which helps to deal with the issue regarding ethnicity.

In an attempt to understand ethnicity or ethnic identity, historical ethno-symbolic approach was applied with a case study of the ethnic Mon in Thailand. The focus area was set in the three old Mon communities, namely Kung Phayom, Ban Muang and Nakhon Chum communities in Ban Pong, Ratchaburi, Thailand. By developing this idea, two major elements of historical ethno-symbolism were used, including the myth of ethnic nation and the invention of the national symbols (comprises of language, religion and symbolism of nationhood). The study attempts to answer the sociological questions of why, how and which types of identities are constructed, contested, transformed and institutionalised. This would further help to better understand the politics of ethnicity.

Introduction

This study aims to understand ethnicity through the empirical analysis of ethnic identity. An ethnic Mon in Thailand was chosen as a case study since it lightens the understanding of the other possible type of ethnic minority, of what Glass calls "hidden minority" who "do not wear a striking label of inferiority" (1964: 150, quoted in Marger, 1991: 47). In this context, the Mons are seen as the ethnic minorities who possess ambiguous ethnic identification. This is simply because they do not experience such overt, institutionalised forms of discrimination, and because many of them have gained access to significant occupational and political positions. However, if consider carefully, there is also the possibility for them to perform a particular kind of ethnic movement. As Glass explains, "there is still a blank patch on

[1] Extracted and adapted from Patise Chuaykunoopakan's *Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand*, a dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Sociology (May 2007).

the collar where such a label can be pinned on; and at any time of general social stress, it may indeed be stuck on again" (1964: 150, quoted in Marger, 1991: 47).

Mon is considered a very ancient ethnic group which has been located in Southeast Asia for more than 2,000 years. As found in the Mon Historical Record[2], originally, the Mon people were located in South India in the Region called Manipura (Assam at present). While the Burmese call the Mons as "Talaing(s)", they are known by the Westerners (especially the British) as "Peguan". The other word for the Mons is "Raman", which derives from the word Rāmañňadesa, meaning "the Monland". According to Nithi (2003), there are two assumptions for the migration of the Mon people. In terms of inter-linguistic relation, namely the transferral of the Mon-Khmer language group, it was believed that the Mon people possibly migrated from the North of Southeast Asia. The other theory proposes that Mon people migrated from the South of India so that they were called "Talaing" which was from the place called Telingana.

Many scholars (for example, Foster, 1986; Sirirath, Sathian & Nipa, 1999; Guillon, 1999; Halliday, 1917/2000 & South, 2003) agree that Mon civilisation was among the most distinctive and influential in pre-colonial mainland Southeast Asia. The Mon heritages include, for example, aspects of the language, art and architecture, political and legal systems, and especially Theravada Buddhism. Nevertheless, the recognition of the "Monland" as the great prosperous country dramatically ceased to exist after the conquest of Pegu by King Alaungpaya of Burma in 1757. Hence over the centuries, many Mon people have fled or been displaced within their traditional homelands (namely, Thailand and Burma), and outside the region. This has made the Mons known by the world as "a people without a country" (Halliday, 1913, quoted in Smithies, 1986: 33). In addition, there is an attempt for the Mon activists and nationalists to fight for their own sovereignty and thus re-establish the "Monland". However, it should be noted that the majority of Mon people in Thailand seem to have little or no interest in the nationalist cause. Nevertheless, a significant minority have been committed to the revival of the Mon cultural and linguistic heritage while a small number remain actively engaged in the struggle for the "Monland" in Burma. The very important strategy the Mon nationalists have employed is to attest the authenticity of their ethnic identity – "to 'the originality, the self-generating nature, of a given culture-community" (applied from Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in Global Era*: 66ff., 146).

The study will answer the major sociological questions, "How are we to understand the politics of the Mon ethnicity?", "What accounts for its salience?", and "How is the Mon ethnicity experienced or manipulated?".

[2] Phra Maha Chuang Oucharoen (trans. & ed.). (n.d). "The Mon Historical Record", in *The 80th Anniversary of Professor Dr. Su-ed Kotchaseni, the 48th Anniversary of Thai-Raman Association* (*80 Pee Satracharn Kierttikun Naipat Su-ed Kotchaseni 48 Pee Samakom Thai Raman*). (2004). Bangkok: Thai-Raman Association, 137.

Setting Theoretical Framework: Why Historical Ethno-Symbolism?

According to South, Mon nationalism is defined as "a movement or ideology which aims to achieve certain goals on behalf of the ethnic constituency in question" (2003: 6). Furthermore, "Mon nationalist inspirations are grounded in a conception of ethnic self-identity... To be Mon is to identify with a certain territory, with a distinct civilisation and culture nearly two thousand years old, and with the Theravada Buddhist religion" (South, 2003: 23). In this context, the aim of the Mon nationalists is seen as 'integrative', since they perceive the nation as "a primordial expression of the individuality and the creative force of nature. Like families, nations are natural solidarities; they evolve in the manner, so to speak, of organic beings and living personalities" (Smith, 1998: 178).

In this paper, I proposed historical ethno-symbolism as an alternative approach to understand the ethnic identity of the Mons in Thailand.

> "Historical ethno-symbolism emerges from the theoretical critique of modernist approaches, as well as from a different reading of the historical record. For ethno-symbolists, what gives nationalism its power are the myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritages and the ways in which a popular *living past* has been, and can be, rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias. It is from these elements of myths, memory, symbol, and tradition that modern national identities are reconstituted in each generation, as the nation becomes more inclusive and as its member cope with new challenges" (Smith, 1999: 9).

Historical ethno-symbolism is applicable for the study of the Mons and the other ethnic groups where history and culture play significant roles in the formation of nations and nationalism. As mentioned earlier, historical ethno-symbolic theory emphasises the importance of history and culture as effective sources for the acceleration of nationalist movements. For the historical ethno-symbolists, nationalism could raise its power and become more inclusive through the rediscovery and reinterpretation of the myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritages by the intellectual elites (Smith, 1999). Studying ethnic identity through historical ethno-symbolism would therefore allow us to tackle the ethnic continent from the angle of its own history. This helps to see how and why the conceptualisation of ethnic ideology has been constructed, contested, and progressively changed over periods of time. The following paper will carry out the study of ethnic identity of the Mons in Thailand through the application of historical ethno-symbolic approach. The study will be divided into two main sections. The first part will provide the ethnic myth of the Mon nation. The second part will present the invention of symbols of ethnic heritages, which includes language, religion, and symbolism of Mon nationhood.

Research Methodology

A case study was located in three communities (Kung Phayom, Ban Muang and Nakhorn Chum) in Ban Pong, Ratchaburi, Thailand, due to these following reasons. First of all, Ban Pong is regarded as one of the largest communities of Mon descendants in Thailand (South, 2003). Secondly, Ban Pong is claimed to be the very ancient Mon community where people still maintain a considerable degree of traditional Mon culture (compared with other Thai-Mon communities in Thailand).

Primary data was gathered directly from key informants (namely, the Thai-Mons in Ban Pong) by using different data collecting techniques. Four techniques had been applied in this study. The main tool was standardised questionnaire. Moreover, reconnaissance survey, in-dept interview, and field observation were also used for supplementary information. The fieldwork lasted for around one month, from late June to the end of July 2006. The questionnaire was conducted with the Thai-Mon people with the total amount of 103 individuals in Kung Phayom, Ban Muang, and Nakhorn Chum communities, Ban Pong, Ratchaburi, Thailand. The focus groups were divided into two major sections: the young generation (under the age of 20) in comparison with the other older generations (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and 70+). The findings were measured in calculating the percentage, presented in single table with the analysis of the data.

Secondary data was gathered from various sources. For instance, facts and figures about the study area were collected primarily from Ban Pong Administrative Office. An overview of the situation was given through former researches on Mons in Ban Pong and in Mae Klong River, for example, researches by Oshima (1993); Boobpha (1996); and Sirirath, Sathian & Nipa (1999). Supplementary information was collected from the Mon periodicals (*The Sound of Raman*), internet websites, the Mon language textbooks, and so on.

In terms of data processing and analysis, quantitative analysis through the application of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed. Descriptive statistics specifically for percentage were used to describe the respondents' answers in each topic. Moreover, qualitative statement technique was applied for the analytical description of the findings.

The Ethnic Myth of the Mon Nation

Narrating the ethnic myth is one of the ultimate missions of the ethnic or nationalist movements. In order to claim for the real existence of their community, the very first and important task of the nationalists is to trace their community's origin, and hence locate it in time and in relation to other relevant communities. Since the ethnic Mons are claimed to be one of the oldest indigenous groups in Southeast Asia, history is a very fundamental source that the Mon nationalists have applied to fulfil their nationalist aspirations. In this respect, the Mon history could be characterised as 'myth-history'. To some extent, its history lesson is not to be taken as an accurate account of the past but rather as an exercise of legitimation where (ethnic) identity and values are celebrated.[3]

Based on the Mon Historical Record (translated and edited by Phra Maha Chuang Oucharoen, n.d), the myth-history of the Mon ethnicity began during the occupation of the Mons in South India. The Mon glorious cities included "Sudhammavati" or "Thaton", and "Pegu" or "Hamsawati". In this respect, it should

[3] The concept of 'myth-history' has been applied from David Mc Crone. (1998). "Chapter 2: Tribe, Place and Identity: Ethnicity and Nationalism", in *The Sociology of Nationalism*. London: Routledge, 51.

be noted that the Mon myth-history always includes supernatural and heroic figures, and with the link to Buddhism as a way to romanticise its ethnic myth.

The other important element of the ethnic myth that the nationalists have applied is **the myth of decline**. The myth of decline explains "how the community lost its anchor in a living tradition, how the old values became ossified and meaningless, and how, as a result, common sentiments and beliefs faded to give way to rampant individualism and the triumph of partisan interests over collective ideals and communal solidarity" (Smith, 1999: 67). Coincided with the myth of decline is **the myth of location and migration**. The myth of location and migration helps to clarify where an ethnic group came from and the reasons why its collective people have relocated to the present place. As mentioned by Smith (1999), space gives a necessary framework of self-identification, and assumes special importance where claims to 'territory' are being pressed. The myth of migration thus gives reference to the myth of ancestry where there is "the symbolic kinship link between all members of the present generation of the community, and between this generation and all its forebears, down to the common ancestor" (Smith, 1999: 64).

The Mon nationalists highlight their myth of decline as the major reason for the stateless situation of contemporary Mon people. Moreover, the Mon nationalists strongly emphasise their constant immigrations in the past mainly as a result of the Burmese invasion. Thus, it is the task of the contemporary Mon people to reunite the fragments of their brotherhood and re-establish the "Monland". In this context, it is also important to note that these immigrations of Mons into Siamese territory coincided with the active intercourse between the two countries, namely Burma and Siam. The wartime between these two countries consequently brought large amount of Mons to flee to Siam for refuge (Halliday, 1917/1986: 8).

The other aspect of historical ethno-symbolism that the Mon nationalists have applied is **demarcating the territory of a nation**. It is among the most effective ways that a national identity is strengthened and sustained. Every single map reveals the nation's 'property space' or sovereignty in which the power order is implicit but unsurprisingly clear (Mc Crone, 1998). Thus, a map is the most concrete, and the seemingly natural and stable feature of a nation (Thongchai, 1994). It is highlighted that territorial boundary tends to shift with the political context of which among the most important features are the size and significance of the boundary that helps to shape the level of group identity that emerges as most salient (Horowitz, 1985).

In history, the "Monland" covered three regions stretching over the whole of lower Burma, namely Tenasserim, Pegu and Irrawaddy. Today the "Monland" (or the Mon State) is a figment of ambiguity. It does not exist on any official maps, but only in patches where the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and its military wing the Mon National Liberation Army (MNLA) are located. The present day Mon State was established in 1974. It covers an area of 12,000 square kilometres, extending from the Gulf of Martaban to the Thai border, and including many small islands along 566 kilometres of coastline.[4] It is divided into three regions: Northern, Central and

[4] Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO). (1996). *Mon.* (http://www.unpo.org/member_profile.php?id=39). [Downloaded on April 22, 2007] & Ashley South. (2003). *Mon Nationalism and Civil War in Burma.* New York: Routledge, 7.

Southern regions. With regards to the contemporary Thai-Mons in Thailand, they are descendants of political refugees and others who entered Thailand from their homeland in the South of Burma. According to the study of Bauer, the size of the Mon populations in both Burma and Thailand seems to be a debatable figure. The estimated number of the contemporary Mon population in Thailand ranges between 60,000-200,000 people, depending partly on whether language use is considered a key criterion. Bauer calculates that the number of Mon speakers is unlikely to exceed 60-80,000 people (Christian Bauer, quoted in South, 2003: 20). In fact, no one knows exactly how many Mons live in Thailand today, because the Mon descendents are all Thai citizens and are not distinguished legally from the Thais in any possible way. Moreover, since much assimilation has occurred, it would be difficult to decide who is Mon and who is not (Foster, 1986). As commented by Seidenfaden, "It seems therefore sure that one day the Mon will be completely absorbed by the Thai" (1958: 116-7, quoted in Smithies, 1986: 34).

The Findings of the Study Area: As proposed by the ethno-symbolists, one of the major elements that gives nationalism its power are the myths and memories of ethnic origins which can be rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias and presented to the participants (Smith, 1999). The assumption for this study is that a sense of ethnic identity tends to increase when members of the ethnic groups have significant shares of their *ethno-history*. On the contrary, the sense of ethic identity tends to decrease when *ethno-history* is seen as less important. In this context, *ethno-history* refers to "the ethnic members' memories and understanding of their communal past or pasts, rather than any more *objective* and dispassionate analysis by professional historians" (Smith, 1998: 16).

According to the study, the Thai-Mon people tended to have no clue about the number of their population, and have superficial knowledge about their *ethno-history*. The historical evidences they provided varied, but were generally of what has been written by both the Thai and Mon sides. This implies that the myth-history of an ethnic group is not to be taken as a history lesson in the sense that it is an accurate story of the past, but is rather the way to celebrate ethnic identity and values, and therefore integrate members of the group (applied from Mc Crone's theory, 1998). Similarly, territoriality plays a significant role in integrating people of the nation. In this context, territoriality seems to be weakened when it lacks a clear picture of its own territory (or an official map). This proves that the myth-history and the territoriality of the nation are always multi-stranded and contested, which requires the continuous process of reinterpretation of national identities (applied from Smith's theory, 1998). With this reason, there is the possibility for changes in perceptions of ethnic identity of the group members in certain places and in different periods of time.[5]

[5] Please refer to the table presentation of the questionnaire results in Patise Chuaykunoopakan's *Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand*, a dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Sociology (May 2007).

The Invention of the Mon National Symbols

Mon Language: Even though language use is not the sole criterion of ethnic identification, it is one of the important cultural aspects which help to construct and sustain an ethnic community. Bash (1979) suggests that language is of great importance for the maintenance, the coherence, and especially the integrity of any given social construction of reality.

Language is very fundamental to the definition of the Mon ethnic identity. As proposed by Guillion (1999: 3), the term "Mon" itself represents the "Mon culture". Guillion (1999) further explains that in spoken Mon, the elegant expression in writing and literature for "the Mon language" is *bhāsā man*. This expression, derived in part from the Pali *bhāsaka*, "speech," also means "Mon culture". The Mon language itself asserts that Mon culture and Mon language are inseparable. With this reason, when speaking of Mons, one of the primary key identifications is the Mon language.

All dialects of Mon, whether in Thailand or Burma, are mutually intelligible. Nonetheless, some vocabularies and the expressions of the Mon language used in Thailand are distinct from those used by the Mon language in Burma. Since the Thai-Mon people have had extensive interactions with the Thai, Chinese, Lao and Khmer people, they have adopted some words and expressions from these ethnic groups. On the contrary, the Mon language in Burma might possibly be influenced by Burmese, Indian, English and other ethnic groups in Burma. However, the Mons from both sides of the countries can communicate and understand each other (Boobpha, 1996: 98). The other issue concerning the language use of the Mon people is bilingualism, which has been widespread in both Thailand and Burma for a long time. In Thailand during Halliday's research time (1922: 78, quoted in Foster, 1982), the Mon language had already absorbed significant Thai vocabulary through a process that possibly required a long period of bilingualism. According to Foster (1982), in the modern times, the restricted use of the ancient Mon tongue has had an important effect on the amount of people identifying themselves as 'Mon'. This includes an estimate number of one-and-a-half million people, of which around five percent are in Thailand. The figure corresponds approximately with the number of Mon descendants who do not speak the language. The lack of the promotion of a written language could affect the spoken language, since people generally seem to think a language that is not written as a second-class language. In Thailand, the Mon written language is scarcely taught, and seemingly in the effort to teach the alphabet which makes Mon as a written language virtually dead (Foster, 1982).

Buddhism as the Major and Only Religion: According to the historical ethno-symbolic approach, religion has provided the most intense energy for many pre-modern ethnic communities or *ethnies*. This is particularly significant in those *ethnies* which have evolved a myth of ethnic election (Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), 1996: 187). As suggested by Smith (1996), "To be chosen is to be placed under moral obligations. One is chosen on condition that one observes certain moral, ritual and legal codes, and for only as long as one continues to do so. The privilege of election is accorded only to those who are sanctified, whose life-style is an expression of sacred values" (190). In this respect, religion strengthens the sense of ethnic identity by making ethnicity seen as a primordial phenomenon which is ineffable and obligatory.

The link between religion and ethnic myth of election is applicable to the case of ethnic Mons. The Mon myth-history tends to make close connection between Buddhism and the Mon people. As mentioned in the Mon myth-history, the ancient Mon city of Pegu was believed to be built due to the Buddha's prediction. There are also the records of the important Mon Buddhists in history. For example, the Mon merchants, Sumala and Wimala, brought eight hairs of the Buddha to keep in Mutao Stupa in Burma. There was also a narrative of the Mon monks, Sona Thera and Uttara Thera, who were the disciples of the Buddha. Moreover, Shwedagon Stupa (in Rangoon) has been claimed to be built by the Mons. In Thailand, the Mons have long gained a reputation for their religious ritual purity. This could possibly be since the Buddhist reforms in Siam in the 1820s and 1830s by the future King Monkut (King Rama IV) later became the basis of Thammayutnikai which has been praised for its strict monastic discipline and ordination procedure (Prince Dhani, 1965: 30-32, quoted in Foster, 1982). Moreover, the migration of the Mon people also brought a large number of Mon monks and novices. The Mon migrants built many Mon temples which are not only the places to teach Buddhism and perform religious rituals, but also the great place for the Mon Studies. There are various resources such as the Mon scripts, paintings on the walls, and so on. These are regarded as valuable heritages, especially for the Mon activists and nationalists, to search for the national resources.

The Symbolism of the Mon Nationhood: According to Thongchai (1994), the symbolism of nationhood has its own power. It is generally the conjugation of several discourses, each of which is effective in itself, and hence "makes the symbol of nationhood a rich and potent icon" (Thongchai, 1994: 171). However, "A code or a symbol, like the word "border" or the map of a nation, does not necessarily signify the original signified. It can be generative, producing many more related meanings" (Thongchai, 1994: 170-171). This argument is supported by the findings of Anthony Cohen (1996, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998). According to his theory, flags and other national symbols have the power to provide the members of the nation with the means by which to perceive. The assumption that under normal circumstances they can make people think in specifiable ways is nevertheless flawed. Despite its potential to guide misleading perception, the hegemony of the symbolism of nationhood considerably strengthens and unites the people of the nation.

The Mon national flag, national anthem, and national day are relatively new inventions. They are invented as to support the Mon Nationalist Movement which is based mainly in Burma yet influences a certain amount of Thai-Mons in Thailand. Even though these aspects seem not to be relevant for the case of Thai-Mons in Thailand, it shows how the Mon people apply the uses of symbols to create the sense of ethnic identity which not only unites the people of the same ethnic origin but also strengthens their ethnic identity by differentiating themselves from other ethnic groups.

It is notable that religion and history play significant roles in the creation of the Mon national symbols. For instance, the present day Mon national flag can trace its origin since 1958 when the New Mon State Party (NMSP) was established by Nai Shwe Kyin. The flag has a red colour, with the picture of a yellow sacred Sheldrake (this relates to the legend of the Mon Kingdom, symbolising the two swans that the Buddha saw when he reached the Pegu or Hamsawati) flying towards a light-blue star. The red colour refers to courage and bravery; the yellow colour refers to glory and

nobility; and the blue colour refers to truth. The light-blue star signifies the guiding Pole Star or the symbol of the Mon conviction. The Mon national anthem was created by the Mons in Burma in 1948, which marks the beginning of the rebellion against the Burmese government. Several years later, the Mon national anthem was recorded in Thailand by the Thai-Raman Association who lived near Bangkok. The last aspect of the Mon national symbol – The Mon National Day – is celebrated once every year during the period of the waning moon of the third lunar month (or in February). This was in commemoration of King Samala and King Wimala, the founders of "Hamsawati" or "Pegu". The Mon national Day was first adopted by the United Mon Association (UMA) founded by U Po Cho. It was celebrated in Moulmein in 1948, after Burma gained independence. The Mon National Day was first performed in Thailand at Ramkhamhang University in 1993. Nowadays, it has been celebrated by the Mon descendants from all over the world, such as Britain, Canada, Norway, Sri Lanka, Australia and Malaysia.[6]

The Findings of the Study Area: According to the historical ethno-symbolic approach, the survival and destiny of collective identities of an ethnic group depends largely on history and culture. There is a relationship between history and culture which "forms integral parts of the fabric of popular visions, and of the social structures and processes in which the designated populations are embedded and through which their elites must forge their strategies" (Kedourie, 1971: Introduction; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983: Introduction & ch. 7, quoted in Smith, 1998: 9). Throughout the times, historical and cultural heritages have been rediscovered, recreated and presented as symbols of nationhood, which not only help to integrate people of its community but also differentiate themselves from the outsiders. Here, the effectiveness of symbolism signifies the power and durability of ethnic or nationalist movements.

The questionnaire attempted to investigate the cultural aspects in which the activists and nationalists have applied for the invention of the national symbols. The major stereotypes of ethnic symbols (language, religion, and the symbolism of nationhood) are used as a key to measure ethnic identity of the Thai-Mon people. According the findings, my study seems to indicate that the sense of ethnic belonging of the Thai-Mon people in the three communities has declined. This can be seen clearly by the seemingly ineffectiveness of the symbolic uses of ethnic identity (such as shared language and history) among the Thai-Mon people, particularly the young generation (under 20 years of age). The changes in the people's perception of ethnic identity are tragically compatible with the danger of loss of some cultural heritages (such as the Mon language). This supports the historical ethno-symbolic theory that culture is among the most important aspects for the defence and maintenance of ethnicity.[7]

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[6] Juajan Wongpolganan. (3-6 April 2005). "The Impact of Thai-Burma Border Politics on Indigenous People: The Case of a Mon Sanctuary in Thailand's Westernmost District of Sangkhlaburi", in *9th International Conference on Thai Studies (Vol. 2)*. Illinois: Northern Illinois University, 3-4 & Sukanya Baonerd. (3 May-June 2007). "The Mon National Day: In the Conception of Nation and Nationalism", in *The Sound of Raman (Sieng Raman)*.
http://www.monstudies.com/show_content.php?topic_id=131&main_menu_id=11 [downloaded on May, 20 2007].

[7] Please refer to the table presentation of the questionnaire results in Patise Chuaykunoopakan's *Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand*, a dissertation submitted to

Final Analysis

According to the findings, it seems that manner in which Thai-Mon people have responded to the nationalist agenda is unclear. In this context, the meaning and the level of ethnic belonging of people varies individually. For example, the persons claiming to be Mon may have some knowledge about the Mon history, or superficial awareness of the Mon culture and traditions. Moreover, many people claiming to be Mons either know a few words of Mon, or could understand but could neither speak nor write Mon. However, it is obvious that the Thai-Mon people tend to view ethnicity as of primordialism which is 'given' and 'unaccountable'. The study of ethnic Mons through the application of historical ethno-symbolism provides the overall understanding of ethnicity as follows.

As suggested by the historical ethno-symbolists, the survival and destiny of collective identities of an ethnic group depend largely on history and culture. In order to strengthen and maintain a group's ethnic identity, the transformation and reconstruction of the constitutive myths as well as the symbols of nationhood are fundamentally required. These elements, however, have changed over time, which make the borders between ethnic and national identities move" (Tønnesson & Antlöv, 1996 & Smith, 1999). What is interesting here is of how the members of the ethnic group perceive themselves as belonging to the group which can help to sustain the ethnic community. Thus, "for nationalism to do its work, ordinary people need to see themselves as the bearers of an identity centred elsewhere, imagine themselves as an abstract community (Eley & Suny, 1996:22, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998: 41). This means the nationalists have to adopt the primordial views of ethnicity for to fulfil its nationalist inspiration. Furthermore, it is also important to consider the relational concept of ethnicity. Ethnicity, or at least the awareness of it, is seen as situational and reciprocal, because it is likely to figure in various ways, with different social costs and benefits attached, and in a certain place and time (Jenkins, 1997 & Stephan, 2000). Hence, what it means to be a group member is continuously contested and transformed through collective debates about group culture and identity. To some extent, the perception of individual agency towards the assertion of the ethnic identity is constrained and influenced by the politics of recognition and authenticity practiced within minority group. (Song, 2003a). Also, ethnic identity is produced and reproduced through social interactions with the other ethnic groups, and interaction is always situated in context (Jenkins, 1997). These could help to explain why ethnicity, as of the political and social construction, has always been contested, reproduced, and transformed over the periods of time under certain circumstances.

Ultimately, this study reminds the hegemony or the 'hidden power' of ethnicity. Ethnicity, in itself, is powerful. To some extent, people tend to assume that it is already there. Historical ethno-symbolism is a sound theory to deal with the problems regarding ethnicity. Even thought historical ethno-symbolism does not deny the possibility of pre-existing ethnic community, it helps to trace the root of ethnic origin, to see how and why the ethnic and national elements have been reinterpreted and reconstructed by the nationalist intelligentsias. I would therefore like to conclude by applying Hall's perception of ethnicity (1990, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998).

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Ethnicity is genuinely a contestable phenomenon. It has never been an "already accomplished fact", but rather a "production" that is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within representation.

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Paper 4 Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand[1]

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Abstract

In the world today, there has been a growing awareness that the so-called 'nation-state' is rarely a true appellation. In fact, only a few states comprise of ethnically homogeneous population, and many of them are diversely multiethnic in composition. Coincided with this evidence, there have been various forms of ethnic rivalries and conflicts as well as ethnic movements. This reveals that ethnic minority groups are active in re-creating and reinventing the meanings and practices associated with the representativeness of their ethnicities or ethnic identities. Consequently, ethnicity has reappeared as a crucial social and political force for the construction of reality. Therefore, it is important to find appropriate method(s) which helps to deal with the issue regarding ethnicity.

In an attempt to understand ethnicity or ethnic identity, historical ethno-symbolic approach was applied with a case study of the ethnic Mon in Thailand. The focus area was set in the three old Mon communities, namely Kung Phayom, Ban Muang and Nakhon Chum communities in Ban Pong, Ratchaburi, Thailand. By developing this idea, two major elements of historical ethno-symbolism were used, including the myth of ethnic nation and the invention of the national symbols (comprises of language, religion and symbolism of nationhood). The study attempts to answer the sociological questions of why, how and which types of identities are constructed, contested, transformed and institutionalised. This would further help to better understand the politics of ethnicity.

Introduction

This study aims to understand ethnicity through the empirical analysis of ethnic identity. An ethnic Mon in Thailand was chosen as a case study since it lightens the understanding of the other possible type of ethnic minority, of what Glass calls "hidden minority" who "do not wear a striking label of inferiority" (1964: 150, quoted in Marger, 1991: 47). In this context, the Mons are seen as the ethnic minorities who possess ambiguous ethnic identification. This is simply because they do not experience such overt, institutionalised forms of discrimination, and because many of them have gained access to significant occupational and political positions. However, if consider carefully, there is also the possibility for them to perform a particular kind of ethnic movement. As Glass explains, "there is still a blank patch on

[1] Extracted and adapted from Patise Chuaykunoopakan's *Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand*, a dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Sociology (May 2007).

the collar where such a label can be pinned on; and at any time of general social stress, it may indeed be stuck on again" (1964: 150, quoted in Marger, 1991: 47).

Mon is considered a very ancient ethnic group which has been located in Southeast Asia for more than 2,000 years. As found in the Mon Historical Record[2], originally, the Mon people were located in South India in the Region called Manipura (Assam at present). While the Burmese call the Mons as "Talaing(s)", they are known by the Westerners (especially the British) as "Peguan". The other word for the Mons is "Raman", which derives from the word Rāmañña-desa, meaning "the Monland". According to Nithi (2003), there are two assumptions for the migration of the Mon people. In terms of inter-linguistic relation, namely the transferral of the Mon-Khmer language group, it was believed that the Mon people possibly migrated from the North of Southeast Asia. The other theory proposes that Mon people migrated from the South of India so that they were called "Talaing" which was from the place called Telingana.

Many scholars (for example, Foster, 1986; Sirirath, Sathian & Nipa, 1999; Guillon, 1999; Halliday, 1917/2000 & South, 2003) agree that Mon civilisation was among the most distinctive and influential in pre-colonial mainland Southeast Asia. The Mon heritages include, for example, aspects of the language, art and architecture, political and legal systems, and especially Theravada Buddhism. Nevertheless, the recognition of the "Monland" as the great prosperous country dramatically ceased to exist after the conquest of Pegu by King Alaungpaya of Burma in 1757. Hence over the centuries, many Mon people have fled or been displaced within their traditional homelands (namely, Thailand and Burma), and outside the region. This has made the Mons known by the world as "a people without a country" (Halliday, 1913, quoted in Smithies, 1986: 33). In addition, there is an attempt for the Mon activists and nationalists to fight for their own sovereignty and thus re-establish the "Monland". However, it should be noted that the majority of Mon people in Thailand seem to have little or no interest in the nationalist cause. Nevertheless, a significant minority have been committed to the revival of the Mon cultural and linguistic heritage while a small number remain actively engaged in the struggle for the "Monland" in Burma. The very important strategy the Mon nationalists have employed is to attest the authenticity of their ethnic identity – "to 'the originality, the self-generating nature, of a given culture-community" (applied from Smith, *Nations and Nationalism in Global Era*: 66ff., 146).

The study will answer the major sociological questions, "How are we to understand the politics of the Mon ethnicity?", "What accounts for its salience?", and "How is the Mon ethnicity experienced or manipulated?".

[2] Phra Maha Chuang Oucharoen (trans. & ed.). (n.d). "The Mon Historical Record", in *The 80th Anniversary of Professor Dr. Su-ed Kotchaseni, the 48th Anniversary of Thai-Raman Association* (*80 Pee Satracharn Kierttikun Naipat Su-ed Kotchaseni 48 Pee Samakom Thai Raman*). (2004). Bangkok: Thai-Raman Association, 137.

Setting Theoretical Framework: Why Historical Ethno-Symbolism?

According to South, Mon nationalism is defined as "a movement or ideology which aims to achieve certain goals on behalf of the ethnic constituency in question" (2003: 6). Furthermore, "Mon nationalist inspirations are grounded in a conception of ethnic self-identity... To be Mon is to identify with a certain territory, with a distinct civilisation and culture nearly two thousand years old, and with the Theravada Buddhist religion" (South, 2003: 23). In this context, the aim of the Mon nationalists is seen as 'integrative', since they perceive the nation as "a primordial expression of the individuality and the creative force of nature. Like families, nations are natural solidarities; they evolve in the manner, so to speak, of organic beings and living personalities" (Smith, 1998: 178).

In this paper, I proposed historical ethno-symbolism as an alternative approach to understand the ethnic identity of the Mons in Thailand.

> "Historical ethno-symbolism emerges from the theoretical critique of modernist approaches, as well as from a different reading of the historical record. For ethno-symbolists, what gives nationalism its power are the myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritages and the ways in which a popular *living past* has been, and can be, rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias. It is from these elements of myths, memory, symbol, and tradition that modern national identities are reconstituted in each generation, as the nation becomes more inclusive and as its member cope with new challenges" (Smith, 1999: 9).

Historical ethno-symbolism is applicable for the study of the Mons and the other ethnic groups where history and culture play significant roles in the formation of nations and nationalism. As mentioned earlier, historical ethno-symbolic theory emphasises the importance of history and culture as effective sources for the acceleration of nationalist movements. For the historical ethno-symbolists, nationalism could raise its power and become more inclusive through the rediscovery and reinterpretation of the myths, memories, traditions, and symbols of ethnic heritages by the intellectual elites (Smith, 1999). Studying ethnic identity through historical ethno-symbolism would therefore allow us to tackle the ethnic continent from the angle of its own history. This helps to see how and why the conceptualisation of ethnic ideology has been constructed, contested, and progressively changed over periods of time. The following paper will carry out the study of ethnic identity of the Mons in Thailand through the application of historical ethno-symbolic approach. The study will be divided into two main sections. The first part will provide the ethnic myth of the Mon nation. The second part will present the invention of symbols of ethnic heritages, which includes language, religion, and symbolism of Mon nationhood.

Research Methodology

A case study was located in three communities (Kung Phayom, Ban Muang and Nakhorn Chum) in Ban Pong, Ratchaburi, Thailand, due to these following reasons. First of all, Ban Pong is regarded as one of the largest communities of Mon descendants in Thailand (South, 2003). Secondly, Ban Pong is claimed to be the very ancient Mon community where people still maintain a considerable degree of traditional Mon culture (compared with other Thai-Mon communities in Thailand).

Primary data was gathered directly from key informants (namely, the Thai-Mons in Ban Pong) by using different data collecting techniques. Four techniques had been applied in this study. The main tool was standardised questionnaire. Moreover, reconnaissance survey, in-dept interview, and field observation were also used for supplementary information. The fieldwork lasted for around one month, from late June to the end of July 2006. The questionnaire was conducted with the Thai-Mon people with the total amount of 103 individuals in Kung Phayom, Ban Muang, and Nakhorn Chum communities, Ban Pong, Ratchaburi, Thailand. The focus groups were divided into two major sections: the young generation (under the age of 20) in comparison with the other older generations (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and 70+). The findings were measured in calculating the percentage, presented in single table with the analysis of the data.

Secondary data was gathered from various sources. For instance, facts and figures about the study area were collected primarily from Ban Pong Administrative Office. An overview of the situation was given through former researches on Mons in Ban Pong and in Mae Klong River, for example, researches by Oshima (1993); Boobpha (1996); and Sirirath, Sathian & Nipa (1999). Supplementary information was collected from the Mon periodicals (*The Sound of Raman*), internet websites, the Mon language textbooks, and so on.

In terms of data processing and analysis, quantitative analysis through the application of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed. Descriptive statistics specifically for percentage were used to describe the respondents' answers in each topic. Moreover, qualitative statement technique was applied for the analytical description of the findings.

The Ethnic Myth of the Mon Nation

Narrating the ethnic myth is one of the ultimate missions of the ethnic or nationalist movements. In order to claim for the real existence of their community, the very first and important task of the nationalists is to trace their community's origin, and hence locate it in time and in relation to other relevant communities. Since the ethnic Mons are claimed to be one of the oldest indigenous groups in Southeast Asia, history is a very fundamental source that the Mon nationalists have applied to fulfil their nationalist aspirations. In this respect, the Mon history could be characterised as 'myth-history'. To some extent, its history lesson is not to be taken as an accurate account of the past but rather as an exercise of legitimation where (ethnic) identity and values are celebrated.[3]

Based on the Mon Historical Record (translated and edited by Phra Maha Chuang Oucharoen, n.d), the myth-history of the Mon ethnicity began during the occupation of the Mons in South India. The Mon glorious cities included "Sudhammavati" or "Thaton", and "Pegu" or "Hamsawati". In this respect, it should

[3] The concept of 'myth-history' has been applied from David Mc Crone. (1998). "Chapter 2: Tribe, Place and Identity: Ethnicity and Nationalism", in *The Sociology of Nationalism*. London: Routledge, 51.

be noted that the Mon myth-history always includes supernatural and heroic figures, and with the link to Buddhism as a way to romanticise its ethnic myth.

The other important element of the ethnic myth that the nationalists have applied is **the myth of decline**. The myth of decline explains "how the community lost its anchor in a living tradition, how the old values became ossified and meaningless, and how, as a result, common sentiments and beliefs faded to give way to rampant individualism and the triumph of partisan interests over collective ideals and communal solidarity" (Smith, 1999: 67). Coincided with the myth of decline is **the myth of location and migration**. The myth of location and migration helps to clarify where an ethnic group came from and the reasons why its collective people have relocated to the present place. As mentioned by Smith (1999), space gives a necessary framework of self-identification, and assumes special importance where claims to 'territory' are being pressed. The myth of migration thus gives reference to the myth of ancestry where there is "the symbolic kinship link between all members of the present generation of the community, and between this generation and all its forebears, down to the common ancestor" (Smith, 1999: 64).

The Mon nationalists highlight their myth of decline as the major reason for the stateless situation of contemporary Mon people. Moreover, the Mon nationalists strongly emphasise their constant immigrations in the past mainly as a result of the Burmese invasion. Thus, it is the task of the contemporary Mon people to reunite the fragments of their brotherhood and re-establish the "Monland". In this context, it is also important to note that these immigrations of Mons into Siamese territory coincided with the active intercourse between the two countries, namely Burma and Siam. The wartime between these two countries consequently brought large amount of Mons to flee to Siam for refuge (Halliday, 1917/1986: 8).

The other aspect of historical ethno-symbolism that the Mon nationalists have applied is **demarcating the territory of a nation**. It is among the most effective ways that a national identity is strengthened and sustained. Every single map reveals the nation's 'property space' or sovereignty in which the power order is implicit but unsurprisingly clear (Mc Crone, 1998). Thus, a map is the most concrete, and the seemingly natural and stable feature of a nation (Thongchai, 1994). It is highlighted that territorial boundary tends to shift with the political context of which among the most important features are the size and significance of the boundary that helps to shape the level of group identity that emerges as most salient (Horowitz, 1985).

In history, the "Monland" covered three regions stretching over the whole of lower Burma, namely Tenasserim, Pegu and Irrawaddy. Today the "Monland" (or the Mon State) is a figment of ambiguity. It does not exist on any official maps, but only in patches where the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and its military wing the Mon National Liberation Army (MNLA) are located. The present day Mon State was established in 1974. It covers an area of 12,000 square kilometres, extending from the Gulf of Martaban to the Thai border, and including many small islands along 566 kilometres of coastline.[4] It is divided into three regions: Northern, Central and

[4] Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO). (1996). *Mon.* (http://www.unpo.org/member_profile.php?id=39). [Downloaded on April 22, 2007] & Ashley South. (2003). *Mon Nationalism and Civil War in Burma.* New York: Routledge, 7.

Southern regions. With regards to the contemporary Thai-Mons in Thailand, they are descendants of political refugees and others who entered Thailand from their homeland in the South of Burma. According to the study of Bauer, the size of the Mon populations in both Burma and Thailand seems to be a debatable figure. The estimated number of the contemporary Mon population in Thailand ranges between 60,000-200,000 people, depending partly on whether language use is considered a key criterion. Bauer calculates that the number of Mon speakers is unlikely to exceed 60-80,000 people (Christian Bauer, quoted in South, 2003: 20). In fact, no one knows exactly how many Mons live in Thailand today, because the Mon descendents are all Thai citizens and are not distinguished legally from the Thais in any possible way. Moreover, since much assimilation has occurred, it would be difficult to decide who is Mon and who is not (Foster, 1986). As commented by Seidenfaden, "It seems therefore sure that one day the Mon will be completely absorbed by the Thai" (1958: 116-7, quoted in Smithies, 1986: 34).

The Findings of the Study Area: As proposed by the ethno-symbolists, one of the major elements that gives nationalism its power are the myths and memories of ethnic origins which can be rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias and presented to the participants (Smith, 1999). The assumption for this study is that a sense of ethnic identity tends to increase when members of the ethnic groups have significant shares of their *ethno-history*. On the contrary, the sense of ethic identity tends to decrease when *ethno-history* is seen as less important. In this context, *ethno-history* refers to "the ethnic members' memories and understanding of their communal past or pasts, rather than any more *objective* and dispassionate analysis by professional historians" (Smith, 1998: 16).

According to the study, the Thai-Mon people tended to have no clue about the number of their population, and have superficial knowledge about their *ethno-history*. The historical evidences they provided varied, but were generally of what has been written by both the Thai and Mon sides. This implies that the myth-history of an ethnic group is not to be taken as a history lesson in the sense that it is an accurate story of the past, but is rather the way to celebrate ethnic identity and values, and therefore integrate members of the group (applied from Mc Crone's theory, 1998). Similarly, territoriality plays a significant role in integrating people of the nation. In this context, territoriality seems to be weakened when it lacks a clear picture of its own territory (or an official map). This proves that the myth-history and the territoriality of the nation are always multi-stranded and contested, which requires the continuous process of reinterpretation of national identities (applied from Smith's theory, 1998). With this reason, there is the possibility for changes in perceptions of ethnic identity of the group members in certain places and in different periods of time.[5]

[5] Please refer to the table presentation of the questionnaire results in Patise Chuaykunoopakan's *Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand*, a dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Sociology (May 2007).

The Invention of the Mon National Symbols

Mon Language: Even though language use is not the sole criterion of ethnic identification, it is one of the important cultural aspects which help to construct and sustain an ethnic community. Bash (1979) suggests that language is of great importance for the maintenance, the coherence, and especially the integrity of any given social construction of reality.

Language is very fundamental to the definition of the Mon ethnic identity. As proposed by Guillion (1999: 3), the term "Mon" itself represents the "Mon culture". Guillion (1999) further explains that in spoken Mon, the elegant expression in writing and literature for "the Mon language" is *bhāsā man*. This expression, derived in part from the Pali *bhāsaka*, "speech," also means "Mon culture". The Mon language itself asserts that Mon culture and Mon language are inseparable. With this reason, when speaking of Mons, one of the primary key identifications is the Mon language.

All dialects of Mon, whether in Thailand or Burma, are mutually intelligible. Nonetheless, some vocabularies and the expressions of the Mon language used in Thailand are distinct from those used by the Mon language in Burma. Since the Thai-Mon people have had extensive interactions with the Thai, Chinese, Lao and Khmer people, they have adopted some words and expressions from these ethnic groups. On the contrary, the Mon language in Burma might possibly be influenced by Burmese, Indian, English and other ethnic groups in Burma. However, the Mons from both sides of the countries can communicate and understand each other (Boobpha, 1996: 98). The other issue concerning the language use of the Mon people is bilingualism, which has been widespread in both Thailand and Burma for a long time. In Thailand during Halliday's research time (1922: 78, quoted in Foster, 1982), the Mon language had already absorbed significant Thai vocabulary through a process that possibly required a long period of bilingualism. According to Foster (1982), in the modern times, the restricted use of the ancient Mon tongue has had an important effect on the amount of people identifying themselves as 'Mon'. This includes an estimate number of one-and-a-half million people, of which around five percent are in Thailand. The figure corresponds approximately with the number of Mon descendants who do not speak the language. The lack of the promotion of a written language could affect the spoken language, since people generally seem to think a language that is not written as a second-class language. In Thailand, the Mon written language is scarcely taught, and seemingly in the effort to teach the alphabet which makes Mon as a written language virtually dead (Foster, 1982).

Buddhism as the Major and Only Religion: According to the historical ethno-symbolic approach, religion has provided the most intense energy for many pre-modern ethnic communities or *ethnies*. This is particularly significant in those *ethnies* which have evolved a myth of ethnic election (Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), 1996: 187). As suggested by Smith (1996), "To be chosen is to be placed under moral obligations. One is chosen on condition that one observes certain moral, ritual and legal codes, and for only as long as one continues to do so. The privilege of election is accorded only to those who are sanctified, whose life-style is an expression of sacred values" (190). In this respect, religion strengthens the sense of ethnic identity by making ethnicity seen as a primordial phenomenon which is ineffable and obligatory.

The link between religion and ethnic myth of election is applicable to the case of ethnic Mons. The Mon myth-history tends to make close connection between Buddhism and the Mon people. As mentioned in the Mon myth-history, the ancient Mon city of Pegu was believed to be built due to the Buddha's prediction. There are also the records of the important Mon Buddhists in history. For example, the Mon merchants, Sumala and Wimala, brought eight hairs of the Buddha to keep in Mutao Stupa in Burma. There was also a narrative of the Mon monks, Sona Thera and Uttara Thera, who were the disciples of the Buddha. Moreover, Shwedagon Stupa (in Rangoon) has been claimed to be built by the Mons. In Thailand, the Mons have long gained a reputation for their religious ritual purity. This could possibly be since the Buddhist reforms in Siam in the 1820s and 1830s by the future King Monkut (King Rama IV) later became the basis of Thammayutnikai which has been praised for its strict monastic discipline and ordination procedure (Prince Dhani, 1965: 30-32, quoted in Foster, 1982). Moreover, the migration of the Mon people also brought a large number of Mon monks and novices. The Mon migrants built many Mon temples which are not only the places to teach Buddhism and perform religious rituals, but also the great place for the Mon Studies. There are various resources such as the Mon scripts, paintings on the walls, and so on. These are regarded as valuable heritages, especially for the Mon activists and nationalists, to search for the national resources.

The Symbolism of the Mon Nationhood: According to Thongchai (1994), the symbolism of nationhood has its own power. It is generally the conjugation of several discourses, each of which is effective in itself, and hence "makes the symbol of nationhood a rich and potent icon" (Thongchai, 1994: 171). However, "A code or a symbol, like the word "border" or the map of a nation, does not necessarily signify the original signified. It can be generative, producing many more related meanings" (Thongchai, 1994: 170-171). This argument is supported by the findings of Anthony Cohen (1996, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998). According to his theory, flags and other national symbols have the power to provide the members of the nation with the means by which to perceive. The assumption that under normal circumstances they can make people think in specifiable ways is nevertheless flawed. Despite its potential to guide misleading perception, the hegemony of the symbolism of nationhood considerably strengthens and unites the people of the nation.

The Mon national flag, national anthem, and national day are relatively new inventions. They are invented as to support the Mon Nationalist Movement which is based mainly in Burma yet influences a certain amount of Thai-Mons in Thailand. Even though these aspects seem not to be relevant for the case of Thai-Mons in Thailand, it shows how the Mon people apply the uses of symbols to create the sense of ethnic identity which not only unites the people of the same ethnic origin but also strengthens their ethnic identity by differentiating themselves from other ethnic groups.

It is notable that religion and history play significant roles in the creation of the Mon national symbols. For instance, the present day Mon national flag can trace its origin since 1958 when the New Mon State Party (NMSP) was established by Nai Shwe Kyin. The flag has a red colour, with the picture of a yellow sacred Sheldrake (this relates to the legend of the Mon Kingdom, symbolising the two swans that the Buddha saw when he reached the Pegu or Hamsawati) flying towards a light-blue star. The red colour refers to courage and bravery; the yellow colour refers to glory and

nobility; and the blue colour refers to truth. The light-blue star signifies the guiding Pole Star or the symbol of the Mon conviction. The Mon national anthem was created by the Mons in Burma in 1948, which marks the beginning of the rebellion against the Burmese government. Several years later, the Mon national anthem was recorded in Thailand by the Thai-Raman Association who lived near Bangkok. The last aspect of the Mon national symbol – The Mon National Day – is celebrated once every year during the period of the waning moon of the third lunar month (or in February). This was in commemoration of King Samala and King Wimala, the founders of "Hamsawati" or "Pegu". The Mon national Day was first adopted by the United Mon Association (UMA) founded by U Po Cho. It was celebrated in Moulmein in 1948, after Burma gained independence. The Mon National Day was first performed in Thailand at Ramkhamhang University in 1993. Nowadays, it has been celebrated by the Mon descendants from all over the world, such as Britain, Canada, Norway, Sri Lanka, Australia and Malaysia.[6]

The Findings of the Study Area: According to the historical ethno-symbolic approach, the survival and destiny of collective identities of an ethnic group depends largely on history and culture. There is a relationship between history and culture which "forms integral parts of the fabric of popular visions, and of the social structures and processes in which the designated populations are embedded and through which their elites must forge their strategies" (Kedourie, 1971: Introduction; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983: Introduction & ch. 7, quoted in Smith, 1998: 9). Throughout the times, historical and cultural heritages have been rediscovered, recreated and presented as symbols of nationhood, which not only help to integrate people of its community but also differentiate themselves from the outsiders. Here, the effectiveness of symbolism signifies the power and durability of ethnic or nationalist movements.

The questionnaire attempted to investigate the cultural aspects in which the activists and nationalists have applied for the invention of the national symbols. The major stereotypes of ethnic symbols (language, religion, and the symbolism of nationhood) are used as a key to measure ethnic identity of the Thai-Mon people. According the findings, my study seems to indicate that the sense of ethnic belonging of the Thai-Mon people in the three communities has declined. This can be seen clearly by the seemingly ineffectiveness of the symbolic uses of ethnic identity (such as shared language and history) among the Thai-Mon people, particularly the young generation (under 20 years of age). The changes in the people's perception of ethnic identity are tragically compatible with the danger of loss of some cultural heritages (such as the Mon language). This supports the historical ethno-symbolic theory that culture is among the most important aspects for the defence and maintenance of ethnicity.[7]

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[6] Juajan Wongpolganan. (3-6 April 2005). "The Impact of Thai-Burma Border Politics on Indigenous People: The Case of a Mon Sanctuary in Thailand's Westernmost District of Sangkhlaburi", in *9th International Conference on Thai Studies (Vol. 2)*. Illinois: Northern Illinois University, 3-4 & Sukanya Baonerd. (3 May-June 2007). "The Mon National Day: In the Conception of Nation and Nationalism", in *The Sound of Raman (Sieng Raman)*.
http://www.monstudies.com/show_content.php?topic_id=131&main_menu_id=11 [downloaded on May, 20 2007].

[7] Please refer to the table presentation of the questionnaire results in Patise Chuaykunoopakan's *Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand*, a dissertation submitted to

Final Analysis

According to the findings, it seems that manner in which Thai-Mon people have responded to the nationalist agenda is unclear. In this context, the meaning and the level of ethnic belonging of people varies individually. For example, the persons claiming to be Mon may have some knowledge about the Mon history, or superficial awareness of the Mon culture and traditions. Moreover, many people claiming to be Mons either know a few words of Mon, or could understand but could neither speak nor write Mon. However, it is obvious that the Thai-Mon people tend to view ethnicity as of primordialism which is 'given' and 'unaccountable'. The study of ethnic Mons through the application of historical ethno-symbolism provides the overall understanding of ethnicity as follows.

As suggested by the historical ethno-symbolists, the survival and destiny of collective identities of an ethnic group depend largely on history and culture. In order to strengthen and maintain a group's ethnic identity, the transformation and reconstruction of the constitutive myths as well as the symbols of nationhood are fundamentally required. These elements, however, have changed over time, which make the borders between ethnic and national identities move" (Tønnesson & Antlöv, 1996 & Smith, 1999). What is interesting here is of how the members of the ethnic group perceive themselves as belonging to the group which can help to sustain the ethnic community. Thus, "for nationalism to do its work, ordinary people need to see themselves as the bearers of an identity centred elsewhere, imagine themselves as an abstract community (Eley & Suny, 1996:22, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998: 41). This means the nationalists have to adopt the primordial views of ethnicity for to fulfil its nationalist inspiration. Furthermore, it is also important to consider the relational concept of ethnicity. Ethnicity, or at least the awareness of it, is seen as situational and reciprocal, because it is likely to figure in various ways, with different social costs and benefits attached, and in a certain place and time (Jenkins, 1997 & Stephan, 2000). Hence, what it means to be a group member is continuously contested and transformed through collective debates about group culture and identity. To some extent, the perception of individual agency towards the assertion of the ethnic identity is constrained and influenced by the politics of recognition and authenticity practiced within minority group. (Song, 2003a). Also, ethnic identity is produced and reproduced through social interactions with the other ethnic groups, and interaction is always situated in context (Jenkins, 1997). These could help to explain why ethnicity, as of the political and social construction, has always been contested, reproduced, and transformed over the periods of time under certain circumstances.

Ultimately, this study reminds the hegemony or the 'hidden power' of ethnicity. Ethnicity, in itself, is powerful. To some extent, people tend to assume that it is already there. Historical ethno-symbolism is a sound theory to deal with the problems regarding ethnicity. Even thought historical ethno-symbolism does not deny the possibility of pre-existing ethnic community, it helps to trace the root of ethnic origin, to see how and why the ethnic and national elements have been reinterpreted and reconstructed by the nationalist intelligentsias. I would therefore like to conclude by applying Hall's perception of ethnicity (1990, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998).

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the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Sociology (May 2007).

Ethnicity is genuinely a contestable phenomenon. It has never been an "already accomplished fact", but rather a "production" that is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within representation.

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SESSION 4
POLICIES AND POLITICS

Chairperson: Dr. Matthew Copeland

1. Students' **Movement and** Political Participation: Research on the Associations of Islamic **Students in Indone**sia.- *Ismail Suardi Wekke & Sidratahta Mukhtar*

2. Inequitable **Land Usage in** East Java (1971-2005): Impact on the Socio-Cultural Livelihood **of Farmers**. - *Ratnawati Yuni Suryandari & Suprajaka*

3. **Southeast Asia in the New** Cold War: A Socialist Analysis. - *Eugene Jones*

Paper 1 Students' Movement and Political Participation: Research on the Association of Islamic Student in Indonesia

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Abstract

Indonesian student movement engages in political participation since Budi Oetomo declared Kebangkitan Nasional (national awakening) in 1908 to nowadays called reformation era. It proves that student activities in Indonesia a part of political process as "an extra parlement". One of the student movements is Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI - The Association of Islamic University Students), a student movement shaped by Islamic value system. This paper tries to examine the practices of HMI in order to realize Islam as a way of life and a universal value relating to politics performance. This study was conducted in Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam, data were collected purposively in Jakarta. Interview with Pengurus Besar (National Board), non-participant observation and documentation study were arranged. The research shows that HMI (sixty years involvement) since 1947 is an instrumental part on Indonesian educational and political activities progress in enhancing and developing the potency of youth generation. Furthermore, this paper will give an example of activities that were designed not only to develop the students' skills of knowledge but also to raise awareness of political activities and how this relates to Islamic belief. Through involvement in wide range activity is one way to increase awareness among students of the possibilities to learn about and practice management and leadership skills. After graduation from the universities many students chair political party activities and appoint in various positions within government institutions. As a result, those activities allow them participate in Indonesia development and contribute to national progress that direct by Islamic belief, value and culture.

INTRODUCTION

Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI, The Association of Islamic University Students) is one of the oldest and the biggest university students' organization in Indonesia. It was founded on the 5 February 1947 in Yogyakarta, two years after the Independence Day of Republic Indonesia. HMI always play strategic roles in every challenge that must be faced by ummah (Islamic society) and this nation. Whereas, Victor Tanja (1982) proposed that, "history of HMI closely tied with Indonesian modern history perfectly." This condition caused that HMI get many notice from intellectual communities both inside and outside of this country. There are many works and studies dealing with HMI, such as, Agussalim Sitompul written the book entitled *Sejarah HMI dan Pemikiran Keislaman HMI (History and Islamic Thought of HMI)* (1975, 1995, 2002), Muhammad Kemal Hassan written dealing with *Peran HMI Dalam Modernisasi Indonesia (Role of HMI in Indonesian Modernization)* (1987), Victor Tanja written about *Kedudukan HMI Sebagai Kekuatan Pembaharu (The Position of HMI as New Strength)* (1983), Greg Barton written dealing with idea

of *Islam Liberal di Indonesia (Islamic Liberal in Indonesia)* (1999). Prior to Hasanuddin M. Saleh worked on research dealing with *HMI dan Rekayasa Asas Tunggal Pancasila (HMI and Changes to The Only Fundament Organization of Pancasila)* (1996), and Masykur Hakim conducted a research as his dissertation dealing with *HMI Dalam Pergolakan Reformasi Dan Strategi HMI (HMI in The Turbulence of Reformation and The Strategy of HMI)* (2001).

This research eager to testify once again how far the role of HMI in creating opportunities for Islamic student to participate in political activities. Victor Tanja research findings stated that HMI has played very important role in the Republic of Indonesia's journey which is full of challenges from time to times. The phenomena of HMI moment is really interesting, especially dealing with its success to create national political cadres, so they always ready for filling the recruitment of national leadership since Old Order Period, New Order Period and even in this Reformation Period.

LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several books which are reviewed in this writing, the book was written by Victor Tanja (1982), dissertation was written by Syaifullah S.A. dealing with *Nationalism of HMI* (1994), Hasanuddin M. Saleh, one of founder HMI MPO, written about *HMI and Changes to The Only Fundament Organization of Pancasila* (1996), and dissertation which discussed about *Reformation Movement and Strategy of HMI* written by Masykur Hakim (2001). Hasanuddin stated that HMI face the deep and long internal challenges or internal conflicts as impact of New Order Period's pressure to accept The Only Fundament Organization of Pancasila systematically. Although at Congress XV, in Medan 1983, HMI still accept The Only Fundament Organization of Pancasila explicitly. However, through many alumni of HMI in the circle of power has intervened to accept the Only Fundament Organization of Pancasila.

Meanwhile, Hakim stated that HMI still be determined to involve with New Order Period and see the needs to take a part in political activities by coming to economic and political institutions. KAHMI (Korps Alumni HMI / Corps of Alumni HMI) has served many government institutions. Several of them chair on second technocrat strata, such as, Cokroamijoyo, Deliar Noer, Marli Halim, Madjib Ibrahim, Zainul Asni, Omar Tusin, Bustanul Arifin and Hariry Hady. In fact, some of them sit on ministry position, such as, Abdul Gafur, Akbar Tandjung, Mar'ie Muhammad, Minteredjo, etc. In its history, Indonesian Islamic ummah have used political party and mass organization as political media. But HMI never made affiliated with political party formally, because accordance with its principal which is independence principal.

In studying result of Victor Tanja's research, Hasanuddin, Masykur Hakim, and the others, the writer uses some of theory dealing with political education and political participation. The concept that developed by Samuel P. Huntington and Kartini Kartono are still relevance become as analysis tool to measure the HMI tendency's on forming cadre and political participation in the circle of power in long

time. In fact, the role of HMI cause problem. Anas Urbaningrum, for example, can not deny the tendency of HMI to political orientation.

> "Although the struggle of HMI is the struggle of truth, but as organization which has developed, including it has contact with the dynamic of nation political, then every attitude and behavior of HMI will still have the political values and resonance. In the beginning, the posture of HMI as moral force, like or dislike also counted as political force." (See Formulate The Political Position of HMI, Media Indonesia, 5 February 1996).

In the book which is published from dissertation of Hakim in Jamia Millia Islamia, India, entitled *"The Response of Muslim Youth Organization to Social-Political Change: A Case of HMI Role in Indonesia"*, the questions that will answered to explain the role and the contributions of HMI in the social political change in 1985's, post The Only Fundament Organization of Pancasila was conducted until the fall of Soeharto power in 21 May 1998.

Masykur Hakim stated that HMI was founded in 1947 has the aims to defend the Unity of Republic Indonesia and to make prosperous of people, to maintain and to widen Islamic wisdom. The aims of HMI indicated of nationalism. Hakim stated that HMI declared Indonesianization. Hasanuddin also stated that HMI have made training to mobilize and to move in many cities for many other students' organizations in 1960-1970's. It means that HMI play significant role.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The term of political participation have defined by many political experts. Samuel P. Huntington and Joan M. Nelson in their book entitled *Political Participation in the Developing Countries* (1984) given the definition of political participation as personals' behavior, attitude and perception dealing with the relevance of personals' interest to influence the government decisions and action. The real political participation behavior is racial disturbance, the strike of workers etc. Considering to its aims are to influence government decision making, then Huntington and Nelson have written two important aspects. *Firstly,* political knowledge, political interest, feeling dealing with competition, and political effectiveness and relevance. *Secondly,* political participation of professional which has a job in politics or in governmental level. *Thirdly,* focused on public official because having authority to making decision in society.

According to Huntington and Nelson stated that, political participation in developing countries is how to change public official decisions, to change or maintain political organization system which becomes its rule player. The research of Huntington and Nelson has found two political participation categories are; mobilized participation and autonomous participation. The first model of participation based on the fact that many people give their vote, making demonstration, or another action seems not act by personal willing to influence governmental decisions. There is a unique thing in this research result that percentage of voters who use their vote right are high in Turkey. Turkey voters are traditional ones. In fact that most of voters in

Turkey are farmers who are mobilized by land lord to use their vote right. Whereas, autonomous participation was defined as participation activity based on volunteering, without pressure from other side. Autonomous participation is truly based on the effort to influence the government decision. Although both of autonomous and mobilized participation are one spectrum but not absolutely. In democratic country tends to participate autonomous.

In another society, according to Huntington and Nelson stated that participation is based on groups' belief. Most of participation involve collaboration and benefit for collectiveness, there are some common fundaments: (a) Class, personal with social status, similar wage and job; (b) Group, personal from racial, religion, language and ethnic; (c) Environment, personals who live close each other geographical location; (d) Party, personal who try to come to formal organization for controlling both in executive and legislative fields; and (e) Group, personal who are united by constant interaction which is realized in patron-client grouping form. By comparing with United State of America, the citizens' political participation there reflected on liberal development model. Huntington and Nelson stated that high autonomous participation can implemented by raising economical wealth as a whole, distribution of wealth as a fair, improving political stability, and setting up the fundament for broader participation with democratic governmental system.

Furthermore, Huntington and Nelson stated that the attitude of political elites toward political participation in every society is the most determined influence of political participation character in that society. Mobilized participation only happen if political elites making effort to involve mass of people into political activity. According to Huntington and Nelson, they stated that autonomous participation can be happen with not to higher sacrifice, if political elites do not oppress people. In traditional society, political participation less appreciate both elite and common people, because they still consider for respectful attitude and hierarchy formation.

On the contrary, Huntington and Nelson also found the basic difference with participation pattern in democratic political system. Participation in election is influenced by intensity and character than competition of voters and parties in society. For example, it has change drastically decline on social power that causes competition among parties after 1896 in USA. Because of both south and north tends to become single party power. In multiparty, every party tends to mobilize their supporters than making competition with other party by limitation intensity of political party competition.

In developing countries cases, broadening political participation are very rare. This is the main goal of political elite in developing countries. Broadening political participation is influenced by initiatives of political leaders who want to defend its power. People who hold the political power can be influence political participation; they prefer to strengthen their power and to strengthen political stability by limitation of broadening political participation. The effort to develop economic wealthy, equal distribution and stability in politic can be create requirement to broaden political participation.

Huntington stated that people who become member of organization and take a part in organization actively, they have big possibility to take a part in politic. In fact,

the involvement in organization maybe more important than social-economical status in political participation. The argumentation of this two American political scholars are supported by Almond-Verba data dealing with USA, England, Germany, Italy and Mexico. The data showed that social-economical status can be explained about 10 percent from differences in political participation; meanwhile the involvement can be explained about 25 percent in organization. Another study also has the same conclusion. One of function of economical development is the increasing of personal participation in group. In many countries, there is preference in educated community that better salary and occupation tends to involve in organization higher. The involvement of people who less status in organization is the impact of consciousness in unique group, class, communal group or environment. Meanwhile, individual intensity can identified as increasing of individual involvement in group. The possibility that individual will involve in organization and take a part in politic.

Elite group who control to government has more ability to broaden participation than elite group who not doing controlling function. To mobilized new group into politic is effective way. Huntington and Nelson considered that the effort to shift dominated power and to take over governmental controlling is one of effective way to broken the status quo. Meanwhile, ruling elite still try to limit their political participation. It is rare for the ruling power to broaden participation except, Firstly, if elite have no fundament for power or establish constituent, it is easy to overthrew by military, so that power must engage new power to keep their power; Secondly, ruling elite who dominated maybe will be forced to take action to mobilized other group into politic to support that ruling elite. Sometimes they found the reality that political elite participation is influenced by ideological background, especially their commitment to eliminate social class.

Dealing with this political participation, Huntington and Nelson written the fact that individual in a developing society has found that there is normal possibility order. That are, non-political individual action, individual political action, non-political collective action, and collective political action. The choice has done by elite, group, and individual between political participation and another ways to achieve the goal can be change. The changes of goal is depends on certain target. The temporary secular developing process is more extensive participation and more variety.

THE SUBJECT OF RESEARCH

In relation to the process and role of HMI cadre-forming in occupying power structure in Indonesia, the subjects are going to discuss in this paper are on the cadre-forming system of HMI. Cadre-forming process in 1960's and 1970's had produced high quality alumni occupying various positions in both social and political and power structure in the decade 1990's.

Though cadre-forming process in HMI is relatively short on about five to seven years, but the cadres produced have a high quality and are pluralistic oriented in term of thought. Creating these high and pluralistic oriented cadres is not an easy job to carry out for they have been grown and educated in primordial environment, Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI).

HMI cadre-forming that emphasizes on the discourse and political thought supported by social and political condition influences political participation of HMI cadres in the power structure of the state. It is clearly that the case of HMI is engaged in political discourse and interest on politics, competition etc will influence political participation of politicians to engage in the power structure.

THE HISTORY OF FOUNDATION AND STRUGGLE OF HMI

The history of HMI was founded on 5 February 1947 in Yogyakarta. At that time, the condition of Indonesian political was still marked by the struggle for liberation in revolution period against to Dutch aggression. The idea to found HMI was inspired by idea was formulated by Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB) with its Islamic Studie Club to utter religious-intellectual and intellectual-religious. At that time, according to Victor Tanja, there was emptiness role of Islamic Youth intellectual because of JIB have been not exist again. There are several important figures in JIB such as Samsurizal and Natsir were not young anymore and became members of Masyumi political party. Lafran Pane with his friends, Kartono, Dahlan Husein, and Misroh Hilal, were students Sekolah Tinggi Islam (STI) (School of Islamic Studies), now become Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII) (Indonesian Islamic University) in Yogyakarta. They discussed to found HMI in their classroom. Tanja stated that the decision to found HMI because of the urgent needs for Youth Moslem Intellectual to take part in the struggle for national freedom. As an independence organization, HMI has expectation to be able to more its integrity toward duty of guarding in the interest of the state.

For Indonesian Moslem Community, the presence of HMI is very relevance to improve the quality of socio-educational and political in organizations. According to Tanja, the reason efforts of this new circle society's, is for completeness Islamis society toward modern teaching method. Moreover, pesantren (Indonesian Islamic boarding school) have played its role in spreading of Islamic literature and liberation religion thought. Dutch language was also used as introduction of teaching in pesantren. Beside HMI, Muhammadiyah movement is viewed as resurrection of Islamic spirit toward new age in Indonesia. Victor Tanja was viewed that the change of Muhammadiyah vision from socio-education organization, which was tied strong with religion, to political struggle. In West Sumatra, Muhammadiyah tends to political interest was strong in past time. Afterwards, Muhammadiyah develop its neutral role in politic, give the political decision for members personally. Tanja stated that, although not focused on political directly, but Muhammadiyah develop political consciousness toward it members.

Meanwhile, Hasanuddin stated that history of HMI have been written by many writers earlier both alumni and not alumni of HMI. Agussalim Sitompul written, *"Sejarah HMI dan Pemikiran HMI dan Relevansinya dengan Sejarah Perjuangan Bangsa" (History and Thought of HMI and its Relevance with the History of Indonesian Nation Struggle)*. Sulastomo in 1989 written *"Hari-Hari Panjang: 1963-1966" (Long Days: 1963-1966)* was told his witness in process of shift power from Old Order Period to New Order Period and the position of HMI at that time. Victor Tanja also has written dealing with HMI and its position in the middle of new movement in Indonesian Moslem.

In 1975, HMI conducted seminar to reformulate the motivation and background toward the foundation of HMI. The foundation of HMI was based on to develop Islam in Indonesia by preparing cadres who have high perception and commitment for Islam. Beside that, the foundation of HMI based on the wish to increase the Islamic quality of students' in performing the Indonesian nation history duty. Considering that sovereignty of country is important. From the historian aspect, Hasanuddin stated that the system of power for HMI is system of power which can support the development of Islam in Indonesia and this mainstream which is taken up by HMI in making interaction with social and political system. There were two important moments for HMI; first, was the physically struggle to face Dutch Military Action I, and second was the struggle to face the communist rebellion. The involvement of HMI in physical revolution to defend the freedom that made impressed the Indonesian leader. General Soedirman, the leader of Indonesian physical struggle for defending the freedom, said that the abbreviation of HMI is Harapan Masyarakat Indonesia (The Hope of Indonesian People). He supposed that HMI is not become separate from Islamic community. General Soedirman stated that when giving the speech in first anniversary of HMI in Yogyakarta (1948).

In 1950's, headquarter of HMI move from Yogyakarta to Jakarta. Since that time, HMI be able to formulate its position in the middle of Indonesian nation, HMI has functioned as Islamic Youth Organization, which have responsibility as agent of change toward nation and state. As the university students' organization, HMI have responsibility in university students' milieu, especially in college, and also as the supporter to the basic of Islam, responsible to how Islamic values can be operated in the society and state life. In the time of parliamentary democracy, HMI give the freedom to its members to choose one Islamic party. Although that decision above destroy the agreement among Islamic organization in 1949. In the subsequent developments, Hasanuddin see that HMI still consistent, for example, when HMI made the demeanor for all of Islamic fraction members in Konstituante (Constituent Assembly) by sent the letter, which was noted:

> "To all of members in Konstituante as the owner of Indonesian Islamic ummah mandate's, we wish that you still struggle for that mandate and always maintain solidarity action among Islamic fraction as only one of the best weapon."

In 1961, when Soekarno announced NASAKOM (Nasionalis, Sosialis, Agama dan Komunis / Nationalist, Socialist, Religion and Communist), HMI made the moderate demeanor. This moderation demeanor was not like other big political organizations' attitude. HMI showed itself as accommodating organization and even embrace with another organization which has accommodating tradition, which was NU (Nahdlatul Ulama / Revival of Islamic Scholars). HMI also has dropped sanction to its members which made demonstration dealing with the power of NU in IAIN (Institut Agama Islam Negeri / State Institute of Islamic Studies) Yogyakarta. According to Hasanuddin, this step to save HMI from influence of PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia / Indonesian Communist Party) in regime Soekarno. HMI got many protections from Islamic organization which was being able to cooperate with Soekarno, which was NU. The unwillingness of HMI was in confrontation with Soekarno directly because he still has very strong power. The big revolution leader, Soekarno, face big wave which willing to shift the power. But, actually the many

members of HMI who involve to crash down the regime of Soekarno which was known as exponent '66.

The policy of New Order Period, to spay Islamic political power systematically by making coalition with ABRI (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia / The Army of Republic Indonesia), bureaucrat, and Golkar (Golongan Karya / The Group of Functionaries). For youth field, government to form KNPI (Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia / National Committee of Indonesian Youth) as an umbrella for all youth organization. Although HMI take part to be at the forefront of counter power, this was Cipayung Group. HMI also support Malari Movement in 15 January 1974. However, according to Hasanuddin, HMI did not react when government implemented NKK/BKK in 1978. Hasanuddin consider HMI as ambivalent demeanor. In one side, members of HMI as demonstration person, but in other side HMI, as organization, did not have courage to make pressure for government. The writer noted this as uniquely of HMI in its effort to safe itself.

THE DEVELOPMENT OF HMI POLITICAL THOUGHT

HMI was known as a cadre forming organization that greatly emphasized on a political orientation especially as a main source of political recruitment of state institutions like the People Representatives and civil servants, but HMI has various kinds of discourses, thoughts and ideas developed through cadre forming activities. Many discourses that HMI cadres had learned especially in the decades of 1960 and 1970's had developed fast into political thoughts, which is beneficial for the actualization of HMI cadres in occupying power structures in Indonesia.

The Development of HMI Thoughts

In the process of HMI, the study on Islam is put on priority. The basic reason of HMI founding, as known, was resulted in the Muslim restlessness on seeing the discontinuity of Muslim reform in Indonesia. This was proved in the time when a Islamic Youth Movement called Jong Islaminten Bond (JIB), in the time of Dutch and Japan colonization, only existed for one generation (1924-1945).

Syafi'i Ma'arif (former chairperson of Muhammadiyah) stated that, Jong Islaminten Bond, founded in 1925 by a genius Muslim intellectual KH Agus Salim. It had delivered some outstanding political cadres like Muhammad Roem (one of the founding fathers of Republic Indonesia), Muhammad Natsir (an intellectual and political figure becoming the symbol of nation morality). Syafi'i Ma'arif ultimately concluded that Jong Islaminten Bond was an intellectual and visionary generation and also the wisest generation in political field (Syafi'i Ma'arif, 1997). In the time of Jong Islaminten Bon generation, they were facing the ethical political system applied by the colonials, but this enabled them to have a high nationalist consciousness. In addition, the frictions among Islam, Nationalists and communists, at that time, had not risen yet. But HMI that was founded following Indonesian Independence was faced with internal conflicts among Indonesians. In the domain of Indonesian political superstructure, the enforcement of ideology and state constitution was the main reason for the existing conflicts. As Bactiar Effendy noted that the difference was presented

in the form of polarization based on two ideological groups -- Nationalist and Religious groups. The first group emphasized on that Indonesia should not be based on the nationalist principle. This group was under coordination of Soekarno, Muhammad Yamin, Supomo and Muhammad Hatta. Moreover, this group proposed Pancasila to be used as the Indonesian principle in the reason that it would be widely accepted by all Indonesian existing groups. While the second group emphasized on the idea that Indonesia should be based on the religious principle. This group, led by Natsir, Wahid Hasyim, Ki Bagus, and Sukiman, proposed Islam as the Indonesian principle. They based on their ideas for some reasons. *First*, Islam is the religion, which provides guidelines for all aspects of life. *Second*, Islam is the religion of the majority of people in Indonesia. In June, 1945s, the solution had been found by adopting Jakarta Charter, a charter obliging Muslims to carry out Islamic teachings, which accommodated all interests of Islamic groups. But a day after Indonesian Independence, the Jakarta charter was cancelled and it was represented by the word "Believe in God" included in the first point of Pancasila. This historical fact inevitably has caused endless conflicts among the next generation for both nationalist and religious oriented groups failed to create a negotiated consensus on the political life.

HMI, in the ideological context, represented Muslims, especially modernist Muslims, and this emerged an accusation over HMI, in the guided democracy under Soekarno, that it was contra-revolution. This issue was also manipulated by Indonesian Communist Party to dismiss HMI from its existence for the party found that HMI and Islam was on the similar ideology and meant similar contender as well. The development of HMI thoughts on Islamic affairs found widely public sphere to contextually re-develop Islamic discourse when the New Order Regime was in power following the failed rebellion of the Indonesian Communist Party. In this time, it seemed that HMI found a momentum to express the hidden thoughts on the Islamic affairs. The roles of HMI in the beginning of the New Order Regime as an ideological response toward modernization process. In this very beginning process, the New Order Regime faced a great responsibility to carry out economical and political recovery under the economic crisis and a high inflation that were inherited by Old Older Regime in term of global strategy to build a new order. The Regime, in this early process, emphasized on the economical development and political stability as its first priority. It is argued that the regime proposed the concept of modernization for social and political life in implementing its developmental policy. The clash of different points of view on the modernization concept emerged in the time when all political entities, including HMI, agreed that modernization should be the means to solve all problems Indonesian faced.

The reason HMI accepted the developmental approach carried out by the New Order Regime was in relation to the re-interpretation on Islamic human values through a social and transformative school in the effort on creating harmonic and integral relation between Islam and the state concerning on some main points. *First*, the developmental process for egalitarian and participatory society. On the basis of complexity in the national affairs, an accommodative strategy or approach was, therefore, significantly in need for accommodating Muslims aspiration. *Second*, under New Order Regime, it was predicted that the state was getting stronger. Based on the point of view, Muslims, according to Bactiar Effendy (1990), needed to be directed toward understanding the wide meaning of politic covering programs, strategies and

the area of struggle. HMI was also interested in formulating substantial and significant relations among the state, Islamic politics and other existing social and political institutions, which had similar visions. Moreover, HMI was interested in re-formulating the inclusive end of Islamic politics.

Islamic reform movements in Indonesia, in fact, was influenced profoundly by other movements in the Islamic countries through long term trading contacts and thought dynamics with, for example, Middle East countries. Fazlur Rahman, an outstanding Muslim scholar who currently has become a source of inspiration for HMI activists, introduced four models of development. First, Pre-modern revivalism movement or early revivalism, this movement was a reaction over the moral decadence of Muslims saturated by the rigidity of the reforming thoughts. In addition, this movement was directed to create fundamental transformation to overcome social and moral decadences over Muslims. Second, classical modernism movement, this movement was carried out through reforming educational institutions. The consequence of this model, especially in many Islamic and ex-colonized countries, was the adoption of the Western paradigm to measure the development achieved. Moreover, the Koran and Hadith were, consistently, used to justify western thoughts. Third, post-modern revivalism, in this phases the western thoughts, especially on politic, social and economic, provided equal meanings with the Islamic terms. In other words, these social and political movements were the basic accentuation of this well and modernly organized movements (Awad Bahasoan, 1984:110-112).

This movement appeared in the modern phases, which was long experienced by Islamic countries through enlightenment process from XVI to XX century. While Indonesian reforming process was marked by the awakening of Islamic nationalism in the world in attempt of confronting western colonials and becoming prosperous and advanced Muslim society (Awad Bahasoan, 1984:110-112). Based political thoughts of Islam, Dien Syamsuddin (2001) argues that the relation between the ruling Islam and the ruled Islam had become an important issue in appearing the new theories concerning on both the relation between the two sides and the ideal society that would appear from the relation. The political thoughts of Islam actually express the long and sustainable intellectual process concerning on the nature of government roles as inseparable means to solve the religious and worldly affairs. As it is common in the intellectual tradition, political thoughts of Islam also present two points of view on the relation between the ruling Islam and the ruled Islam.

In this context, there is profound contradiction among political ulama toward the power, especially in the pre-modern era, which was influenced by geographic, social, political and cultural factors, thus in common the history of Muslim civilization put the ruling sides (Khalifah, Amir and sultan) in the superior position with absolute or divine power and sovereignty. It is mostly reflected for example in the title of sultan with Allah *fi al-ardh* (the representative of Allah in the earth) or *zil Allah fil ardh* (the shadow of Allah in the earth). The weak position of religious ulama in social sectors has motivated political ulama to legitimate the ruling party with religious reasons.

HMI and Political Thoughts

To explore and study the political thoughts of HMI was not an easy job, though when we mention the word "HMI", people will automatically related it with political field. For the image of HMI was rooted from strong political orientation. According to Nurcholish Madjid that in attempt to enforce Islamic and political mission of HMI, the thoughts on HMI politics develop in accordance with the growth of HMI thoughts. In every stage of process, HMI is urged to actualize itself as part of the whole Indonesian Muslims. Nurcholish Madjid argued that the conscience as part of Indonesian Muslims would create pluralist and independent behavior in the thoughts and culture of HMI.

The pattern of HMI participation is based on the ideological conscience of HMI as a political cadre with certain understanding on reality and ideology toward nationality affairs; and HMI hope on the ends and target, which need to be achieved by Indonesia as a plural nation. In addition, the hope and nationality vision are also adapted with political ideals of HMI since it was first founded, that is intellectual participation and participation to defend this state physically. The model of HMI participation in national and political life is active, this participation is reflected in the attitude and the roles of HMI in criticizing and confronting the process of national development (Nurcholish Madjid, 1999:16-17). According to Nurcholish Madjid, this participation has to be based on an independent participation both to internal and external Muslims like in relation to the political groups in national and political life. But HMI has to see the criticized developmental problems objectively whether it has been appropriate with developmental agenda that are needed by the people.

As an independent organization, HMI often has to confront with other Muslim resistance especially Mashumi. Greg Barton found that there is an implicit conflict between HMI and Mashumi (an Islamic political party) though it seems that their platforms are almost same. Barton argues that there is fundamental difference between HMI and other organizations especially political ones for HMI is an independent and established organization though in the past Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) had accused HMI as an inseparable part of Mashumi. To show its independence, HMI rejects to join in any existing political parties for HMI was critical to any existing political parties including Mashumi. In term of political development, in the Renville conference between Indonesia and Dutch, HMI was clash of ideas with Mashumi in which HMI totally supported to the conference. In addition, HMI supported secular ideology (Pancasila) for Indonesia while Mashumi supported Islamic constitution that had become ideals of the people at that time and the relation between HMI and Mashumi was at the worst time when HMI decided to support four Islamic political parties (Mashumi, Nahdatul Ulama' (NU), Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia (PSII), and Perti (Barton, 1999:58-61).

In the guided democracy era (1950-1963), the political sphere especially in the internal Muslims was experiencing conflicts and was in fragile. In addition, between Islamic group and communist and nationalist group was in clash of interests and thoughts. Communist and nationalist groups accused HMI as reformer group, contra revolution and anti Pancasila. Nevertheless, this accusation strengthened the internal solidarity of HMI that it was able to formulate some useful thoughts for Islamic communities and for national affairs.

As organization with developmental oriented, HMI continually tried to achieve its interests by producing modern discourses on nationality affairs. There were at least five fundamental aspects that had become important discourse for HMI at that time – politics, education, religion, economy, and culture. Before, HMI generally had futuristic thoughts on nationality affairs. Endang Saifuddin Anshari outlined that there three important dimensions to note in discussing commitment of nationality (HMI called it Indonesian values); Indonesia as a country, Indonesia as a nation and Indonesia as state. In term of Indonesian as a country, Endang explained the strategic position of Indonesia that is surrounded by two oceans – Pacific and Hindia – and tens of islands, big and small, located in the equator lines, therefore Indonesia is strategic both economically, politically, socially and culturally. In term of Indonesian as nation, Indonesia is pluralism in form of races, religions, traditions, local languages and many more, therefore HMI as an Islamic organization pays much attention to the pluralism. In this context, HMI should play an important role to implement national integration (Ade Komaruddin and M. Fauzie, 1990).

In relation to the political thoughts of HMI, the relation between religion and political aspects will be discussed in details. From the religious perspective, the interpretation of the HMI principle shows that the truth of Islam is perfect in which it will enable human beings to be happy both in the world and hereafter. In additon, HMI will participate to implement Muslim's sacred missions to invite human being into truth. Agus Salim Sitompul and Greg Barton agree that since first time HMI supported Pancasila as an ideology. In this context, Muslims are required to keep struggle for the future and HMI, as nation cadre and future generation, is required to formulate humanity agenda because Islamic university students are considered as Ummah cadres to continue Muslim ideals. Ismail Hasan (HMI chairperson in 1958) argued that NDP had to be HMI zeal to achieve its final targets. Further he insisted that HMI should have moral belief, high intellectuality and creativity.

HMI is a moderate organization, which can adapt with any existing political reality. In this context, HMI tried to overcome marginalization process by government and to eliminate political decay in Muslim community. Even, HMI tried to solve any problems concerning on the nationality basis. Nevertheless, the state tried to hinder and limit the growth of political ideology of Islam. In the weakening of Islamic politics, HMI continually conducted wide cadre process to create Muslim cadre that could be recruited into the political structure in the future. In the guided democracy era, when Soekarno was to establish Kabinet Gotong Royong that would include Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), HMI demanded that Piagam Jakarta be applied in which Islam was the state was based on Islamic principles. In the fifth congress of HMI in Medan (1957), it decided that Islamic state had to be established in Indonesia. In fact, this demand was in relation with constitution committee (Konstituante) that was discussing in attempt to replace the temporary constitution of 1950.

Agussalim Sitompul stated there were two important factors that formed the background of the political thoughts of HMI. First, that our independence from colonial domination was an absolute achievement for colonial domination brought great disadvantages for our nation and our people. HMI suggested that if Indonesia was still dominated by colonials, people sovereignty should be enforced to achieve people independence. In 1950s, it seemed that Dutch's influence was still strong for the domination was not merely physically but also spiritually (for example, the arrival

of Jending mission to Indonesia). According to HMI, Indonesia should be equal with other nations in the world. Second, the political thoughts of HMI were explained in the First Anniversary of HMI in Bangsal kepatihan Yogyakarta in February 6, 1948. Ahmad Tirtosudiro, the vice-chairperson of HMI, in his speech stated:

> "Based on the sociological perspective, the form of Indonesian state should be appropriate with characters and condition of our society, therefore the western dogma and theories should be observed before they were adopted. For it would change the social structure of Indonesian people"

In the end of his speech, he stated that Indonesian students had to pay attention to their social functions and had to engage in the social reality. They had to keep in mind the statement that says "a politician that does not know sociology like a ship man that does not know the course of the wave and the line of sea reef mountains, and he would be collapse in the middle of the ocean".

When HMI was faced with Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), HMI under Soelastomo tried to be accommodative with political manifesto of Soekarno known as Nasakom. Dahlan Ranuwihardjo who knew directly all PKI's efforts to dismiss HMI thought to meet Soekarno to explain HMI position and asked not to dismiss HMI and suggested Soekarno to bring HMI into his revolutionary politics. To implement his thought to meet Soekarno, he applied hidden strategy. Most of his seniors did not agree with his steps and suggested that HMI, like Mashumi and GPII, to reject Pancasila and other political manifestations as an organization ideology. Dahlan finally could meet Soekarno and discussed in details on the HMI position. In the meeting, Dahlan applied Breed front strategy and produced Gunung Puyuh Agreement. This strategy stated that if Soekarno dismissed HMI, it could be predicted that HMI would engage in the separatist movements like DII/TII.

According to Dahlan Ranuwihardjo, his meeting with Soekarno was a form of political deal and a way to clean HMI from ex-GPII members. In addition, this meeting was intended to make HMI a supporting force for our state principles – Pancasila and Nasakom. Soekarno also would free HMI to conduct cadre-forming process and political education for its members generally called Kursus Kader Revolusi and he issued president's decree that would control HMI. This lobby was considered as an indication that HMI would win the competition against its political contenders, and it was proved that HMI was the winner in the competition. In addition, HMI was also able to face any attacks to dismiss it. This was not only caused by political deals between Soekarno and Dahlan Ranuwihardjo but because all elements within HMI from Local to central organization plus LDMI and LAPMI were consistent to defend the existence of HMI.

Since 1970s and 1980s, we have seen new intellectual processes that have been pioneered by HMI. According to Bachtiar Effendy, there were at least three fields of thoughts that played a significant role in changing old Islamic activism and intellectualism; reformation of Islamic thoughts, political and bureaucratic reformation and social transformation. The three sectors carried out reformation movement collectively. For example, reformation of Islamic thoughts emphasized on the dynamic of the changing world. Bureaucratic and political reformation emphasized on the Muslim involvement in the bureaucratic and political life of the

state and cultural groups (social transformation) conducted people empowerment in the grass roots. All this were intended to empower Muslim community in the economic and political fields. Therefore, in the future they would be able to support the construction Muslim community that focused on the values of justice, equality, discussion, and Pancasila (Bahtiar Effendy, 2001:91-93).

It seemed that transformation of HMI political thoughts was well responded by New Order Regime, therefore since 1980s New Order Regime had accommodated significantly the political aspiration of the Muslims. R William Liddle (Kompas, 1990) stated that Nurcholish Madjid's statement Islam Yes, Islamic Party No is an appropriate political slogan to express the roles of Muslims in democratic, stabile and effective Indonesian government. Indonesian Muslims in the New Order Regime did not struggle through political parties as in the Old Regime, but they struggled through social organizations (HMI) that to achieve their interests and visions in the political arena including executive and legislative member.

CONCLUSION

HMI is not political organization, but it puts concern on the political issues that make HMI accused as pressure group. HMI though is only intense in the issues of intellectuality, Indonesianism and Islamism but sometimes it also engages in political roles that can ultimately create new problems for it. This paper described how the political participation of HMI. The former adopted authoritarian and the later adopts a democratic political system. This research is, finally, explained the influences of HMI domination on the power. This is conducted in relation to the decline of the cadre quality and strategic roles of HMI in reformation movement. In this context, HMI should function as critic and power controller. This study is not, of course, intended at merely producing descriptive and phenomenological knowledge on HMI as sources of political recruitment in the power structure but also intended to provide values added toward the development of political science, especially the theory of political participation.

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Paper 2 Inequitable Land Usage in East Java: Impact on the Socio-Cultural Livelihood of Farmers

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Abstract

There has been a dramatic change in the agricultural sector during the last 34 years (1971-2005) in Indonesia. The contribution of the agricultural sector to the Gross National Product (GNP) has decreased drastically. Conversely, the industrial sector's contribution to the GNP significantly increased. In 1971, the agricultural sector's contribution to the GNP was 44.8% which constituted almost half of the GNP. In that year, the industrial sector only contributed 8.4% to the GNP. In contrast, in 2005, there has been a drastic reduction in the agricultural sector's contribution to the GNP to 13.4% of the GNP. On the other hand, the industrial sector's contribution to the GNP increased to 29.0%. So, it could be argued that during the past 34 years, the Indonesian government's development policies gave more favor to the industrial sector and marginalized the agricultural sector. This was caused by an annual decrease in the allocation of land for agricultural purposes and an increase in the rate of agricultural land conversion to estates and industrial areas. The process of land conversion increased instability in the agricultural sector, which was the main source of farmers' bread and butter. The result of this was that farmers were marginalized since they had lost most of or all their land, which was their means to earn money to support their families. This dramatically increased instability in the agriculture sector and violated the harmony of farmers' lives. Therefore the main objective of this paper is to examine how this has led to a decrease in the living standard of farmers and how all of this has affected the farmers' pattern of employment, their values, traditions and resultant social structures.

INTRODUCTION

Generally, the agricultural land conversion refers to the land usage which proposed to plant the plantations and make farm animals. The allocation of land in the world is about 1.4 million hectares. According to Buringh and Dudal (1978), it consists of 1.4 million hectares of ice, 13.9 million hectares of agriculture, forest, and non-agricultural land.

The conversion of land usage in agricultural sector closely relates to the human being activity to alter the agricultural land to be non agricultural one for certain purposes. In short, non-agricultural land is used to build other sectors such as estates, urban services and facilities (churches, hospitals), industries (factories, storages), mines, irrigation, waste disposal, communication and transportation (street, train railway, airports), and recreation activities (gardens, sport) (Buringh and Dudal 1987).

The fact shows that it is difficult to change the agricultural land conversion because it becomes sustainable (Economic Research Service 2002). Indeed, it takes a long time even in a century to change the land conversion becomes land agriculture. This phenomenon is caused by the macro structure factors and processes such as demography, urban management and the transformation of agriculture to the industrial sector (Kustiwan 1997).

THE PHENOMENON OF LAND CONVERSION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

According to Kustiawan (1997) in macro perspective, the phenomenon of agricultural land usage in developing countries is caused by the transformation of demography and economic structures. It means that if it is seen from the economic transformation, it closely relates to the change of agricultural usage become industrial sector. While, if it is viewed from demographical one, it will imply that the high growth of population in the urban area will impact on the changes of land usage to become non-agricultural one. It is true that the rate of agricultural land conversion to establish urban areas in developing countries like Latin America, Africa, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh is high comparing with developed nations. Statistically, the growth is about 476 000 annually. The example of this growth happened in Sao Paulo Brazil which has the growth about 180 kilometers in 1930 while 1988 it was more than 900 kilometers. It will be caused by the changes of natural forest, agricultural land and botanical garden become non-agricultural one (World Resources Institute 1997).

However, the rate of inequitable agricultural land conversion can be seen in most developing countries such as East Asia and South-East Asia like South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia. Thailand, Philippine, and Indonesia.

The growth of economic sector after 2nd world war in East Asia has caused the increase in the rate of agricultural land conversion to estates and industrial sectors. In Taiwan as an example, the development of industrial sectors and urban areas in the bay has damaged the agricultural areas around it (UNEP 2000). In 2000, the amount of agricultural land will reduce to 851 000 hectares in Taiwan (FAO 2000). Similarly, in South Korea, it is predicted that 1016 kilometers will converse to be non-agricultural land in the 10 years.

It can not be denied the fact that most of developing countries in South-East Asia such as Malaysia, Thailand, Philippine, and Indonesia have experienced with the agricultural land conversion rapidly; moreover, they become the fast growth among the countries in the world. In 1985, 48% of the land in Malaysia became agricultural area, 38% is for forest, and 9% is for estate. In 9 years period or in 1994, the estate areas had increased 17% and the agricultural and forest areas have decreased 28% (SARCS without date). Based on GNP (Gross National Product) from 1960 to 1980, there has been a drastic reduction in the agricultural sector's contribution every five year. It was 38% (1960), 32% (1965), 31% (1970), 28% (1975), and 22% (1980). It proves that Malaysia has encountered with the inequitable land usage.

Thailand also experienced with this inequitable land usage particularly around Bangkok. It happens because Bangkok is the center of economic and culture. The impact of the drastic growth of Bangkok citizens who build their houses, and buy cars has made traffic jam. Thus, there are many citizens who move to rural areas and it will cause the agricultural land conversion about 46 640, 80 505, and 110 000 hectares in 1974, 1984, and 1988 or the percentage is about 13%, 22%, and 30% from the number of agricultural areas (Dowall 1992).

In Calabarzon, Philippine, the inequitable land usage is 11 600 hectares and 44% is for industrial areas, 34% for estates. 50% of land conversion is for farming fields. On December 1996, 48 468 hectares of agricultural land have conversed because they had an agreement from agricultural and law ministries. Additionally, 85% of this land has become non-agricultural area (Hemedez without date).

THE PHENOMENON OF LAND CONVERSION IN INDONESIA

In the 34 year period, from 1971 to 2005, there has been a drastic change of agricultural sector in Indonesia. The fact shows that the GNP and human resources who manage the land reduced. In 1971, the contribution of agricultural sector (including animal farms, forests, and fishery) is 44,8% which constituted almost half of the GNP. In that year, the industrial sector contributed only 8.4 %. The agricultural sector uses about 64% of sources while industrial one is about 6.5%. It proves that agriculture become the most important sector in Indonesia. In contrast, this condition has been changed drastically since 34 years. In 2005, the use of it did not contribute significantly. It only contributed 13.4% to the GNP. On the other hand, the industrial sector's contribution to the GNP is 29% and use the sources 15% (See table 1 and 2). So it could be argued that during the past 34 years, the Indonesian government's development policies gave more favor to the industrial sector and marginalized the agricultural sector. The marginalization of agriculture in the 34 years has made the farmers spoil. The impact of agricultural marginalization made the farmers had lost most of or all their land, the transaction cost had become expensive one, there had been many economic institutions which did not consider the farmer lives (Yustika 2003).

Table 1. The type of occupation based on sectors (%), 1971 - 2005

Sector	1971	1980	1990	2001	2005
Agriculture, Forest, Fishery	64	54,7	50,1	43,8	40.8
Mines	0.2	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.0
Manufactures	6.5	8.6	11.6	13.3	15.0
Electric, Gas, and Water Supplies	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0
Building Construction	1.7	3.1	4.0	4.2	4.2
Business and Restaurant	10.4	12.9	15.0	19.2	20.3
Transportation and Communication	2.4	2.9	3.8	4.9	6.2
Finance, Insurance, Estates, and Service	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.2	1.3
Public Service	9.9	15	13.7	12.1	11.1
Other sectors	4.6	1.4	0.0	1.2	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Original source: Yustika 2003 and statistic data 2005

Table 2. The Gross National Product based on sectors (%), 1971 - 2005

Sector	1971	1980	1990	2001	2005
Agriculture, Forest, Fishery	44.8	24.8	21.5	17.0	13.4
Mines	8.0	25.7	13.4	13.2	13.0
Manufactures	8.4	11.6	19.9	25.0	29.0
Electric, Gas, and Water Supplies	0.5	0.5	0.6	1.5	1.5
Building Construction	3.5	5.6	5.5	5.9	6.2
Business, Hotel and Restaurant	16.1	14.1	16.9	16.2	16.0
Transportation and Communication	4.4	4.3	5.6	5.2	5.1
Finance, Insurance, Estates, and Service	3.5	4.3	6.7	6.3	6.0
Public Service	10.8	9.1	9.8	9.8	9.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Original source: Yustika 2003 and statistic data 2005

In Indonesia, the agriculture areas which often being scarification of inequitable land usage are mostly arable farming fields with good irrigation system (Anwar & Pakpahan 1989). From 1984 to 1996, the number of agricultural areas decreased from 99 249 to 52 213 hectares. It was caused the improvement of industrial areas from 34 376 to 85 444 hectares. It also happened in bush areas from 14 000 to 33 000 hectares (SARCS without date).

The conversion of arable agricultural areas in Indonesia along the period 1991 – 1993 gained 106 424 hectares or more than 53 000 hectares annually which became 54%, 16%, and 4.9% as estates, industries, and government offices. It is true that 51% of inequitable land usage happened in Java because the development of industries and estates drastically. The land agricultural conversion from 1981 to 1986 was 37 300 hectares annually, and 16 500 or 44.23% became estates, industries, and infrastructure. It can be concluded that the amount of inequitable of land usage from 1983 to 1994 decreased 104 581 hectares and mostly it happened in north beach of Java (Kustiwan 1997).

Based on the statistical agricultural census 1983 and 1993, the reduction of agricultural areas from 0.58 to 0.41 hectares in Java. The result of drastic reduction of agricultural land has also influenced 56% on the national rice supply. The fact showed that 48.4% of agricultural workers do not pass the elementary school, 40.5% graduated from elementary school, and 11.1% graduated from high school.

The result of this was that the reduction of agricultural products. In the 1984, Indonesia had become the source of rice. In contrast, the production of rice has dramatically decreased. Unfortunately, it should import rice from other countries such as Philippine and Thailand. In 1994, The East Java which could produce 700 000 tons but in 1995, it only could produce 250 000 tons.

THE PHENOMENON OF LAND CONVERSION IN EAST JAVA

Until recently, agricultural wetland including rice farm and *tambak* (fishponds made by damming) in Indonesia, at large, and in the province of East Java, in particular, is still popular in terms of economic usage. However, the phenomena of wetland conversion are increasing causing concern and fear that the wetland ecosystem will end in extinction. The width of East Javas's wetland makes up 33.68% of this province's overall land taking the fourth place after Riau, Jambi, and South Kalimantan.

Pakpahan *et al.* (1993), after conducting studies in four provinces in Java Island in different period of time, found out that there had been 23 140 ha per year (table 3) of agricultural land converted into non-agricultural purposes. East Java held the record as 43 947 hectare (8798 ha/year) of its agricultural land had been converted. Central Java was in the second place with 40 327 hectare of land has been converted (6721.2 ha/year). West Java was in the third place with 37 033 hectare of land had been converted (7406.6 ha/year). Yogyakarta was the last in the list with 2910 hectare of land had been converted (223.8 ha/year). East Java held the record because it has the widest agricultural land in Java on the contrary to that of Yogjakarta. The function of agricultural land was changed into non agricultural purposes like settlement, industry, infrastructure and the usage of dryland.

Tabel 3. The conversion of agricultural land usage into non-agricultural usage in four provinces of Java Island

Propince	Year	The cumulative width (ha)	The average width of land conversion (ha/year)
West Java	1981 – 1991	37 033	7406.6
Center Java	1981 – 1986	40 327	6721.2
Yogyakarta	*Pelita* III - IV	2910	223.8
East Java	1987 - 1991	43 947	8798.0
Java		124 217	23 141.0

Source: Pakpahan *et al.* (1993)

According to Anwar (1994) most of Indonesian big cities including Surabaya have what so called as agricultural hinterland (including land for fishery or fishponds) which has good access to the city area. The availability of this land is permanent in nature however the demand keeps increasing especially in the city area. Population growth, better income, economic activities and migration from other areas and the city's hinterland (urbanization) were considered as responsible to this condition. The high demand for land was the main reason explaining the rapid conversion of agricultural land into other purposes beside the decline of agricultural business and economic problems caused by the increasing of living cost.

The economic growth of the province of East Java is considered as rapidly developing as its capital city Surabaya was pointed as the Central Business District (CBD) with Gresik, Sidoarjo, and Pasuruan as its hinterland. During the period of five years (1995-2000) the availability of land for fishery had been declined up to 40% in

the Province of East Java (Table 4). It indicates a big scale of land conversion into non fishery purposes had taken place.

Table 4. The development of land for fishery's width and its changes in the Province of East Java

District	Land for fishery's width (ha)						Change	
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	ha	%
Tuban	423	423	423	423	423	340	-83	-0.20
Lamongan	130	100	133	133	193	125	-5	-0.04
Gresik	5 428	5 442	5 443	5 443	5 450	3 292	-2136	-0.39
Surabaya	1 621	1 651	1 651	1 651	722	355	-1266	-0.78
Bangkalan	1 719	1 719	1 593	1 567	1 567	1 447	-272	-0.16
Sampang	1 938	1 938	1 942	1 942	1 942	1 253	-685	-0.35
Pamekasan	346	263	268	329	329	280	-66	-0.19
Sumenep	607	643	646	646	653	490	-117	-0.19
Sidoarjo	2 911	1 297	1 242	1 242	1,242	1 100	-1811	-0.62
Pasuruan	1 243	1 243	1 381	1 381	1,381	1 030	-213	-0.17
Kota Pasuruan	450	421	393	363	393	350	-100	-0.22
Probolinggo	494	530	536	536	538	280	-214	-0.43
Kota Probolinggo	121	121	80	80	80	97	-24	-0.20
Situbondo	187	187	187	187	187	127	-60	-0.32
Banyuwangi	40	36	36	36	32	26	-14	-0.35
Muncar	78	72	72	72	72	52	-26	-0.33
Jember	8	8	7	7	7	5	-3	-0.38
Lumajang	3	3	3	3	5	2	-1	-0.33
Malang	14	14	14	14	12	11	-3	-0.21
Blitar	2	3	3	3	3	1	-1	-0.50
Tulungagung	2	2	2	3	3	1	-1	-0.50
Jumlah (ha)	17 765	16 116	16 055	16 061	15 234	10 664	-7101	-0.40

Source: The Annual Book of the Province of East Java's Statistics for Fishery 1995-2000

The rapid development of industry in East Java was responsible for the blooming of new settlements in the region. These new settlements had occupied productive agricultural land. The actors behind this land conversion are ordinary peoples, private companies and the government. It can be easily predicted that the development of these new settlements had triggered the rapid and uncontrollable conversion of agricultural and fishery land. The wetland's ecosystem was seen as *terra incognita* and underdeveloped and neglected. Worse, the government shared this view and assumed wetland as potential land for production interest by way of land conversion. In short, the regulation related to the ecosystem of the wetland does not exist.

Agricultural sectors still have great importance in the economic growth of the Province of East Java. However, this business is dominated by small scale practitioners as 72 % of the peasant families own less than 0.50 hectare of land. Despite small average of land ownership, East Java is one of the nation's rice

providers with 18.3 % of contribution. In 1999 the production of rice was around 9 million tons gathered from 1.76 million hectare of agricultural land with the productivity of 51.25 kw/ha. The productivity is higher compared to what is recorded 10 years earlier which is 51.06 kw/ha.

THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CONVERSION TOWARDS THE PEASANTS OF EAST JAVA

The increasing of physical development in East Java such as infrastructural development, industrial development, housing development, had a great deal in marginalizing the existence and the position of the farmers. The fund of these projects was derived from APBN (National Budget) or various foreign aids. Local companies with local and foreign capital or the combination of both were also involved in these developmental projects.

All the projects defenitely need land. Facts in the field showed that most of the land used for the developmental purposes was previously owned by the farmers. To add to our sadness and concern, most of the converted land was strategic in terms of location, extremely fertile and productive.

Actually, the agricultural land conversion will less probelamatical if the life of the farmers whose land has been converted get better. Yet, facts show another story. The price paid for the land was usually lower than what they get in the free market. As the result, they were not able to buy another patch of land with the same condition (witdh, fertility and location) in another place. In other words, the farmers and the agricultural activities were pushed into less fertile soil. In short, this condition had deemed the farmers into series of economic problems.

Worse, some of the 'rouge element' of the government officers had misused their power in searching for the right land to satisfy the need of domestic and foreign investors. Using the government projects as the pretext of this land take over to get minimum price was not unknown. It became a new venue for the blooming practice of CCN (Corruption, Collusion, Nepotisme). Therefore, it had speed up the marginalization process of the farmers.

The process of land conversion had created the instability in the agricultural activities which is the main source of the farmers' earning. The farmers lost some or all of their agricultural land which is their bread and butter. In 1980s Hayami and Kikuchi reported the average of landownership in East Java was less than 0.5 hectare. Recently, the average has dropped into 0.25 hectare only.

This meager ownership or no ownership at all are in line with the small income of the farmers which is not sufficient if they want to enjoy a merely modest living, especially, if they only count on the earning from agricultural activities. According to Mustafa (2005) the 0.25 hectare of fertile land will produce 1 ton of dry rice. If the price of the rice is Rp 2000 per kilogram, the total sales will be Rp 2000 000. If the production cost is Rp 650 000, the benefit will be Rp 1350 000. This earning is gained in four months periods so that the monthly average of income will be Rp 337 500.

If during the dry season the land is planted with corn, within three months the farm will produce 1 ton of corn. If one kilogram of corn is valued Rp 1000, it means 1 ton of corn will worth Rp 1000 000. Assuming the production cost is Rp 300 000, the total benefit will be Rp 700 000 which means the farmer only earn Rp 233 000 monthly. In the break time after planting rice of corn, the farmers plant another crops if the land's condition permit to do so. However, the available land is not always suitable for the intended crops. Considering the gross calculation above and assuming there is no disturbance to the crops such as pests or plague the earning from agricultural activities on the 0.25 hectare of land does not meet the minimum regional wage standard which is Rp 600 000 per month. In other words, the earning of farmers who own only 0.25 hectare of land is already below the minimum regional wage standard meanwhile there are plenty more farmers who own land less that 0.25 hectare.

Meagre income on-farm causes the farmers to look for another living off-farm. This step is a common strategy conducted by farmers to deal with the subsisten life. New studies show the farmer's earning considerably varies recently. Meaning, the off-farm income is bigger compared to the on farm earning. A study conducted by Yustika (2003) in Malang East Java found that 80 % of the farmers' earning is derived from their off-farm activities. The off-farm activities the farmers do are construction workers, *ojek* drivers (a motorcycle taxi), and little sundry shop owners. Therefore, their formal job is as farmer yet factually they do not live on farming anymore. In this context there is a solid ground to formulate that there is no more 'peasant society', a society who live on farming and their needs are fulfilled by farming.

The losing of their land had caused the farmer to change their occupation. The cultural value which constitutes land as the source of living has therefore has faded. The farmer's social structure had also changed from land owners to low income city dwellers.

The poverty that grips the farmers makes the children dare not to dream to become farmers like their parents. Interviews with some respondents' children directed to some reasons why they do not want to profess as farmer. First, farming is perceived as under class profession so that they will gain no respect from others. Second, farming is considered as seasonal job that will not guarantee they will earn handsomely. Third, their land is not fertile that they only able to plant rice once a year during the wet season. For those who have no wet land but own *tegalan* (dry field near the rice farm) and *kebun* (small farm or garden planted to make a living) thing is not better for this land's low productivity. Fourth, they live in the urban fringe which gives them a great deal of exposure to the life style of the city dwellers.

Most of the farmers' descendants move to big cities like Surabaya to work for informal sectors. Meaning, villages have lost their potential man power in agricultural activities. Furthermore, the migration of people from villages to cities to work for informal sectors or so-called as premature urbanization creates the problem of big population in the cities which generates various social problems like the emerging of slump areas, high rates of crimes and health problems.

FORMULATION

The conversion of agricultural land into non agricultural purposes has narrowed down the availability of the agricultural land. The impacts of agricultural land conversion which can be formulated are:

1. The change of the farmer's social structure from land owners to *tuna lahan* (peasants)
2. The *tuna lahan* have to seek for other off-farm jobs to make the end meets. Normally, they earn more from working off-farm compared to what they get from on-farm activities.
3. The losing of the land has caused the farmers to quit from agricultural sectors. It transforms them from farmers to non-farmers. Lack of preparation in terms of facing the challenges of the new jobs, lack of skills and education doomed the ex-farmers to work for informal sectors only.

CONCLUSION

The implications that can be made are the agricultural land conversion into non agricultural purposes pushes farmers out of agricultural sectors and seek for side jobs or completely change their profession. Hence, the agricultural society is indeed in the brink of extinction for farmers are no longer dependent to agricultural activities in fulfilling their needs. Moreover, these ex-farmers can only work for low income informal sectors like being coolie, construction worker, and porter in markets, petty merchant, and *ojek* driver. Thus, agricultural land conversion into non agricultural purposes had not enhanced the living standards of most of the farmers in that area.

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Paper 3 Southeast Asia in the New Cold War: A Socialist Analysis

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Abstract

Southeast Asia was the battleground for the longest and most sustained conflicts of the first cold war. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia actually saw American invasions while Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia had active insurgencies. According to Noam Chomsky, this cold war occurred because the USA will not allow any country to succeed in an alternate route to development. Now with the retreat of Communism, the US has gotten afraid of another ideology that might seek another route to development that would prove capitalism inadequate. While many Muslim countries are capitalistic, there are provisions in Islam that prohibit some of the most brutal practices of capitalism; usury, exploitation of labor, profiting without adding value and the use of capital to make money. Because of this and because it needs an enemy, the US, with its client states have created a new cold war against Islam. Using Australia as its client in the region, the Americans are fomenting conflict, insurrection and ethnic liberation to maintain control. Again Southeast Asia is a major battleground.

In addition to doing the bidding of its suzerain, America, Australia has imperialistic intentions of its own. Now with its control of the economy and political system of East Timor, its military control of the Indonesian military, its involvement in the Muslim insurgencies in Thailand and the Philippines, Australia is in a position to gain control of the oil and other resources of Southeast Asia. While this is happening, they are building up their military and gladly accepting the role of regional "sheriff" for the American empire.

In this paper, using a Socialist analysis, I will argue that the real enemy of Southeast Asia is Australia with its American overlord and that the Muslim insurgencies play into the hands of these new imperialists.

A new cold war is raging throughout the world. Like the previous cold war, this one is between the powers of corporate wealth with their political appendages led by the United States and supported by its clients Britain, Japan, Australia and Israel on the one side and those states and societies which follow a different path to development on the other. The corporate capitalists and the governments they possess can never permit the world to know that capitalism is not the only way to economic development.[1] Just as in the first cold war when these corporate states sought to punish and destroy socialism and communism, in this cold war, they seek to punish and destroy Islam, a religion that forbids some of the practices of capitalism such as usury, the exploitation of the labor of others for undeserved profit and the buying and selling of commodities for profit without adding value. The sins of Islam are the virtues of capitalism. This new cold war, like the previous one is being fought primarily in developing countries and once again Southeast Asia is a major battleground. Just as before this region has the right combination of conditions for a proxy in long standing mistrust between Muslims and other religious groups. It is for this reason, along with the fact that much of Southeast Asia possesses natural wealth, particularly oil, that Australia is committed to gaining economic and political control of as much of this region as possible and exploiting the entire area for the benefit of itself and its supporter the USA.[2]

Already in the name of regional security and democracy, Australia has taken charge of the economy of East Timor, a country that, because of the agitation and propaganda of Australia along with the USA, Canada, Britain and Portugal has broken away from Indonesia. A leaked Australian Defense Force document has revealed that Australia's "first objective" in East Timor is to "seek access" for the Australian military so that it can exercise "influence over East Timor's decision-making. [3] This is the language of Australian diplomats for what Socialists would call "imperialism" and "aggression." Now Australia is agitating for the further break up of the country in hopes that it may soon control the wealth of Aceh.[4] Along with the other powers who would gain hegemony over the world's political and economic systems, Australia is fomenting conflict and destabilization throughout the region.[5] In the name of a "war on terror" the Bush regime, the Blair regime and the Howard regime have decimated civil rights and individual liberties within their own countries and put in power others who will obey their commands and decimate the rights of people in states they've been given to rule.[6] (For example, Gloria Aroyo, an American, who was put in control of the Philippines after a US encouraged impeachment of the elected president.) Under the propaganda of regional security and stability, these same states are fueling conflict between government

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[1] Noam Chomsky, *Rogue States,* South End Press, (Cambridge, MA), 2000, 206-7 Most of the general ideas in this introduction come from Chomsky and other anti Neo-liberals and are applied to the situation of Amero-Australian hegemony in Southeast Asia.

[2] Australian Democratic Socialist Party, *The Role of Australian Imperialism in the Asia Pacific Region,* Issue 18, III-IV, http://www.dsp.org.au/links/node/116#I (Visited, 23 October, 2007)

[3] John Pilger, Australia Builds its Empire, *New Statesman,* 26 June, 2006, 23

[4] Terry Townsend, The Role of Australian Imperialism in the Asia Pacific, *The Activist*, 11, 3, February, 11, 2001

[5] Ibid.

[6] For a overview of this see Human Rights Watch, Counterterrorism, http://www.hrw.org/doc/?t=ct&c=austra (visited 10 November, 2007)

supporters and Muslims in Thailand, between political parties in Malaysia and are taking advantage of the oppression in Myanmar in order to put in charge, in those states, governments that will imitate their Western consumer capitalist societies and turn over the majority of wealth and resources to their Australian sponsors[7] as has already happened in East Timor.

To understand Australia's paradoxical position as both a client state of the USA and an empire builder in the area of Southeast Asia, it is important to analyze the situation from a dialectical perspective. To a large extent that dialectical analysis has already been done by Terry Townsend. He explains that the foreign policy position of Australia has three aspects which coincide with its own sphere of influence and its sycophantic support of American imperialist interest. In the area of the Middle East and most of Asia, the Australian ruling class falls in line with American military and economic policies because the interests of its rulers are largely in line with those of the American ruling class. In the region of Australia's sphere of influence including Melanesia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and parts of Indonesia, where the USA has little immediate concern, Australia is pursuing its own aggressive imperialism, with, of course the consent of its sponsor state willing to allow that piece of the global pie to it's deputy sheriff, a role John Howard seems willing, even proud, to accept from his superior, George W. Bush. The third area, which includes Southeast Asia, is the one in which Australia is in an apparent contradiction. It is pursuing its own aggressive policies while, at the same time, acting as American's deputy sheriff and enforcing American policy. This is working because Australia's ruling class is determined to enforce its need for maintaining and increasing an order favorable to global consumerism even though that order favors the American commercial class even more than it does Australia's.[8] Problems only occasionally arise when the economic needs of the Australian and American ruling classes, which emphasize stability and order, conflict with the aggressive intentions of the political and military rulers of both countries Those intentions stress the need to foment division and conflict that they can exploit to their own advantage in building[9], under the guise of democratization, an Anglo-American-Australian global empire.[10] The structure of this empire is already unfolding. The USA has overall hegemony over a global political and economic block in which it uses financial blackmail and propaganda to put in place governments in the various states that will obey its commands and carry out its policies. This can be done because the United States has no regard for international law and standards except when they can be used

[7] Australia is caught in one of the contradictions of international capitalism, it needs stability for its economic interests while needing conflict in order to divide and conquer in the region. It seems to be pursuing both sides of the contradiction at the same time. For a good explanation of how this is being done see Australian Democratic Socialist Party, *The Role of Australian Imperialism in the Asia Pacific Region,* cited above.

[8] This explanation is given by Townsend in the same article cited above.

[9] "Building" rather than "conquering" in that these countries have already put in place in most of Southeast Asia governments that accept there hegemony.

[10] For one representative example of how American imperialist policy can coincide withthat of its client, Australia, in Southeast Asia, see Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback,* Time Warner, (London), 2000, 87

against those states which will not obey the American masters.[11] The American empire is enforced by various client states in the divers regions of the world. Britain enforces American hegemony in Europe, Japan does the same in Northeast Asia, although fortunately China somewhat alleviates that. Israel tries to be the enforcer in the Middle East. Ethiopia and Brazil seem to have been given that role in North Africa and Latin America respectively, while Australia is the American deputy in Southeast Asia and parts of the Pacific.

It has so far been easy for Australia to maintain it's hypocritical position as to its intentions in Southeast Asia without attracting too much attention. There are, however, two obvious exceptions where the insincerity is graphic. The first of these is Myanmar or Burma where Australian officials talk in impeccably liberal and moralistic tones about human rights and democracy while maintaining relations with the military dictatorship.[12] They support programs for the opposition forces and for refugees while encouraging them to be passive, patient and peaceful. At the same time, they seek negotiations and compromise between the oppressor and the oppressed. This will put them in a good position to exert their control no matter who emerges the victor in the struggle.[13] Undoubtedly the Australian ruling class needs a measure of stability in Burma so as not to affect their other imperialistic interests in Southeast Asia but are also making ready to go in at the earliest possible time to exploit cheap labor and a developing consumerist market.

The other exception to Australia's ability to hide its imperialism while pretending to promote stability, democracy and human rights is Indonesia where the Howard regime encourages conflict and supports independence movements for disgruntled regions while, at the same time, supplying arms and military training to the Indonesian military. This again is an attempt to gain control over whatever political situation emerges. When independence movements do succeed, Australia will no doubt incorporate those regions into its empire as it has East Timor.[14]

Consider some of Australia's other hypocritical positions. These should make it crystal clear how the Howard regime is using conflict to gain influence in other countries of the region. It has condemned one party rule and what it calls human rights abuses in Vietnam[15] while remaining silent on the same two issues as applied to Singapore. Yet Singapore also has one party rule and has been citied by a number of human rights

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[11] This tendency of the USA is explained and documented well by Noam Chomsky in his book, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance,* A&U (Cambridge, MA), 2003, 20-1

[12] Craig Skehan, *Downer Soft on Burma's Hard Men,* SMH, April 11, 2002, at http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2002/04/11/1018333380016.html (Visited, 16 November 2007)

[13] This policy is discussed but soft pedaled in an article by the Asian Human Rights Commission, *BURMA: Torture, military dictatorship, political accountability,* at http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2003/463/ (Visited 10 November, 2007)

[14] See Australian Democratic Socialist Party, *The Role of Australian Imperialism in the Asia Pacific Region,* cited above.

[15] Human Rights Watch – Asia, *World Report,* at http://www.hrw.org/wr2k3/asia9.html (Visited 16 November, 2007) and Alan Cadman, MP (Australia) *Human Rights Vietnam,* at http://www.thienlybuutoa.org/Misc/HumanRights-Vietnam.htm (Visited, 16 November, 2007)

organizations for its dismal practices[16]. At the same time that the Australian government claims to advocate Democracy and representative government in Burma[17], it does not apply the same standard to the even more autocratic and authoritarian regime in Brunei.[18] Of course Brunei is the Iraq of Southeast Asia and Australia no doubts wants its oil.

Just as coming down on both sides of a conflict in such places as Indonesia demonstrates the contradiction in interest in Australia's ruling class, the dichotomy between the military and economic interests is also indicated by Australia's selective condemnations in the Southeast Asian region. In Vietnam and Myanmar their economic interests are weak so they can pursue their aggressive imperialism by fomenting conflict in the societies. On the other hand, Australia has strong economic interests in Singapore and Brunei so stability is needed in those countries in order to enable the Australian business sub-class to continue their consumerist exploitation in those countries which already have friendly governments. The interests of the ruling classes in those two countries coincide with those of the elite class in Australia. However, eventually the contradictions in the interests of the Australian military and business sub-classes will lead to major divisions in the country itself as well as conflicts for control of its foreign policy.

In a working paper dealing with these contradictions with more sympathy for the position of the Australian government than is given here, Mark Beeson claims that even the regime of John Howard is aware of the incompatibility between its strategic and cultural ties or in the words of John Howard himself, as quoted by Beeson, "between our history and our geography." Beeson goes on to admit that "it is hard to imagine the Howard government doing anything other than dutifully following the tradition of Australian foreign policy that has seen Australia fight alongside the US..."[19]

Right now this incompatibility is quite visible in Australian attitudes and policies toward the religious conflict in Thailand. In December of 2002, Howard announced his support for and willingness to use the Bush neo-con first strike policy in the region to respond to terrorist threats. In the statement, Howard also denounced Muslim insurgencies in the region.[20] This gave the Shinawatra regime encouragement to pursue a failed policy of heavy handed oppression in the South of the country. This very policy

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[16] For example, see Human Rights Watch – Asia, *Singapore*, at http://www.thienlybuutoa.org/Misc/HumanRights-Vietnam.htm (Visited, 17 November, 2007)

[17] CNN story, *Europe Urges China to Pressure Myanmar*, at http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/asiapcf/09/27/myanmar.reax.ap/index.html?iref=newssearch (Visited, 17 November, 2007)

[18] Amnesty International Report 2004, Brunei Darussalam, at http://web.amnesty.org/report2004/brn-summary-eng, (Visited, 16 November, 2007) Even the US State Department has a negative report on democracy and human rights in Brunei, see US State Department, *Brunei: Country Report on Human Rights*, at http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61602.htm (Visited, 17 November, 2007)

[19] Mark Beeson, *Living with Leviathan: Australia, Asia and American Hegemony*, Unpublished working paper, (Asia Research Centre), Murdoch University, Perth, 2005, 13

[20] *Mike Head and Peter Symonds, Australian government invokes first-strike doctrine in Asia*, World Socialist Website, December 7, 2002, at *http://www.wsws.org/articles/2002/dec2002/howa-d07.shtml* (visited 19 November, 2007)

was then denounced by the right-wing Heritage Foundation which is a policy advising body to George W. Bush. In their statement, Heritage Foundation accused Shinawatra of using "Thai security forces [to] create an international terrorist problem where there had been none before."[21] This, of course, left Howard, who did not directly denounce these heavy handed tactics, looking like a fool. Australia's reaction was to then send a delegation of Australian Muslims to Thailand and invite Thai Muslims to Australia for an "interfaith dialogue."[22] It is unclear whether or not Howard considered this to be a first strike. What it does do is to again demonstrate plainly that Australia is both encouraging the government of Thailand to use all available methods to fight Muslim insurgents and, at the same time, encourage those very Muslim insurgents. It also demonstrates the contradiction in Howard's policy of unconditional obedience to the Bush regime and pursuit of an independent policy of imperialism.

In the primarily Muslim state of Malaysia, there is now little ethnic conflict for the Australian military sub class to exploit. It has therefore turned its attention to political differences. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the Australian government fought a recurring battle with the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahatir Muhammad. Taking advantage especially of the political crisis that developed over the imprisonment of Anwar Ibrahim in 2000. Ibrahim had turned from support of Muhammad to being his staunchest critic. The Australian government involved itself in this domestic political conflict to try to install a government in Malaysia that would be less outspoken about Australia's aggressive intentions in the region. At the same time, both the Hawke-Keating and the Howard regimes continued to train and equip the Malaysian military through the Malaysia-Australia Joint Defense Program (MAJDPP). Australia has also maintains a military presence at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Base in Butterworth.[23] To be fair it must be admitted that this situation indicates hypocrisy and contradiction on the parts of both Australia and Malaysia. Yet, as has been pointed out a number of times it is Australia that is to be feared.

It must be reiterated that this paper is a Socialist interpretation of recent Australian foreign policy towards Southeast Asia. Probably consumer capitalists in any region of the world will disagree with the thesis. It has been the purpose here to demonstrate that the real threat and danger to the Southeast Asian region is not internal conflict, not so-called terrorism, but rather the imperialistic intentions of Australia both in its role as George W. Bush's deputy sheriff and in its role as a would be regional military superpower. There are those who might agree that Australia intends to gain hegemony over the region but attribute that intention to fears of China's rising influence rather than to the needs of Australia's own internal bourgeoisie and the contradictions within that ruling class between the business and military interests. The November elections in Australia will probably not change much except perhaps bring in a more independent and

[21] John Roberts, *Violence in Southern Thailand Escalates,* World Socialist Website, April 15, 2005, at http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/apr2005/thai-a15.shtml (Visited 16 November, 2007)
[22] Alexander Downer, MP (Australia's Foreign Minister), *Australian Muslims to Visit Thailand,* Media Release FA80, Government of Australia, 22 June, 2005
[23] See, Craig G. Snyder, Southeast Asian Perceptions of Australia's Foreign Policy, *Contemporary Southeast Asia,* 28, 2 (2002), 333

intelligent Prime Minister to replace Howard. There could also be a slight shift in policy. This would be because the Labor Party will be more favorable to the interests of the business sub class while the Howard regime has leaned more towards the military sub class along with its links to the aggressive regime in Washington and in support of protecting and expanding the American empire.

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SESSION 5
LANGUAGE IN ASEAN

SEMINAR ROOM 1

Chairperson: Dr. Saran Kaur Gill

1. Searching Harmony in Asean Relationship with Civil Society. - *Yuyun Wahyuningrum*
2. Language and Ethnic Relations –A Case study on Reverse Situations: Thais, a Minority in Kedah Malaysia and Malays a Minority in Pathum Thani in Thailand. - *Umaiyah binti Haji Umar*
3. Maintaining Harmony: The Role of the Judge in the Malaysian Courtroom. - *Noraini Ibrahim*

Paper 2 Language and Ethnic Relations – A Case Study on Reverse Situations: Thais, a Minority in Kedah, Malaysia and Malays a Minority in Pathum Thani, Thailand

Umaiyah binti Haji Umar
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Abstract

The author developed an understanding of the Kedah-Thai communities during her research on Thai Kedah dialects spoken in Kedah, Malaysia. How they co-exist as a minority group maintaining religious and cultural practices within the dominant Malay and Muslim society.

Several years later, the author undertook a reverse study on the Bangkok-Melayu communities living in and around greater Bangkok and reporting on their assimilation.

This paper attempts to relate how a minority, the Thai and Malay communities, lives alongside the dominant group from the perspective of language and ethnic relations.

Introduction

In undertaking my research on the classification of Thai–Kedah dialects, Umaiyah (2003) under a study leave grant from the University of Malaya, I came across Thai Buddhists who regard themselves as Malaysians, a minority group living in small communities in Kedah, Malaysia. These small communities are scattered in the state of Kedah, centred on Buddhist temples living peacefully with the predominantly majority Malay community. Of interest in this paper is the community living in Naka, Kedah.

In the course of conducting my study on the assimilation of Bangkok-Melayu communities in the Bangkok metropolis and surrounding areas under a grant from the Asian Fellows Scholarship, Umaiyah (2003), I came across Melayu people who regard themselves as Thais, a minority group living peacefully in small communities scattered in and around Bangkok metropolis. Of interest in this paper is the community living in Khlong Bang Pho, Prathum Thani.

This brought new challenges to my study, opportunity to extend the scope into language and ethnic relations; a study on reverse situations in line with the focus of the Asian Fellows Scholarship for cohorts to conduct multidisciplinary research.

For a better understanding on ethnic relations between majority and minority communities, an appreciation on the background of the two communities to be studied would be useful.

Thais in Malaysia

In my research, Umaiyah (2003) on speakers of Thai dialects in Kedah, Malaysia, I came across many small communities of Malaysians who speak a Thai dialect as their first language. The communities can be Muslims or Buddhist. The Buddhist community can be easily identified as it is centred on Buddhist temples. The Muslims are sometimes referred to as Samsam.

Kobkua (1996) focussed on the origin and ethnicity of the Samsam. There is scant explanation of the people's ancestry or why these Thai-speaking Malaysians are in Malaysia. Kobkua, herself, believes that the Samsam were originally Siamese who converted to Islam in their original settlements in Siam by the tenth and eleventh centuries. They migrated to Kedah due to socio-religious, other socio-economic and political factors. In note number 3 of her paper, she admits of a continuous flow of Muslims and Buddhist labour migration which could be due to floods and scarcity of foodstuff.

Findings from the classification of Thai-Kedah dialect, Umaiyah (2003) suggest that Buddhist Thai dialect speakers in Kedah belong to the Sukhothai people. Specifically, the people of Baling (in South-East Kedah) and Naka (in Central-East Kedah) could be migrants from Satun area as Kobkua says; or they could be descendants of Sukhothai families, at par with the people of Satun, who moved to the interior of Kedah hundreds of years ago. Those in Kubang Cenok (North Kedah) appear to be recent migrants from Songkhla.

Malays in Bangkok

Existence of Malays in Bangkok was reported by Tadmor (1992, 1995), Jitmoud (1988), Damrilert (2002) and Umaiyah (2003). The first group of Malays were brought to Bangkok as prisoners in 1786 after Pattani was defeated by forces from Bangkok, Jitmoud (1988:108). The Thais took some 4,000 Pattani Malays in ships to Bangkok as slave and other prisoners were marched 1,200 kilometres to Bangkok.

Raids took place in 1791, 1808 and 1832 to crush efforts for self rule in Pattani. Kedah was raided in 1838 after declaring self rule. The objective of these exercises was to weaken Pattani and Kedah; and to provide slave labour used for the building of Bangkok that was rising to replace the devastated Ayuthaya.

The Pattani prisoners upon arrival to Bangkok were 'processed' and sent for resettlement in different locations in and around Bangkok. They were provided with land to develop and settle. It is observed that the Malay Muslims were settled along the Khlong (canals), probably for ease of transportation and abundance of land (forest at the time). Today, descendants of the communities can be detected starting from Khlong Banglampoo (within the greater compound of the old palace), travelling to the east until some 74 kilometres away at Bang Pakong River. The areas are dotted with mosques, Islamic schools and Muslim graveyards.

Malay Muslims from Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Penang were placed at Thanon Tok. Later they were moved to Khlong Saen Saep near Sai Kong Din in

Minburi. The descendants were moved to new khlong such as Khlong 17, 20, 21 and 22. Some were also moved to Tha-It and from Tha-It moved to Bang Bua Thong, Umaiyah (2003: 21 – 22).

The extent of Bangkok-Melayu assimilation and subsequent dilution of language and cultural practices was found to be relatively high in all sites visited, Umaiyah (2003). Malay is still spoken, albeit mostly by people aged 50 and above in Bang Bua Thong, Nonthaburi and in the villages of Khlong Bang Pho and Khlong Neng in Prathum Thani. The Malay dialect spoken in Bang Bua Thong has a distinct dialect and has been a subject of further research, Umaiyah (2005).

Related Literature

According to Bealey (1999: 123) ethnicity can be defined as 'the characteristic of belonging to an ethnic group,' involving identification 'with people one sees as similar to one's self.' Eriksen (1993) examined a number of approaches to ethnicity and said that, 'All of the approaches agree that ethnicity has something to do with the *classification of people* and *group relations*'. The word ethnicity still has a ring of 'minority issues' and 'race relations', but in anthropology it refers to aspects of relationships between group which consider themselves and regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive.

Macionis (1998:327) defines a racial or ethnic minority is a category of people, distinguished by physical or cultural traits, who are socially disadvantaged. Distinct from the dominant 'majority', in other words minority are set apart and subordinated. The breath of the term 'minority' has expanded in recent years beyond people with particular racial and ethnic traits.

Eriksen (1993) argues that in the contemporary world, virtually everybody is forced to take on an identity as a citizen. Since some form of cultural and ethnic variation must be 'matter out of place' to nationalists, ethnic variation is frequently defined by dominant groups as a problem, as something one has to 'cope with'. Downright genocide and enforced displacement are the most brutal methods employed by states in their dealings with minorities. There were instances of genocide in the Americas and Australia after colonisation by Europeans; and more recently attempts at 'ethnic cleansing' in Serbian-Bosnia conflict.

Ethnic boundary mechanisms function differently, depending on the social networks in the areas, Sandra Wallman (1986). In her paper, Wallman found interesting differences in majority-minority relationships between two poly-ethnic areas in London with similar background. She reported that in Bow, there is strong polarisation and dichotomisation between traditional residents and immigrants and describing it as a closed homogeneous system. In Battersea, the relationships were much relaxed and socially less important, an open heterogeneous system.

Some interesting local research conducted on anthropology and minority studies includes: Sanitwong Na Ayuthaya Kusuma edited a Conference proceeding entitled 'The crack in Thai society? Integration and National Security Problems' (Sanitwong Na Ayuthaya, 1988), where questions on re-evaluation of national policy on minorities was posed. Jitmoud Sawvanee book on 'Ethnic Group: Thai Muslim'

(Jitmoud, 1998) covered the history on Thai Muslims and her perspective on Bangkok Malays. Phongsaphit Amara's study on 'Culture, Religion and Ethnic Group: Anthropological Approach to the Analysis of Thai Society' (Phongsapit, 1990) is another useful reference as the title suggests.

Satha Anand Chaiwat's in the article 'Muslim Studies: Radical Social Science and Otherness' (Satha Anand, 1998) advanced the idea of a 'radical social science' which chooses to reposit human as the centre of the study as a critical methodology appropriate for Muslim Studies. Suthawat Arong in the article 'Theory Solving Minority Problem' provides a different dimension in the approach for the study of minority problems – study the majority instead. It provides a comprehensive understanding of the issues facing Malay minority.

Satsaguan Ngampit's several publications are handy reference materials too: textbooks such as 'Principles of Cultural Anthropology' (Satsaguan, 2000) and 'Anthropology Research' (Satsaguan, 1999); and research findings such as 'The Family Institution of Ethnic Group in Bangkok Metropolis: A Case Study of Vietnamese Families' (Satsaguan, 2002), 'The Family Institution of Ethnic Group in Bangkok Metropolis and its vicinity: Case Study on Thai Songdam Families' (Satsaguan, 2001) provides insight on impact of Thai government policies on other minority groups too.

Louis Golomb book on 'Broker of Morality: Thai Ethnic Adaptation in a rural Malaysia Setting' is an interesting account on the Thai minority, Golomb (1978). The articles, 'The Patterns of Social Interaction in Malaysian Society', Abdullah Taib, (1981); and 'Some patterns of Ethnic Relations in Malaysia', Fatimah Daud (1985) provides some insight into this Malaysian plural society.

Objective

The objective of this study is to:-

1. Investigate the relationship between Thai-Buddhist minority in Kedah and mainstream Malay majority in Malaysia; and between Malay minority in Prathum Thani (Bangkok metropolis) and mainstream Thai-Buddhist majority in Thailand
2. Identify and compare key elements determining minority-majority relationships of the groups under study in the two countries.
3. Assess factors (derived from key elements, in item 2 above) affecting harmonious living of the groups under study with its mainstream society.

Significance of the study

The study of ethnic relations between minority and majority can contribute to better understanding on how societies can live together harmoniously and ultimately help develop peaceful living globally.

Statement of the Problem and Methodology

The main problem that concerns this study is the language and ethnic relations between Thai-Buddhist minority in Kedah and mainstream Malay majority in Malaysia; and between Malay minority in Prathum Thani (Bangkok metropolis) and

on mainstream Thai-Buddhist majority in Thailand and the attendant issue of harmonious living of the communities under study.

The problem is approached through a comparison of three key elements impacting the two communities in the respective countries. Theses are: 1) Policy of the dominant power group (Government) towards their minorities, 2) Ethnicity and group identity and 3) Environment surrounding the community.

Site Selection and Data

The criteria for site selection at the sites in Thailand and Malaysia are: the respective minority communities exist as a group surrounded by the majority group, retained their cultural identity (relatively to a higher degree) and strong internal community network. The Thai Kedah community living in the village of Naka (located 40 kilometres east of Alor Setar, the capital of Kedah; and the Bangkok Malays community living in Khlong Bang Pho, Prathumthani (a general area made up of four thambun namely: Bang Pho Nea and Bang Teay in Sam Khok ampher; Khu Khwang and Khu Bang Luang in Lad Lum Kaew ampher some 20 kilometres from the Prathumthani Provincial Office) are selected for this study.

Data on the respective Thai Kedah and Bangkok Malay communities in the two countries were gathered by the researcher during her previous research in Kedah at Thai Kedah villages in Naka, Baling and Kubang Cenok; in Bangkok and surrounding areas (including Khlong Bang Pho, Prathum Thani) at various Malay villages. Subsequently, the researcher conducted several follow-up research and site visits to these areas.

Conceptual Framework

The framework used in this paper is mainly adopted from the Eriksen's (1993) together with other relevant concepts, broadly outlined below:-

Minority

The term minority should be treated within a context; the twin concepts minority and majority are relative and relational. An ethnic minority can be defined as a group which is numerically inferior to the rest of the population in a society, which is politically non-dominant and which is being reproduced as an ethnic category (cf. Minority Rights Group, 1990). A minority exist only in relation to a majority and vice versa, and their relationship is contingent on the relevant system boundaries, Eriksen (1993). These systems boundaries are nearly always state boundaries. The majority-minority relationship therefore changes if state boundaries are redrawn. Suthasasana in his article, Nithet (2001: 50), further argues that the minority should exhibit one or more differences, in terms of language, religion, tradition, culture, ancestry, skin colour, ethnicity, or nationality.

Today, states generally use one or several of the three main strategies, Eriksen (1993), in their dealings with minorities.

First, the state may insist on the assimilation of 'entropy-resistant elements'. One example, minorities such as Bretons and Provencals become French; that they shed their parochial languages and boundary markers and gradually come to identify themselves as French people. Although such policies of assimilation are often believed to help their target groups to achieve equal rights and to improve their social standing, they often inflict suffering and loss of dignity on the part of the minorities. Successful policies of assimilation ultimately lead to the disappearance of the minority.

Second, the state may opt for domination, which implies segregation on ethnic grounds. This entails the minority being physically removed from the majority, and this is frequently justified by referring to the presumed cultural inferiority of the former. South African apartheid was a very clear case of ethnic segregation, and many North American cities are also segregated also on ethnic lines.

The third main option for the state consists in transcending ethnic nationalist ideology and adopting an ideology of multiculturalism, where citizenship and full civil rights need not imply a particular cultural identity, or a decentralised federal model providing a high degree of local autonomy.

Eriksen (1993) quoted Hirschmann (1970) that minorities may respond to state domination in three principal way; 'exit, voice or loyalty'. The first response or option is to assimilate; a common process, whether chosen or not. In some cases, it is nevertheless impossible for an ethnic minority to choose assimilation. Blacks in United States, for examples due to the skin colour ('race'). Skin colour, language and religion can become an ethnic characteristic. In minority-majority relations, therefore, we see the limitations of an analytical perspective on ethnicity which one-sidedly stresses the voluntary, strategic aspect. Many people are indeed victims of ethnic classifications which they themselves do not support.

The second response or option for minorities is in acquiescing in their subordination, or in other ways trying to co-exist peacefully with the nation state. Sometimes, they may negotiate for limited autonomy, in say, religious, linguistic or local political matters; some even reproduce their boundaries and identities informally. Some, such as North American Jews, Sino-Mauritians or Freetown Creoles (in Sierra Leone; cf. A Cohen, 1981), can even be considered elites.

The third option for minorities is to exit or secession which is always incompatible with state politics. In Handelman's sense, the group that favours secession and full independence are always ethnic communities.

These strategies are ideal types. In reality, both state tactics and minority response will combine strategies of assimilation and segregation (or ethnic incorporation), and minorities may be divided over issues of independence. 'Integration', is a term commonly used to describe combinations between assimilation and integration/incorporation. This implies the minority's simultaneous participation in the shared institution of society and its reproduction of group identity and ethnic boundaries.

Indigenous peoples

In anthropology, the term 'indigenous people' is used to describe a non-dominant group in a delineated territory, with more or less acknowledged claim to aboriginality, Paine (1992). Indigenous groups are defined as non-state people, and they are always linked with a non-industrial mode of production and may not necessarily be 'first-comers'. Whilst this does not mean indigenous people do not take part in government or work in factories, but rather they represent a way of life which renders them particularly vulnerable to modernisation and the state.

Eriksen made two general points. First, there is no necessary contradiction between modernisation and retention of ethnic identity – on the contrary, Eriksen argues that modernisation are required for identity maintenance to be successful. The chances of survival of minority ethnic minorities depends more on their ability to master changes and utilise new technology and political possibilities for their own ends; and not cultural change in itself.

Second, a minority-majority relationship may involve other agents as well as the two groups. Third party may play an important role. Minority groups, particularly indigenous people generally lack military and political power, thus to a great extent rely on international support. The networks of the minority groups are extremely important in this regard. So is the role of cultural brokers and entrepreneurs: those individual and agencies which mediate between the people and the state. In some cases, there may be doubts as to whose interests these brokers actually represent: in Roosen's (1989) and van den Berghe's (1975) view, they may be career politicians in search of power.

Boundary process and identity

Sandra Wallman (1986:243) suggested a model on ethnic boundary mechanisms:

> When all your resources are in one overlapping local system, the possibilities for adaptation are much more limited, and your social relationships tend to be multiplex, – i.e. the person you work with is also your neighbour etc. – local relations are not linked with domains or systems outside in the same way, and ethnic groups are more likely to remain distinct.

The salience of ethnicity according to Wallman (1986) varies and that this variation can be investigated by looking at 'who does what with whom and for which purposes'.

It is commonly held that second and third generation immigrants in European cities experience identity problems because they 'live in two cultures', Liebkind (1989) and Leman (1987). Minorities too have the same problem, practicing their culture within the community and subscribing to the culture of the majority when 'outside'. Eriksen's (1989: 137-138) observation on identity process and perceptions: A clear 'acculturation' in terms of values and general orientation has taken place. The people in question may switch situationally between identities, at times resulting in

tension between these individuals and their parents. The boundaries preventing full assimilation may be both internally and externally constructed.

Public controversies over culture

According to Erisen (1993), in many countries, there is a general agreement that ethnic distinctiveness is acceptable as long as it remains private – however, it is never easy to draw an unambiguous boundary between the private and pubic. Occasionally, there are public debates over the different cultural practices of minorities that do not conform to the norm of the (majority) society. It can be on religious, language or other practices of the minority.

Scope and limitation

In this paper, 'Culture consists of the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow, and the material goods they create.' Giddens (1991:31). Data in this study will revolve mainly around two dominant components of culture that differentiate minority and majority groups under study i.e. religion (Islam and Buddhism) and language (Malay and Thai), while other culture components such as clothing, housing will also be touched on as result of the former. Analysis will be conducted from a synchronic approach and historical data is intended to be for background information.

This paper will cover language of the communities under study as a differentiating factor for examining group identity. It is not the intent of this paper to report on the languages as a subject.

Analysis

The data will be analysed and presented within the broad outline of conceptual framework set out in this paper. It will be described, discussed and assessed along the lines of the key elements.

Minority

One should be mindful that groups which constitute majority in one area or country may be minorities elsewhere. Thais, for example, form a strong majority in Thailand, but the groups of people who consider themselves as Thais living in Malaysia, are considered by others as Thais living in Malaysia where they are minorities.

The same applies to Malays living in Bangkok, who are minority in face of the majority Thais in Thailand. Malays in Malaysia on one hand form the majority in Kedah and hold political influence in Malaysia. Eriksen (1993) state; a majority group can also become a minority through the inclusion of its territory in a larger system. Had the state boundary be redrawn and say Kedah is included into Thailand, and then Thais in Kedah will become the majority and the Malays in Kedah a minority.

Language and ethnicity of minority groups is dependent on Government policy. For example, in 1916, King Rama VI (1910 – 1925) decreed that all Thais

must have a surname. For Muslims, this meant abandoning their patronymic naming, and in addition they were encouraged to add Thai words onto the name, Jitmoud, (1988:115). Subsequent to the adoption of constitutional monarchy in 1932, the Government continued with nationalist policies; banning all Muslim first names and requirement to use names resembling Thai names; and new policies determined that schools were not allowed to teach Malay language (referred as Jawi). Umaiyah (2003) concluded that these policies contributed to the dilution of language and cultural practices of the Bangkok-Melayu.

The federal constitution of Malaysia provided for all 'residents' at the point of independence from Britain, in 1957, be given citizenship; irrespective of race, religion and origin. No restrictions were imposed on names, religion and education on the multi ethnic groups. It is permissible to establish schools to teach mother tongue language. Chinese and Indians continued with schools where Mandarin and Tamil are the medium of education, different to the national schools where Malay is the medium of education; all within the national education system. Malaysia takes a pluralistic approach towards ethnic relations. Thais in Kedah can choose to attend state sponsored schools or in some cases at Chinese medium schools. Within the community they speak their own Thai-Kedah dialect (Umaiyah, 2003 – A classification of Thai-Kedah dialects) and learn to speak and write Standard Thai from monks (posted to the temples from Bangkok) at the local temples.

Indigenous people, such as the Malays, Dayaks, Kadazans and Thais including and for their concurrence to accept migrants as citizens were given special rights, enshrined in the constitution; implemented under the new economic policy. In the context of the Siamese people practicing Buddhism, or Thais in Kedah, Malaysia, see themselves as Malaysians and do not attempt to be classified as a minority. Politically, these are small communities, insufficient to form a majority from within, such as, to dominate in a particular state or even parliamentary (made up of several state constituencies) constituency. For their support to the ruling party, the Thais are given political representation (one seat) in the unelected Senate of Malaysia.

For Malays in Bangkok, they are practicing Muslims and they too see themselves as part of the mainstream Thai society. Politically, Bangkok Malays are significant in number, sufficient to gain representation at the local council level and parliamentary seats. An interesting point to note is that representation of Bangkok Malays, though based on communal support, is within the framework of existing Thai political structure as part of mainstream political parties.

Indigenous people

One can argue that Thais in Kedah and generally in Malaysia can be classified as indigenous people in so far as anthropology definition, though there is no history of slaughter, forceful assimilation or neglect of the community despite centuries of warring between Malay states and Thailand. Within the Malaysian context, Thais has been accorded 'bumiputra status' (son of the soil – a redefinition of the term 'indigenous people') same as Malays and all other 'bumiputra or indigenous people' in Malaysia. They are entitled to the same 'special rights' accorded to 'bumiputra'.

In the case or the Bangkok Malays, it can also be argued that they too can be classified as indigenous people. In an earlier study, Umaiyah (2003), it is found that they are a non-dominant group, lives within a delineated territory (as provided to them by the Thai Government) and linked to agricultural way of life vulnerable to modernisation and the state.

Erekson argues that indigenous peoples stand in potentially conflictual relationship with to the nation-state as an institution. In the case of the two communities, they do not express themselves as 'activists in the context of indigenous people' thus do not have a 'main political project' which is often presented as an attempt to survive as a culture bearing group' as envisioned by Erekson.

In the context of Thais in Kedah there are no reported territorial conflicts, the land they own are with valid legal titles. There may have been incidences of compulsory acquisition of such land by the state, undertaken within existing legal processes including avenues for appeal. The communities are located in the rural parts, so land acquisition is mainly for rural development such as road building. As a minority, they do represent a voting bloc and thus becomes an added attraction for political parties and politicians seeking power base.

Respondents during my fieldwork, aware of their position and political 'influence' are guarded in responding, portraying the community as fully supportive of the ruling political party. At the same time, they are also quick to point that the community is receiving the deserved allocations from the state in terms of funding for local development.

Similarly Malays in Bangkok, did not report territorial conflicts but were more concerned on opportunities sell their land, in light with the accelerated urbanisation of areas surrounding Bangkok coupled with sudden increase in land prices In the earlier study, Umaiyah (2003), the same was reported especially in urbanised areas, leading to Malay communities living in urban slums on the remaining pieces of Bangkok Malay owned land surrounding mosques.

From the above discussion, in terms of indigenous status and language, the Thai Kedah community appear to secure more benefit from national (Malaysian Government) policy than the Bangkok Malay – Is this true and if so, is it relevant to the attendant issue that is defining harmony?

Has the Thai Government policy on language, i.e. the imposition of compulsory use of Thai language on names and for education on minorities, affected harmonious living of Bangkok Malays and the Thai mainstream society?

Can one assume that for Khong Bang Pho community, oppression would be when they are required to use Thai language for practicing Islamic? Thus, the Malay minority in Khlong Bang Pho are prepared to comply with the assimilation policy with respect to language imposed by the Thai Government.

The retention of ethnic identity by the minority is dependent upon, in addition to government policy, the ability of the community to adapt and positively response to changes in the environment (within the country and globally). The present people of

Khlong Bang Pho, having settled in the area for some seven generations (over 200 years), consider the place as their homeland; they feel they are as indigenous as the mainstream society, equally entitled to the same benefits as any other Thai citizen; able to retain their ethnicity for example their cultural practices even though assimilated.

There is an active social life within the Thai Kedah community, centred on and around Buddhist temples encouraging social contact within the community. They freely receive television and radio transmission from Thailand and are therefore exposed to mainstream Thai culture. Other findings during site visits as part of my research, Umaiyah (2003) showed that Thais in Kedah retained their ethnicity over the generations living along the Malay community.

Way of life of the Malay community in Bangkok has been going through major changes since 1930s, when their lifestyle was encroached upon. They began to interact with the mainstream Thai society and 'forced' to assimilate, Umaiyah (2003). Ereksen (1991) argued that 'the form of cultural reflexivity engendered by literacy may be a decisive variable in ethnic revitalisation of indigenous people' and in the case of Bangkok Malays this appeared in the form of Islamic revival, or the makings of Thai Muslims, Umaiyah (2004). The Bangkok Malays reaction to the 'forces' of assimilation by strengthening their commitment to retain their culture; this, coupled with a worldwide revival of Islamic fundamentalism made the society easier to accept.

To the Thai communities in Kedah including Naka, the challenge is the changing employment landscape as industrialisation sets in. This minority population, especially the youth, is less insulated from the mainstream society, bringing new challenges. The community and the village is still detached from these development.

Rapid development of Bangkok and surrounding areas resulted in communities of Bangkok Malays, almost overnight finding their neighbourhood changed from padi land into modern society, factories, housing estates, shopping complexes and the like. Suddenly, there are modern highways connecting to Bangkok city and quality roads in the villages, when less than 30 years ago, the transportation to Bangkok was only by boat.

The sudden encroachment of modern society to the previously isolated Bangkok Malay society instantly brought changes. Youths are able to secure work at the new businesses. Many parents lament to me of the sudden change and the inability of the community to cope. They are suddenly closely surrounded by Thai Buddhists who are totally integrated within the capitalist system of business and production; which is to be the new way of life for the Malays in Bangkok, having sold their padi farms.

Encroachment through land purchase, subsequent development and urbanisation of Malay peasantry areas has been a continuing phenomenon since Malays first settled in Bangkok over 200 hundred years ago. Parts of Bangkok such as areas along the Khlong Saen Saab such as the Bo Bae market, Phra Thu Nam, Ramkhamhaeng (Khlong Tan – originally called Khlong Kelantan and Kelantan is the name of the state in Malaysia bordering Narathiwat Province, were previously Malay owned padi land.

The area under study, Khlong Bang Pho is still relatively rural in nature and beginning to witness encroachment from urbanisation as it is slightly away from major roads and highways. From the researchers' own interviews, the people are reasonably aware of the looming challenge of urbanisation their community would face, as a minority, Malays and Muslims.

Taking the Wallman model, I will attempt to classify the Kedah Thais. Generally the community can be described as a closed homogeneous system. They are located within confined areas, the residents are limited to and where only old Kedah Thai Buddhist are considered full members; the social network is dense and close, centred around Buddhist temples; the people are mostly farmers, some, in particular, the younger generation working in factories, enterprises and with Government offices nearby, alongside other races; their homes are typical Kedah conventional and modern finishes.

Kedah Thais speak a distinct dialect, referred to as Naka dialect, Umaiyah (2003) within the community. There is a strong tendency for people to dress in the 'typical local' Thai way within the community; changing to a more 'decent' dressing (acceptable to the majority Malay community) outside.

There is little or otherwise no interface with the rest of the society i.e. communication and interaction with other peoples in Kedah; except where required such as when dealing with government matters, education, conducting business or shopping. When interacting with others, they communicate in Malay language and to a very limited extent in Mandarin and other localised Chinese dialects. There is a tendency for the younger generation to find work elsewhere and move out.

In the context of the Malays in Bangkok, and specifically the Khlong Bang Pho Malay community, they too can be described as a closed homogeneous system. The community is located in a confined area (comprising of many padi farmland), whereas urbanised communities are located within a small area (sometimes referred to as slums); the social network is dense and close, centred on mosques; the people are mostly farmers, with some, in particular the younger generation working in factories, enterprises and Government offices, alongside other Thai Buddhists; their homes, externally looking like other houses in the area whilst internally resembling Muslim homes.

The Khlong Bang Pho Malay community, the subject of this paper, communicate within the community in Malay language as opposed to the remainder of this minority group who have abandoned the use of Malay language, Umaiyah (2003). This is reinforced thorough the use of Malay language for delivering Friday sermons in mosques. Sermons in other Bangkok Malay areas have for many years been delivered in Thai language.

People living in Khlong Bang Pho, I observe when within the community, dress in a typical South Thailand Malay style (sarong, males with headgear resembling turbans and females with hijab - headscarf). Outside, and when in contact with the mainstream Thai society, there is a strong tendency to change into the more typical Thai modern dress except for females who prefer to continue using the hijab.

During my field work in the two areas, I did come across tension and even conflicts between individuals and parents. Parents refuse to accept request for inter-marriage with the majority group. Bangkok Malays can accept marriages with Muslims from other ethnic groups; and Kedah Thais accept inter-marriage with Chinese.

One finds these observations on identity pattern to be similar to those exhibited by second and third generation immigrants, Eriksen (1993);

1. It is clear that there is 'acculturation' in the two communities: Kedah Thais residing in Naka and Bangkok Malays residing in Khlong Bang Pho.
2. The two communities under study situationally switch their identity, for example switching languages.
3. There is tension between parents and siblings' arising from the latter's possible non adherence to religious practices.
4. The boundary preventing full assimilation, in both cases, is religion.

There is almost no public controversy over the cultural practices of the Kedah Thais and Buddhists, in general. They can be considered as amongst the least controversial group in the mainstream society (bearing in mind Malaysia is a multi ethnic society). They have successfully kept their presence rather low profile and least imposing.

Malays in Bangkok are not visible too, despite actively participation at local and national level politics. Initially in 1980's when Muslims started to put on the hijab, there was resistance from the mainstream society in Thailand, Umaiyah (2003). There were reported cases of woman being asked to remove the hijab, such as to be photographed for issuance of identity card. Today this type of dressing is quite common in public including worn by tourists from the Muslim contries. Malays in Khlong Bang Pho are low profile and generally 'unseen' by the majority community.

In this situation, the lack of pubic controversy can be used as a positive indicator on relationship between the majority-minority as being harmonious.

Conclusion

The two minority groups live in harmony with the majority despite diverging Government policy on minorities in the two countries; retain their ethnicity and continue with their respective cultural practices living alongside the majority host community.

The boundary preventing full assimilation is religion. The endangered Malay identity amongst the Bangkok Malays has been revitalised through the global wave of Islamic revival, without conflict with the Thai Government. In Malaysia, the Thai Buddhist community partners with Malays to be accorded the 'bumiputra status' and benefit from 'special rights' for 'bumiputra'.

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Paper 3 Maintaining Harmony at Work: The Role of the Judge in the Malaysian Courtroom

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Abstract

Courtroom discourse is generally high-stake and the adversarial legal system that is practised in Malaysia (often) results in an atmosphere of hostility between the contesting parties. During cross-examinations for instance, an adversarial counsel will test the accuracy and credibility of the evidence with questions that are designed to discredit the other party's version of narratives while attempting to boost his party's contention. Within certain limits therefore, there will be contestations and struggle as both sides attempt to claim and reclaim control over the discourse. Such instances thus require the presence of an overarching body to regulate the interactions and the climate of the courtroom. In the Malaysian courtroom, this power resides in the most powerful participant in the setting, the judge, as all interactions are directed to him. But how is this power exercised by the judge? This paper, which is based on a prolonged in-*situ* case study of a criminal trial in a High Court Malaysia, employs a discourse analytic approach (Foucault, 1972 and 1978), to identify firstly the locus of power and secondly, the various ways in which judge wields his power through directive and constitutive linguistic practices.

INTRODUCTION

Legal discourse (which includes courtroom discourse) views law as a social practice and, like all discourses, legal discourse is situated and practised in specialised institutions. Courtroom discourse is an instantiation of spoken discourse, and this study is concerned with one specific participant in the Malaysian courtroom – the judge – with a focus on how he wields 'his power' to maintain harmony within a site of struggle.

This paper aims to show how law works as a consequence of the role of the judge in particular the power that he wields and the role of language. The traditional view of judicial behaviour involves the application of principles and rational argument is currently being challenged by the belief that the legal system does not only reflect social reality but it also constructs social reality. As such there is a growing interest in how judicial behaviour is manifested.

In Malaysia judicial behaviour is governed by the legal system that is practised. The Malaysian legal system is, to a large extent inspired, influenced and modelled after the British common law adversarial system and has two main characteristics that set it apart from its western counterparts: trial by judge not jury and the absence of court recorders or clerks. The sole judge thus bears a heavy burden to hear and pass judgments and inevitably assumes a pivotal role in the court.

Despite this heavy judicial responsibility, the absence of recorders makes it necessary for the judge must take his own notes of proceedings by hand.

During a trial, the judge has to listen to the examinations and submissions from counsels and witnesses of both litigating parties. There are three types of examinations where evidence will be adduced: direct or sometimes known as chief examination of a witness by his own counsel, a cross-examination of a witness by the opposing counsels, and finally where necessary, a re-examination of a witness by his own counsel. Literature has shown that cross-examinations are necessarily hostile as counsels will try to present alternative and competing versions of reality (Drew 1994). Needless to say after taking into consideration the weight of evidence adduced against the burden of proof, the judge will have to make the necessary decision.

WHO CAN BE A JUDGE?

Malaysia observes Montesquieu's doctrine of separation of powers: the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. Hence, where the judiciary is concerned, the courts are supreme because they are independent of control by Parliament, the executive, or anybody else, and secondly, they can pronounce on the legality, or otherwise, of executive acts of government: federal and state.

The judge, therefore, has a very grave duty, as in the words of Socrates, "to hear courteously, to consider soberly, and to decide impartially." The impartial requirement of judges is of paramount importance as stressed by the late Tun Suffian, a former Lord President, who said:

> "It is important that the judiciary should be impartial. But more important is that the public should think that the judiciary is impartial. They accept a court's decision only if they think that the judge has decided quite impartially. Judges are paid to listen. Some lawyers are tedious to listen to, but the effort must be made, not only in fairness to counsel, but to his client who has a lot at stake. A judge who is impatient and frequently shuts up counsel is in the wrong profession." (1980:46).

A Malaysian judge is appointed on a fairly democratic system. Recent developments and newspaper reports may want to dispute this. However, procedurally, the process begins with the nomination and in the case of a High Court judge, the name is referred to the Chief Justice who forwards it to the Lord President and then to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister consults the Conference of Rulers and with the royal assent, the Prime Minister finally submits the name to His Majesty the *Yang di Pertuan Agong* (YDPA) who then appoints.

A candidate for the Malaysian bench however, must also fulfill certain conditions. The late Tun Suffian (1980), who was a prominent jurist, states that anyone (that is, a lower court judge) can nominate himself to a higher court provided he is be well versed in the law, has served the judicial service for a number of years and most importantly, performed well. Merit is also considered. In terms of personal traits, a good temperament is important. He must be patient, courteous, and willing to

listen to both sides. It follows, therefore, that a judge must be honest and obviously so. It is also said that a judge must behave properly, in court and out of court, and not be an eccentric. Hence, a judge should earn the confidence, respect and esteem of the public.

But how does a judge listen to both sides in a high-stake activity. How does he deal with the contestations? What can he do will and what will he do in order to ensure that justice is achieved without fear and fervor?

A BRIEF REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section will deal with the concepts of *discourse* and *power* that are crucial as scaffolding for the paper.

Discourse

Conley and O'Barr (1998) perceive that that there are two senses to the term discourse; linguistic and social (p.6). They explain that in its linguistic sense, the term overlaps with language and refers to connected segments of speech and writing. Hence in the context of law, discourse here refers to courtroom testimony, closing arguments lawyer-client interviews, etc.

The second sense of *discourse* however, refers to what is popularly known as the Foucauldian concept of discourse that is more abstract social phenomenon. This concept owes its currency to Michel Foucault (1970 and 1972 in Conley and O'Barr 1998). In his two seminal papers, Foucault shows that the macrodiscourse that he proposes is not simply talk itself but also the way something gets talked about (Conley and O'Barr 1990: 7). He perceives that the way people talk about an issue is closely intertwined with the way they think about it and thus act with respect to it. Hence it is thus fitting to consider discourse is a locus of power (Conley and O'Barr 1990). In the social world, and a courtroom is a social site (world), different discourses do compete for ascendancy. The difference is that within the world of the court, there is an overarching institutional power
That delineates the roles and responsibility of the participants. The manifestation of power as provided structures the discourse and inevitably reflects the power structure of society.

To study the power of talk in the Foucauldian sense as we shall in this paper, we must however first, look into discourse at the micro level. At the micro level, discourse is represented by talk. As such we shall see how talk is produced and reproduced, what allows talk to flow and what factors do impede talk. When talk breaks down, who is allowed to repair it and what strategies, if any are used to do so. Inevitably, the issue of power has to be discussed.

Power

Power in discourse has been described as the ability of people and institutions to control the behavior and lives of others, or as described by Fairclough (1989) as a situation when "powerful participants control and constrain the contributions of non-

powerful participants" (p.46). He further distinguishes three types of constraints: *content, relation, and subject*. Powerful participants he implores can indirectly employ these constraints through the selection of discoursal types. His views should be seen in tandem with the findings on judge's ideology by Conley and O'Barr (1990), (1998), and Philips (1998).

Due to such asymmetries of power, Cotterill (2003) alludes that "....perhaps even the *majority*, of research into courtroom discourse has some degree of critical orientation" (p: 7) which parallels other areas of discourse analysis in institutional settings, such as the media, medicine and education (see Fairclough 1989; Caldas-Coulthard and Coulthard 1996; Sarangi and Coulthard 2000).

Earlier works on power show how it exists due to the asymmetrical relationship of members of society in general, we can relate to the reality of those 'haves' and others who are 'have-nots'. Fowler (1985) succinctly states that power does not exist in a vacuum but always resides in relation to another variable which may be gender, ethnicity, and occupation. He further states that power relationships are not natural and objective but artificial, socially constructed intersubjective realities (1985:6). But what is the mechanism that allows for these socially constructed intersubjective realities?

In their seminal 1976 book entitled, The *Social Construction of Reality,* Berger and Luckman (cited in Fowler 1985), assert that language is "a major mechanism in this process of social construction" (p. 61). To them, language has the capacity to manipulate concepts and relationships in the real world, as view shared by other sociolinguists, who were rather disenchanted with the traditional view that language and society are relatively 'divorced' from each other with language not being an instrument of inequality.

Closely related to power is the issue of control. Mead (1985) defined *control* as "the right to take decisions that govern the performance of a particular activity." (p.28) in his work, he cites the example of a counsel exercising control when he examines a witness. Philips (1994) on the other hand, opines that *courtroom control* refers to "the judge's ability to exert command from a distance over the actions of the physical bodies of those in his courtroom without recourse to physical coercion". This study again reiterates the fact that control is exercised through speech and over the speech of others.

As law is language and manifested in the courtroom as talk, and when that talk realizes itself in the form of contestations and argumentations, it becomes relevant to see are how harmony in the courtroom is maintained and the participant responsible for the maintenance of harmony.

This paper thus seeks to show how language is used as an instrument to maintain harmony in the courtroom using Fowler's two types of linguistic practices exercised by the powerful, i.e. directive and constitutive. The former includes explicitly manipulative speech acts e.g. command and requests, proclamations and interpersonal practices e.g. use of pronominal and pronouns (not included in speech acts). Constitutive practices are concerned with the ways in which language (and other semiotic systems like dress, setting arrangement) constructs social reality to

preserve hierarchical structure of society through ideology. This ideology legitimizes or sanctions the institutions of power by the ruling (powerful) class through lexical practices, syntactic structures and transformations, pronunciation and terms of address. Further since this is an analysis on talk, the structure of talk can also be examined. Hence, an analysis of who controls the turns, which has the most turns. Who has the longest turn and who can wrest the floor without opposition will also be relevant?

It must be noted that studies on legal and courtroom discourse in Malaysia are developing but rather slowly (see Mead 1985, Baskaran 1995, Noraini Ibrahim 2003 and 2007). However, there is yet to be a documentation linguistic judicial behavior.

RESEARCH DESIGN

This paper is based on my doctoral dissertation which examined the testimony of expert witnesses where a qualitative approach was adopted. A single intrinsic case was identified as the unit of analysis, and data collection comprised ethnographic in-situ prolonged observations, the taking of field notes (also by the researcher) and its transcriptions, interviews, and the perusal of documents (statutes, notes of proceedings from the prosecution and witnesses; expert medical and forensic reports from the expert witnesses; and the decision of the case). Legal ethnography was very useful here as the long and extended trial made it necessary that the close observations and continuous of notes became significant not immediately but much later as the case developed.

Data Collection and Analysis

Data collection commenced once permission to observe the proceedings was obtained from the Court Registrar. It was a very challenging exercise due to several factors. Firstly, institutional constraints deemed that no recording, either video or audio was allowed. Hence during the observations carried out over two years, field notes had to be taken down by hand, and duly transcribed by the researcher. Much time was spent on this, but the advantage is that the researcher became very close with the data, facilitating the ensuing process of data analysis, as identifying of the themes that emerged, could be done with the ensuing sensitivity.

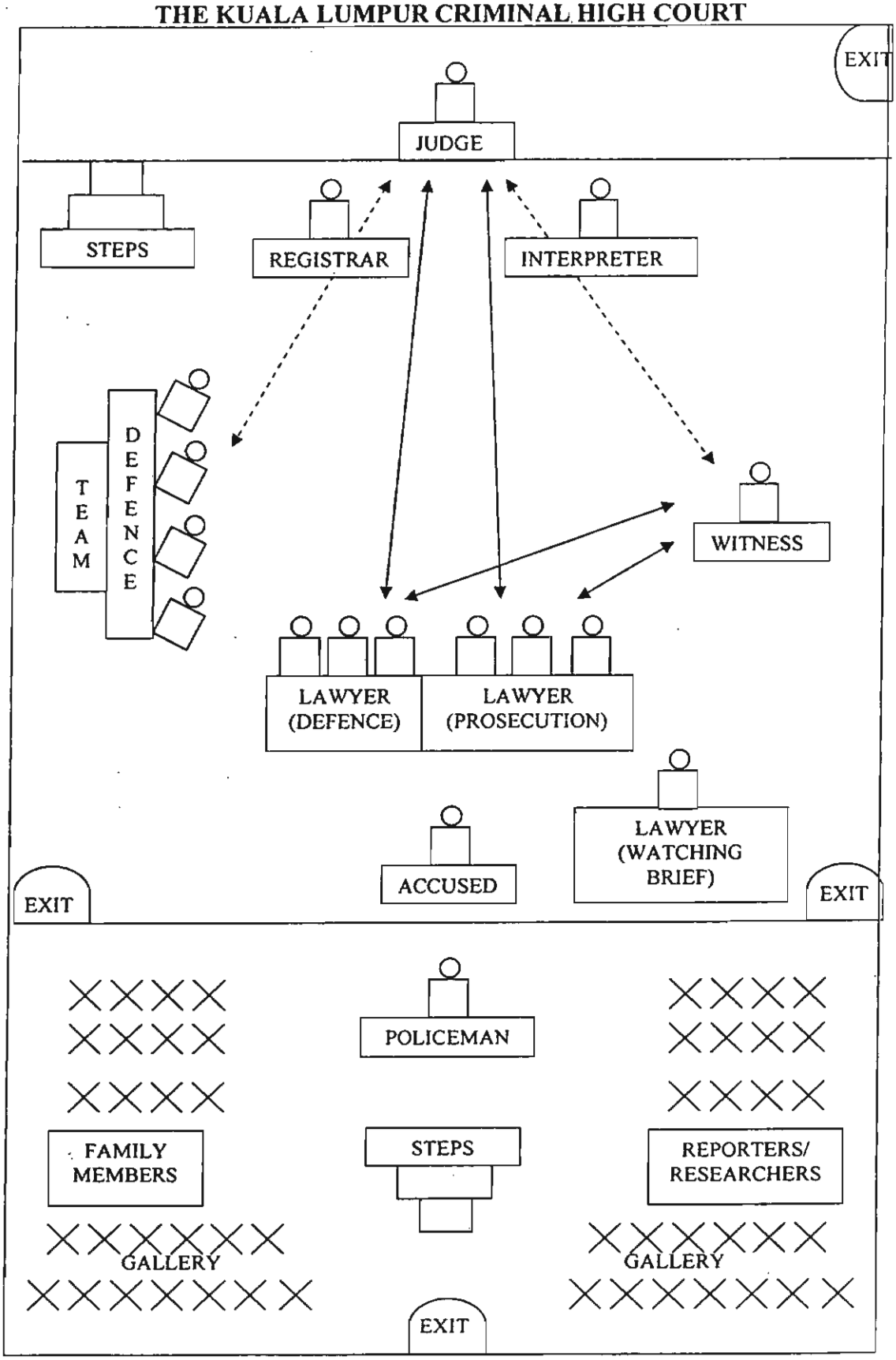
Once the entire hearing was transcribed, and the complete notes of proceedings and decision of the case was made available to the researcher the 'real' data analysis began with much reclusiveness in the sense that there was much going back and forth to the counsels, namely the prosecution, when the need arose. The judge however, declined to be interviewed and hence the observations became a crucial part of the data.

Data gathered from the field notes were coded in tandem with observation notes, where applicable. From the coding process, a summary of the trial was developed, and here with particular attention to the interactions from the judge. Such interactions were then coded. From the analysis of the whole trial and examinations of all the witnesses, certain themes began to emerge repeatedly. Such recurrent themes then identified. This paper is based on such recurrent themes.

The following discussion will present the findings of the study. To appreciate the constitutive practices mentioned above, the context of the Malaysian high court will be presented first highlighting the setting, participants and their roles and the courtroom procedures. This will be followed by the discursive practices employed by the judge in exercising his power to maintain harmony in the courtroom.

Figure 1: The Setting

THE KUALA LUMPUR CRIMINAL HIGH COURT



THE CONTEXT OF THE MALAYSIAN HIGH COURT – SETTING, PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURES

To begin with, the manifestation of power can be seen from the physical setting of the court as well as the role of the participants. Figure 1 reflects this. The courtroom is demarcated with the active participants on one side, and the overhearing non-active participants on the other. The arrows in Figure 1 indicate the institutionalized spoken interactions.

On the speaking side, the bench (this normally refers to the judge as well as the seat) is elevated, thus demonstrating that the position and hence the power and authority of the judge is over and above anyone else in the courtroom. The directive linguistic practices observed often resulted in the reformulating of questions, and terminating or changing the focus of the questions. In other instances, witnesses may be called, recalled, and exhibits tendered. These directive practices are quite direct.

Immediately below the bench are the court officials: the Registrar and the court interpreters. The counsels or lawyers face the judge. The prosecution is normally on the right, facing the bench, and the defence on the left. Unlike in the American courtroom, lawyers in Malaysia are not allowed to stray from their positions. They cannot approach the bench or the witness as is seen on television courtroom-dramas and movies. When the occasion arises for any documentations or exhibits to be submitted to the bench, or when there are materials, documents or exhibits to be tendered for verification, permission must first be sought and if granted, such materials must be handed to the Interpreter who then approaches the bench or the witness.

In this particular case, the defence team included not only the assistant or junior counsels, but also a medical doctor (in attendance for specific reasons) and they were seated to the left of the defence team. The witness is in the witness box. The accused (confined to the dock) is directed to the middle of the courtroom. This confinement of the accused throughout the trial has come under criticism recently (September 2005) as it was deemed improper for the accused (who technically remains innocent until proven guilty) to be treated so. The matter has yet to be resolved.

Power is also manifest in the code of conduct and attire of the participants. The judge is robed (in black) and so are the lawyers. This is in adherence to the rules of the High Court and a legacy of the English common law system. Female lawyers are not allowed to appear before the court in skirts that are above the knee. Shoes must be black, and for female lawyers, only 'court shoes' are allowed. In fact, until 1982, judges and lawyers appearing in the higher courts had to don wigs. However, this practice has been discontinued, and male judges had to don the Malay headdress or *songkok* during official occasions. The other court officials, interpreters and the registrar have to wear black coats, and this is supplied by the state. Members of the gallery are also subject to a dress code: i.e., to be 'decently' attired, or otherwise, one will be refused entry. During proceedings, members of the gallery would have to sit properly (straight up, legs are not to be crossed, and to observe silence). Silence is strictly observed when the judge is in the court.

The way a trial is conducted and the mode of conduct of the lawyers is another important point. Counsels must stand up when addressing the court and must take turns to speak and refrain from speaking when the judge is addressing the court. Such institutionalized behavior is very apparent before and during sessions as seen in the section that follows.

Ambience in court: Pre- session vs. In-session

Before the start of a hearing, litigating parties were observed to be exchanging greetings and bantering with each other, sometimes with the interpreters and court registrar participating. In the gallery, pleasantries were also exchanged among the members as the trial did take a long time. On a daily basis, the researcher observed how most of the participants in this trial (speaking as well as non-speaking) with the exception of the judge and the accused, would actually acknowledge each other. Only the victim's sister and the family members of the accused did not exchange greetings with each other throughout the duration of the trial

It was court practice that at about nine o'clock in the morning (or the designated time), the trial judge's assistant, would appear to see whether the court was 'ready' to begin the day's session(s). The Interpreter or the Assistant Registrar would then look around to make sure that the counsels and witnesses were present and ready. If the Interpreter was satisfied, then she would give a signal to the judge's assistant. Meanwhile, the accused would then be led to the dock, and counsels would make sure that they were properly attired in their robes (as this is the High Court), and would get ready at their designated positions. Once the court is ready the judge's assistant would ring a bell, and this would be followed by the entrance of the judge in tandem with the court policeman calling out "*Bangun*" (or "All Rise") and everyone in court would have to so do. This practice is similar in all common law jurisdictions and harkens back to medieval times. Once the judge was seated, everyone would follow suit and the court would officially be in session.

In-session

Once the court was in session, the atmosphere would immediately change. Silence must be observed and all parties would await the judge's move to begin the day's session. The Interpreter would rise, turn to the judge and with an exchange of glances, and sometimes a nod, or even in the absence of any cue, but after a slight pause, one of the three interpreters present would call for the case or cases to be heard for the day (which have been entered in the court diary). It was observed that proceedings would commence as follows:

Example 1: Calling Out of Cases

Interpreter: *Kes 45-52-200, PP lawan Kenneth Fook Mun Lee. Kes mula bicara [Case 45-52-2000 PP vs Kenneth Fook Mun Lee. Hearing begins]* ,

Subsequently, during the trial, it was as follows:

Interpreter: *Kes 45-52-2000 PP lawan Kenneth Fook Mun Lee, kes sambung bicara. [Case 45-52-2000 PP vs Kenneth Fook Mun Lee. Hearing continues]*

While the calling of the case would be the cue for the prosecution (the party who initiated the action in the criminal court), to begin the proceedings, it is the judge who actually (who would normally be writing something in his diary) gives the permission to commence. Once permission is granted, the leading Deputy Public Prosecutor (DPP1) would introduce himself and his team and then introduce the defence team: beginning with the leading counsel first, followed by the rest according to rank, as in Example 2 below:

Example 2: Introduction of parties (in BM)

DPP : *Dengan izin Yang Arif, pihak pendakwa diwakili Abdul Karim Abdul Jalil, dibantu oleh Timbalan Pendakwa Raya Encik Abdul Wahab Mohamad (.) Timbalan Pendakwa Raya Encik Ahmad Fairuz Zainal Abidin (.) TPR Puan Rosidah Abu Bakar (.) manakala pihak pembela diwakili Encik Muhammad Shafee Abdullah dibantu oleh Encik K Kumarendaran (.) Encik Wong Keong Kong (.) dan Cik Leena Ghosh dan Encik Dev Kumarendran bagi pihak tertuduh dan Cik Hasmaliza* (.) sebagai watching brief. [With your lordship's permission, the prosecution is represented by Abdul Karim Abdul Jalil, and assisted by Deputy Public Prosecutor Encik Abdul Wahab Mohamad (.) DPP Encik Ahmad Fairuz Zainal Abidin (.) DPP Puan Rosidah Abu Bakar(.) while the defence is represented by Mr. Shafee Abdullah assisted by Mr. K Kumarendaran (.) Mr. Wong Keong Kong (.) and Miss Leena Ghosh and Mr. Dev Kumarendran for the accused, and Miss Hasmaliza as watching brief.]

In the days that followed, it was observed that if there was no change in the composition of teams then the introductions would be as follows:

DPP : *Dengan izin Yang Arif, pihak pihak seperti yang ada.* [With your lordship's permission, the parties remain the same.]

There were also times when the prosecution did the introductions in English, if permitted by the court, as shown below:

Example 3: Introduction of Parties in English

DPP : If it pleases the court Yang Arif, parties are still the same.

The permission to allow the proceedings in English is yet another prerogative of the judge who can compel parties top use the national language (a rule initiated in1982). Ruling. This is yet another application of social reality as some counsels

were found to be rather incompetent to use Bahasa Malaysia (see Juneidah Ibrahim and Abdul Kahar Yaakob 1993).

The start of a session would also change the atmosphere in the court. There would be minimal or no movement and all eyes would be on the interactions. It was noted that all interactions were addressed to the judge. Counsels were not allowed to address each other directly at all.

As the judge is the one to order a trial to begin, he is also the one with the power to adjourn a hearing. In Malaysia, due to a system that compelled him to listen and take down all the notes of proceedings, the judge is faced with mental and physical exhaustion. The following Example for instance was taken when counsel was in the midst of ascertaining the expert endocrinologist's credibility in the said areas when the judge suddenly decided that he had enough for the day. So, court was adjourned.

(In the Examples that follow, DPP is the Deputy Public Prosecutor, Defence is the Defence Counsel, DW is the Defence Witness, and Judge is the presiding Judge. The underlined words indicate a raised tone and emphatic stress. Two strokes / / indicate overlapping, while parallel = are contiguous utterances. (.) indicate relatively short pauses. The data is authentic and the structures have not been corrected).

Example 4: Direct Examination of DW3 on 15.11.01, at p. 26

Defence	:	Now Dr. we need to know your knowledge in relation to blood	1
		analysis glucose and urine. Could you state your knowledge in	2
		these areas? Knowledge and qualifications?	3
DW	:	As /a/	4
Judge	:	/I/think we can continue tomorrow. I need a clear mind,	5
		before I get fermented. (To DW) You are educating us quite a	6
		bit. We have to talk patiently to you.	7
		(Adjourned)	

Here note how DW's answer in line 5 was overlapped by the judge who directed to end the proceedings and remarked with humour that he "was getting fermented" with all the information. It was rather abrupt and this 'fatigue' of the judge happened several times during the proceedings. Usually, after such a direction, the judge would rise and leave the court immediately.

From my observations, it was rather trying for the judge to sit through such a trial that demands the best, in not only mental health and capacity, but also physical health. The fact that the judge has to listen, comprehend, and at the same time weigh the evidence adduced against the issues, known laws and cases (local and international). This is certainly a Herculean task.

THE ABSOLUTE POWER OF MALAYSIAN JUDGES

Section 165 of the Evidence Act 1950, deals with the power of the judge in the taking of evidence. The section provides that the judge may ask any question he pleases, in any form, at any time, to any of the witnesses or of any of the parties (counsels), about any fact relevant or irrelevant and may order the production of any document or thing.

The section further provides that the parties or their agents are not entitled to make any objections for any question or order and the judge can refuse to allow any counsel from asking certain questions during cross-examinations

The judge, as the most powerful participant in court, thus have the liberty to address all parties, adversarial counsels, witnesses, the Registrar and the interpreter. This was amply observed and recorded in the case. It was also observed that the court officers mentioned earlier, would speak only when spoken to, except for the non-examining lawyer who may raise objections during the examination of witnesses. The judge had also, at times, addressed the non-examining lawyers: namely, the junior members of the defence team, seated at the left-side of the courtroom. It must be noted that while the arrows in the diagram are two-way, the only one who can initiate the interactions is the judge. Again, the lawyers may initiate the interaction with the witnesses or the interpreter. However, the accused has no speaking part until, and unless, he is called to the witness box.

Due to the nature of the open court, when matters which are deemed confidential, or which may be injurious to any parties need to be raised, these matters will be discussed in the judge's chambers. If such occasion arises, then the judge would adjourn the hearing. It was also observed that this retiring to the chambers also took place when the parties deliberated on hearing dates.

Power is also manifest in the code of conduct and attire of the participants. The judge is robed (in black) and so are the lawyers. This is in adherence to the rules of the High Court and a legacy of the English common law system. Female lawyers are not allowed to appear before the court in skirts that are above the knee. Shoes must be black, and for female lawyers, only 'court shoes' are allowed. In fact, until 1982, judges and lawyers appearing in the higher courts had to don wigs. However, this practice has been discontinued, and male judges had to don the Malay headdress or *songkok* during official occasions. The other court officials, interpreters and the registrar have to wear black coats, and this is supplied by the state. Members of the gallery are also subject to a dress code: i.e., to be 'decently' attired, or otherwise, one is refused entry... During the proceedings, such members of the gallery would have to sit properly (straight up, legs are not to be crossed, and to observe silence). Silence is strictly observed when the judge is in the court.

The way a trial is conducted and the mode of conduct of the lawyers is another important point. Counsels must stand up when addressing the court. We now turn to the role of the judge to maintain harmony and the judicial power exercised.

THE JUDGE AND CONTESTATIONS IN THE COURTROOM - TO LISTEN CAREFULLY AND ACT FAIRLY

It has been mentioned earlier that contestations usually arise during cross-examinations and the judge must exercise his power to maintain harmony. To illustrate this need let us turn to the following example.

Example 5 that follows is the start of the cross-examination of DW7, a defence expert witness, who is a clinical endocrinologist from a hospital in Penang, who is a British national. Her evidence was to support an earlier testimony by another defence medical expert, DW3. DW3 was a researcher, and thus would not have been considered competent enough to give an opinion. Hence, the defence brought in a clinician. DW7 attested that this was her first appearance in court as an expert, a point which did not escape the scrutiny of both the cross-examining lawyer and the judge.

Example 5: Cross Examination of DW7 on 12.12.02 on page 35.

Judge	:	Yes? (rising tone, sounds like a question but is really a signal to the DPP to proceed with the cross-examination)	1 2
DPP	:	My lord, I'm going to take some time with this witness especially I'm going to look at this article. I may or may not finish with this witness today.	3 4 5
Judge	:	Never mind.	6
DPP	:	I've not finished reading this article (pause, gathers notes) Now, Dr. Elizabeth, I put it you can understand the way I ask. If you can't understand please tell me and I will give it again. Now Dr. you were approached by Mr. Kumar to be a witness for this trial in September 2001. And after Mr. Kumar has briefed you, you agreed to assist him do certain things, yes, or no?	7 8 9 10 11 12
DW	:	(raises tone) I did not agree to assist him to do certain things but agreed to /come/	13 14
DPP	:	/Dr! / I would like to advise you one thing	15
DW	:	May I?	16
DPP	:	If I ask you to explain, then /explain /	17
Defence	:	(rises and speaking loudly)/Your lordship!/ I would like the learned deputy to =	18 19
DPP	:	=Let me control this witness not my learned friend	20 21
Defence	:	My lord, he can control the witness through the questions, I don't think we can control then explain the question	22 23
DPP	:	(continues to address DW) Did you come to dislike _____?	24
DW	:	I dislike the tone	25
Judge	:	There is nothing wrong to say, yes. Lawyers are not here to do crooked things; lawyers are here to assist me. You are here to present a case, to make sure that justice is done.	26 27 28
DW	:	Because this is not a _____ and following by assisting I'm taking great care in my use of words, because that implies I'm not assisting into _____scrutinize of _____	29 30 31

DPP	:	One thing Dr. Elizabeth, don't think that I have some threat in your questions, threatening into and trying to confuse you	32 33
DW	:	Perhaps I watch too much TV	34
DPP	:	Dr, I have to ask you questions,	35
Judge	:	See, the objective of cross-examination is actually to destroy, to destroy your credibility, we may also go into your qualifications, you see, sometimes degrees can be penalized. I'm explaining to you. You have come as an expert, you are an endocrinologist, and they will go to your qualifications. That is the extent to which they can go. Of course there are limitations to what is asked. They cannot scandalize you, or annoy you or, or your lawyer will stand up and object if I am busy writing this say it is very difficult sometimes. _____ So, don't worry about the questions, don't get upset, answer and candidly. So you were asked not assist Mr. Kumar, say yes or no, and don't hesitate. Say I do not know if you do not know, say no, 'cos if you want to volunteer and answer everything, say you do not know. It will be for other witnesses, experts. You (.) You see these people who ask questions (.) are very nice people (.) but the process of justice is like that (.) See these people do not have bedside manners like you doctors have (.) There your objective is to serve patients; here their objective is to destroy you.	36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55
DPP	:	If you have not answered me	56
DW	:	As your lordship has said	57
Judge	:	Your answer is yes?	58
DW	:	Yes.	58
Judge	:	Your answer is, I am not here to assist Mr. Kumar	60
DW	:	Yes	61
Judge	:	Leave it like that.	62
DPP	:	Now, you give the defence on this case was hypoglycemia, it was briefed to you?	63 64

Example 5 demonstrates the exercise of absolute judicial power by a very highly involved judge. This stretch of data was taken from the start of the cross-examination and we can see that the judge is the one empowered to start the proceedings for the day. In line 3 the DPP was attempting to ask for an adjournment as he was not fully prepared to cross-examine the witness (lines 3-4) as the defence had tendered a document that he had not finished reading. The judge in line 6 did not entertain this indirect request and from *Never mind* in line 6, the DPP was directed to proceed.

As this is a cross-examination of an expert, the objective of the DPP was to show that this witness was not credible. Literature (for instance Cotterill 2003) has shown that experts may lose their credibility if they are proven to be impartial, for example if they 'were paid' to do the job. Lines 9 to 12 were to lay the foundation of bias and pecuniary interest. The *Now*–prefaced question marked a shift in topic, and *And*-prefaced (line 11) marked an additive to the approach earlier mentioned.

The lexical choices of *approached by, briefed,* and *agreed to assist* were carefully selected to highlight the DPP's contention.

Earlier ethnographic notes showed that this expert was relatively uneasy and seemed a bit nervous, which may have arisen from the fact that she was a novice in court. The rise in intonation and the use of emphatic stress indicated that the insinuations did not go unnoticed. The expert witness knew that she was 'in danger' of having her testimony thrown out. Hence we see the denial in lines 13-14.

We note how the DPP seemed to be losing control of the witness, followed by a rather heated exchange between the counsel and the witness (line 15-16). It is not surprising therefore to see the defence counsel raising an objection in line 18-19, and appealing to the judge, which is an indirect request to for the judge to intervene. At this stage, the counter objection by the DPP to control the witness, was actually a move to regain his lost turn. At this stage it seemed that there was a loss in courtroom control as the contiguous utterances in lines 19 and 20 and the raised voices by both the DPP and the defence counsel.

As in many other instances in the trial, and as provided for by section 165 of the Evidence Act, the judge seized control in line 25 with the objective of re-creating the harmony that was disrupted. In light of the hostility that was brewing and the apparent naiveté of the expert, the judge indulged in a rather long turn to enlighten the court (especially the witness) on the objective of cross-examinations. It would also seem that the judge implying that perhaps the witness had been coached by the defence counsel to respond in a certain manner. So from lines 45, the judge laid out the 'duties' of witness, with a rather gentle comparison of 'bedside manners' of doctors and the destructive 'manner' of cross-examining counsels (line 51). This demonstrates the awareness of the judge of the different discursive practices of different bodies of science: law on the one hand, and medicine on the other. This difference is markedly clear in the question-answer process of the court. Line 47 alludes to this. In the science of law, objectivity is the key variable. There are no grey areas. Questions posed by counsels must be answered in the affirmative or otherwise. In line 58 the judge took over the questioning from the DPP and with a leading question, the witness completed that part of the testimony. Line 62, *Leave it like that* is a directive to both the DPP and the witness. Hence in line 62, the *Now*-prefaced question marked a topic shift.

FORMS OF ADDRESS : THE ISSUE OF THE 'LEARNED FRIEND'

Tiersma (1999) documented that legalese has allowed the legal fraternity to be kept closed and accessible only by 'insiders'. Linguistically, this has been done in many ways: from the genre to the syntax, lexis, vocabulary, etc. For instance, a word may take on a different meaning in the legal fraternity: for instance, bench, prayer, etc.

In the courtroom, harmony is maintained with the strict recognition of forms of address. Adversarial counsels must refer to each other in the most polite terms, for example, Mr. So and So, or *Tuan* or *Puan* (for ladies). In the case observed, the judge was referred to as *Yang Arif,* loosely translated as *The Enlightened One* (the

English equivalent being Your lordship, or My lord). It is also noted that the judge will not refer to himself in the first person, but as *'the court'* or *'the bench'*. He would however, address the counsels interchangeably by their names of by the parties they represent- prosecution or defence.

In this case, the judge also addressed the defence counsel by his title, *Datuk*, a finding relatively different from tha of Gibbons (2003), which reports that in their courtroom appearances in the UK and Australia, judges address counsels by their name(s) only when they are reprimanding the counsels.

In court, one of the norms of address frequently used among counsels is the concept of the 'learned' used in conjunction with 'friend', or 'colleague', 'counsel' or 'judge'. In several instances in this trial, the counsels have been documented to use this adjectival description mutually for each other. So what is the meaning of the word 'learned'? Is it an adjective to describe someone who has studied a subject for a long time? The following example will show how the court has restricted the use of the word within the legal context.

Example 6 : Cross-Examination of DW8 on 24.11.01

DPP	:	Now my last question, Mr. Hacharan Singh, we have the	1
		evidence of Professor Vincent Marks to calculate	2
		(.)backwards from 1.30 to 8, ascertain the amount of	3
		alcohol , 8 o'clock actually there is , is no such guideline	4
		to I, would you agree with it?	5
DW	:	You please repeat what the Professor said?	6
DPP	:	Prof. Marks said that there is no, it is very difficult to	7
		ascertain what was the alcohol level at the time of the	8
		incident ____ 8o'clock, from 1.30 198 mg, and it is	9
		difficult or bad guide to calculate the level of alcohol at 8	10
		o'clock.	11
DW	:	I don't agree my lord because one, calculations between	12
		a range not accurate. I don't agree with the learned	13
		Professor	14
Judge	:	The word 'learned' is only for lawyers means qualified.	15
		So when lawyer refers to lawyer, learned friend, is my	16
		friend qualified in law (.) not clever	17
DW	:	Chemist also can	18
Judge	:	**Cannot!**	19
Defence	:	In the case of Mr. Hacharan he is also qualified in law.	20
Judge	:	No, this is Prof Marks.	21

This excerpt was taken in the closing stages of the cross-examination of the expert witness, the forensic chemist. The expert had adduced that the blood alcohol level of the accused was at a certain point at 8 p.m., which would have been lower than the 1.30 a.m. sample, as analyzed by the Chemistry Department. This was the point that the DPP was attempting to dispute, by placing in juxtaposition prior testimony from DW3, another defence expert witness. In order to disagree with deference, he referred to DW3 as the 'learned' Professor (line 14), a person to be

respected due to his knowledge. This point was not well taken by the court as shown in lines 15-17. To the judge, and perhaps the legal fraternity, 'learned' is a term reserved for one who is 'trained in law', and not for any other description.

CONCLUSION

Malaysian judges have a duty to listen to and deliberate on evidence adduced within a contentious adversarial system. As parties come to court to tell their version of a narrative aided by their counsels , and taking various subject positions, there needs to be a power that can deal with the issues and regulate the behavior of the contending parties. The judge in the Malaysian courtroom may exercise his power through discourse at the macro and micro levels and through directive and constitutive linguistic practices which include the invisible institutional power behind the discourse.

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Biodata

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SESSION 6
EDUCATION AND YOUTH

SEMINAR ROOM 2

Chairperson: Dr. Lalita Sinha

1. Pedagogical Thoughts: Education, Critical Literacy, and Cultural Identity in a Democratic Society. - *Dale Rorex*
2. Maintaining Harmony in Online Chats. - *Tan Kim Hua*
3. Competing Views of Higher Education. - *Lynken Ghose*
4. Cultural Globalization: The Impact of the Farang on Thai Identity. - *Ninja Weissinger*

Paper 1 Pedagogical Thoughts: Education, Critical Literacy, and Cultural Identity in a Democratic Society

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Abstract

Diverse pedagogical thoughts competing within the cultural milieu of Southeast Asia influence the processes of becoming and being literate. This article is organized around three assumptions. First, it argues that the current crisis in education is symptomatic of a broader crisis in the meaning and practice of democracy. Second, it analyzes the critical relationship between literacy and cultural identity in a multicultural, multiethnic society. Third, it calls for educators to rethink leadership vis-à-vis expanding and deepening cultural democracy. In short, critical literacy is a culturally defined construct; therefore, it follows that it should have close links to cultural identity.

INTRODUCTION

Cultural identity and critical literacy significantly impact the labyrinthine mechanisms individuals navigate in becoming and being literate called *mental negotiating processes*. This paper will explore the relationship between human cultural identity and critical literacy in a multicultural and pluralistic society. Minorities within diverse cultures differ from the perceptions held by the majority in what is perceived as literate behavior or appropriate style. This difference, in turn, influences how individuals function within social constructs (Ferdman, 1990). The type and content of literacy education that individuals receive can markedly influence their cultural identity. The human connections between literacy and culture must be fully acknowledged and respected in order to bring about a democratic society along with attaining the goal of literacy acquisition for all citizens.

Cummins (1996) states that children who enter schools in which cultural diversity is not tolerated, let alone encouraged, soon grasp the fact that their differences are not respected but are suspect. The resulting sense of reduced worth undermines achievement, in other words, pressuring children to conform, or to participate in educational practices that are unfair or discriminatory, causing them to lose their cultural identity. If students are not encouraged to think critically, to reflect, and to solve problems, they are being submitted to a transmission model of pedagogy.

Cummins, along with other pedagogues such as Lem Vygotsky, Henry Giroux, and Giles Ji Ungpakorn, emphasizes the need for structural changes within educational institutions that support positive attitudes and strong social and cultural identities on the part of majority and minority learners.

Becoming and *being* are highlighted to stress the dynamic aspects of literacy, rather than conceiving of literacy primarily as a passive characteristic of the

individual regardless of the vocation he or she pursues. The focus of this paper is the transformation of literacy and the ways in which literacy can be consciously thought of as "transformative ways of carrying out social transactions within the social constructed world" (Carraher, 1988). Being literate means the critical engagement of human beings in unique activities that define individuals as they transform and transact within the social constructed environment.

Learning is generally accepted as the holistic phenomenon in which language and cognitive development dynamically interact. Literacy is the ability to read and write, and should be approached as a holistic manifestation of learning. To this extent, the methods used in teaching and assessing first or second-language literacy should critically reflect the holistic nature of learning literacy. Language learning should occur within the context in which the language is to be used.

Language, culture, literacy, and education are inextricably intertwined. Ongoing debates over cultural identity, literacy, and political power are distended by histrionics and alter the focus on what is best for students. The issue of what language or dialect should be taught in school should be put to rest (Banks, 2005).

An individual's identity as a member of a group set apart from the majority is intertwined with the meaning and nature of becoming and being literate. As such, individuals maintain an image of the behaviors, beliefs, values, and norms that is culturally appropriate to the multicultural groups with which they identify. This is *mentally negotiated cultural identity* which is derived from and modulates the symbolic and practical significance of literacy for individuals as well as multicultural groups.

Once students are empowered to recognize their own cultural identity, they can learn to think critically about it and make meaningful decisions about their life opportunities. Problem-posing education, seeks to help students understand the world they live in and critically analyze real-life situations. Inclusion, critical analysis, practical skills, and self-confidence lead to empowerment.

The unique diversity in educational achievement among multicultural groups in the classroom begs the question of understanding the relationship between literacy and cultural identity which is driven by a desire to integrate minorities into the contemporary multicultural environment. At the same time, inquiries into this topic can demonstrate that literacy is comprised of complex, multifaceted, and multi-layered constructs. When one looks at literacy education and acquisition in the context of a multicultural society, one is forced to go beyond viewing the processes called transmission and internalization of a set of cognitive functions and skills and to consider both the symbolic aspects and the content of what is taught and learned.

CRITICAL ROLE OF VALUES

Accepting differences also means making provisions for them. Multiculturalism consists of values, traditions, and world views created, shared, and transformed by a group of people bound together by a common history, geography, language, social class, religion, or other shared identities (Nieto, 2004). The critical question at this juncture is how multiethnic differences in school performance have been and should be addressed by educators, and how that question—and responses to it—have been confused.

The debate over the relationship of literacy and culture is forced by societal concerns with issues of student and collective rights: To what extent do students and groups within a multiethnic society have a right to define and maintain distinctive identities? To what extent do these rights complement or conflict with each other? In Thailand, the 1999 National Education Act focused on an integrated and holistic scheme of education, religion, art, and culture. The subsequent National Education Plan endorsed equal access to opportunity without any barriers or advantages based on ethnicity, race, or gender (Ministry of Education, 2003). Foremost of these values, students' merit and classroom accomplishment are viewed as the only source of social and economic success. The educational system is promoted as the unique equalizer—the institution that can and should provide citizens with the tools they need to be productive members of a democratic society. In this view, fairness means measuring each student by the same criteria. It also means that all students must be treated in similar ways. To do otherwise would be to repeat inequities. In many other ways, however, to think about equal opportunity is to promote the unique differences among people, in particular, those differences rooted in culture and, therefore, in group membership.

To ignore group membership is to deny an important part of humanity. Indeed, treating everyone the same can be the right thing to do, for the interest of humanity. Be that as it may, not a small number of scholars have claimed that equal treatment creates inequalities.

Multicultural education is a conscious integral part of the effort to create a more democratic society. Therefore, multicultural societies including Thailand must participate in the democratic process as described by John Dewey (1916) in *Democracy and Education*:

> A society which makes provisions for participation of all its members on equal terms and which secures flexible readjustment of its institutions through interaction of the different forms of associated life is democratic. Such a society must have a type of education which gives individuals a personal interest in social relationships and control, and the habits of mind which secure social changes without introducing disorder.

Diverse views on the proper nature of the relationship among ethnic groups in Thai society may also be unique underlying points of disagreement: Should each group create its own way and be free to maintain its own heritage, norms, and values,

following a pluralist-within-multicultural model? Or should the dominant cultural group be emphasized and should assimilation be required?

Preservation of cultural identities, critical literacy, and democracy depends on a system of conscious education that equally prepares all multicultural children—majority and minority—to achieve high standards of success in the basic skills of reading, writing, and mathematics to participate in maintaining their democratic community. As Sanchamuneewongse (2007) explains:

> Multicultural education is three things: an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process. It incorporates the idea that all students—regardless of their gender and social class, and their ethnic and cultural characteristics—should have equal opportunity to learn in school.

If multicultural values are honored and respected, then individual merit also needs to be respected and defined in a cultural modus operandi in which group membership is taken into consideration. Within the educational system, educators must encourage students and parents to give equal consideration to the maintenance and development of distinctive ethnic cultures. To the extent that groups differ, effective programs could be designed to meet the need for multiple perspectives based on students' group membership and academic needs.

Literacy has created a debate among educators for schools are viewed as the social institutions most responsible for literacy education in society. Furthermore, schools affect the thinking or mindset that shapes the way children become literate. It is practical and fair to explicitly link content and outcomes to the cultures of the participants.

Since having 45 students in a class is the norm in public schools in Thailand, there is a propensity for teaching to center around the teacher—a pedagogical style which diminishes interactive learning. Thai students have little or no opportunity to express themselves openly, rather they have to follow what teachers say or instruct them to do. Students' individuality, initiative, and creativity expressed through critical, constructive questioning are not generally welcomed by the teacher and are often regarded as offensive. Students have little opportunity to become involved in extra-curricular activities which would otherwise allow them to appreciate and adopt some desirable social values and attitudes. Values such as internationalization, democracy, the environment, leadership, and service are ignored by the overwhelming majority of teachers. There is a desperate need for practical and workable approaches in Thailand that will educate the whole person and foster active, responsible, and compassionate citizens.

LITERACY AND CULTURE

Ethnic diversity, of and by its very nature, directs attention to the role of culture in the individual's interaction with the social world. Heller (1987) provides a useful perspective on the type of culture that distinguishes an ethnic group:

> For members of an ethnic unit, shared experience forms the basis of a shared way of looking at the world; through interaction they jointly construct ways of making sense of experience. The ways of making sense out of experience, the beliefs, assumptions, and expectations about the world and how they work underlie what we think of as culture.

Culture includes both specific behavioral characteristics typifying a group and the underlying views of social reality that guide those complex behaviors. Cultural behaviors are referenced as the way in which a group perceives its social environment. These definitions of culture suggest that an individual's view of social reality is mediated or negotiated by collective representations of that reality.

In a multicultural society moving toward homogeneity, it is common to think of literacy in terms of specific skills and activities. Given a broad multicultural consensus on the definition of literacy, alternative constructs are either remote or not conceptualized, so literacy becomes a self-evident personal attribute either present or absent. In such a multicultural environment, literacy is experienced as a characteristic inherent in the individual. Once individuals acquire the requisite literacy skills, they also acquire the quality of mind known as critical literacy, together with the right to be labeled as literate.

Judgments about a person's degree of literacy are not dependent on the situation. Because there is wide agreement on what constitutes literacy, people carry the subjective cultural label regardless of whether or not they continue to demonstrate the behaviors that first earned them the designation.

In a multicultural and multiethnic context, however, the cultural framing of literacy becomes easier to see. Being literate has always referred to having mastery over the processes by means of which culturally significant information is coded. Accordingly, literacy does not consist of a universally defined set of skills constant across the spectrum of time and place. Since cultures differ in the values they attach to cultural texts, they will also differ in literate behavior. Di Gropello (2006) speaks about how the domains of literacy in schools in Thailand have shifted historically from views that until the last three decades emphasized the moral, religious, and civil aspects of literacy instruction to more current views that emphasize functionality, basic skills, and measurability.

An illiterate person is someone who cannot access textual frames that are perceived as significant within a given culture. That same person, in another cultural context, may be classified as being literate. When a number of cultures co-exist within the same social construct, it is more likely that society will produce variant conceptions of what constitutes being literate, for culture exists as a product of social interaction and organization. Chomsky (1989) notes that being literate involves

mastery of conventional experience and common knowledge. These concepts form an unwritten textual contract which determines what will be construed as literacy by a particular group or community at a given point in time. In becoming literate, an individual must master, in addition to a set of defined skills, all the cultural information involved in decoding and producing textual frames of reference for comprehending their contents.

Social and cultural control of society is tied directly to the manner in which knowledge is presented in the educational environment.

> Schools in Thailand, acting as agents of the culture, control the extent to which personal knowledge may enter into the public knowledge of the school curriculum. In selecting what to teach and how it is to be taught and evaluated, schools reaffirm what Thai culture values as knowledge (ONEC, 2002-a).

Since educational institutions in Thailand are agents of culture, minority communities must walk a fine line in advocating equal considerations for all cultures as a common practice for moral justification. International schools in Thailand tend to see reading and creative writing by students as a valued activity. National schools may be uncomfortable with these activities because students are encouraged to learn by rote rather than to produce original work.

The environment of the school and its agents—administrators, teachers, textbook writers, and editors—has, in turn, shaped these preferences. Whether these cultural messages are congruent depends in part on the degree of cultural heterogeneity represented by the agents of education.

In promoting literacy, Thai schools vary in the degree to which the cultural views of ethnic groups are incorporated. To the extent that schools reflect the majority culture, students from the dominant ethnic group in Thailand are more likely than are ethnic minority students to find consistency between the various constructs of literacy. In either case, because literacy education tends to be left primarily to the school, children become literate in the cultural image represented by their school. In the case of minority group members, however, the process may be fraught with problems depending on the extent to which the group's standards of cultural significance differ from the norms of the dominant group.

CULTURAL IDENTITY

The present analysis focuses on cultural identity as an aspect of ethnicity in a multicultural, multiethnic society. This emphasis is not meant to suggest that other social considerations—gender, race, and class—do not play an important role in linking individuals to groups and, therefore, in helping to form people's identities and conceptualizations of a multicultural world. Indeed, arguments similar to those presented in this paper could be constructed linking literacy to other complex societal components. Krug (1996) identifies the issue as one in which the, "out-group members are too far removed from the context in which distinctive in-group cultural

patterns are displayed. In-group members, on the other hand, are often too close to their own culture to be able to see it."

Cultural identity is an abstract principle which can help to generate these links. By its very nature, culture is meaningful only with reference to the group, yet it is enacted by individuals. Society must clarify what is meant by cultural identity to understand its interaction with literacy.

GROUP LEVEL

An ethnic group's cultural identity involves a shared sense of the features that help to define and characterize the group. Multicultural attributes are important not just for their functional values, but also as symbols. Vygotsky (1978) explains that as children become cognizant of their environment, they use symbols to code, organize, and internalize all sensory information as new knowledge. On the adult level, for many illegal aliens in Thailand as well as the indigenous inhabitants of the Muslim provinces in the Deep South, the Thai language is not just a means of communication, it is seen to repress their cultural identification and accentuate their differences.

Kochman (1997) makes a distinction between emblematic and non-emblematic ethnic indicators. "Emblematic indicators are those racial and cultural features that serve an identity function or otherwise mark and maintain social boundaries," between the in-group and the out-group. These are the features that in-group and out-group members tend to think of as ethnic identities. Non-emblematic indicators are those cultural patterns that do not serve such functions and of which the behavior of the in-group and out-group members are not otherwise generally linked to the group.

Cultural identity at the group level involves features that are perceived as emblematic by the in-group. While outsiders may consider particular features as characteristic of most group members, these features do not necessarily form part of the group's collective cultural identity unless the in-group has internalized this point of view.

Smolicz (1991) asserts that "whenever people feel that there is a direct link between their identity as a group and what they regard as the most crucial and distinguishing element of their culture, the element concerned becomes a core value." Maintenance of the native language may function as a core value for some groups, for others the centralities of family or religious life may assume this role. Ethnic minority language communities are frequently marginalized from the main stream of their nation's social, economic, and political institutions. If nothing is done to ameliorate the plight of endangered linguistic species, 90 percent of the world's 6,000 living languages—one-third of which are in Asia—will become extinct over the next one hundred years.

Cultural Identity and Critical Literacy

Critical literacy is a culturally defined construct; therefore, it follows that it should have close links to cultural identity. At the social level, literacy education involves not just the imparting of particular skills, but also the transmission of values which show how literacy programs are carried out in the context of particular social agendas.

> If critical literacy campaigns are seen as attempts to forge or to impose a common cultural tradition, and secondarily as attempts to disseminate competence at reading and writing, then society ought to reconsider the current crises not as failures in the mass transmission of reading and writing but as failures of a far more fundamental kind, failures in the perpetuation of a desired socio-cultural tradition (De Castell and Luke, 1987).

In that cultural symbols can affect the behavior of individuals suggests that the process of becoming and being literate is negotiable. When misunderstandings occur in the learning process as a result of definition and an individual's cultural identity, the individual is confronted with making a negotiated choice that has implications for the acquisition of reading and writing skills, as well as for the individual's relationship to particular texts and the symbols they contain. Minority students must either adopt the cultural perspective of the educational institution they are attending at the risk of diminishing their cultural identity, or else resist externally imposed activities and definitions which foster alienation from the dominant culture. For majority children, the educational institution's perspective is likely to replicate their cultural identity. Clearly this is less likely for members of ethnic minorities.

Giroux (1987) points out how people's "memories, narratives, and readings are inextricably related to wider social and cultural formations." In the context of literacy education, when students perceive a text and its symbolic contents as belonging to and reaffirming their cultural identity, it is likely that they will become challenged and meaning will be transmitted or derived. In multicultural societies, people wishing to acculturate are more likely to engage in activities that will help them to acquire competency in the native-language of the dominant group.

Cultural identity negotiates the process of becoming literate as well as the types of literate behavior a person subsequently develops. It is possible to formulate critical questions as a guide to explore future thinking and research on cultural identity and whether an individual becomes literate as a result of schooling:

- How is literacy defined in the individual's group, and what is its significance?
- How do texts address cultural identity?
- What subtle messages does a curriculum communicate about the value of the learner's culture?
- What relationship does the learner perceive between the tasks assigned in school and his or her cultural identity?
- Must the learner completely alter or modify the nature of his or her self-concept in order to do what is asked?

Critical attention to these questions by politicians, educators, and parents may help society to better understand how the meaning of literacy for individuals is influenced by their sense of self as cultural beings. In turn, such understanding should better serve members of a multicultural society as they acquire literacy.

The most critical points facing educators and parents are how to acknowledge students' cultural identity and consider them in planning the curriculum so that society can consciously provide more effective literacy education. Before one can educate children, one must think carefully about one's own values, beliefs, and attitudes regarding ethnic diversity as well as one's experiences of cultural awareness.

Avoiding stereotyping and over-generalization does not mean avoiding the social constructs of the realities of culture. The classroom should exist to encourage students to explore the ramifications of their ethnicities. Consciously and positively linking educational activities to the students' cultural identity is a way of motivating students. Educators can provide a range of literacy experiences and explicitly integrate students into cultural involvement and understanding. Literacy can take instruction to a more effective level of awareness by permitting and encouraging instructional acknowledgement of the different cultural influences on students.

CONCLUSION

This paper has argued for education within a multicultural milieu and has demonstrated how cultural diversity plays a critical role in influencing the relationship of literacy and the individual. The perception of people in relation to their ethnic group and to society as a whole can be changed by the process of becoming and being literate. Advocates of extending literacy to all members of society might well incorporate the view that minorities are cultural beings. If this can be done consciously, perhaps more sensitivities and articulated models of literacy acquisition can be developed that will better take into account the social context in which literacy is defined and expressed. When majority and minority students are supported in the development of clear and strong cultural identities, excessive uniformity at the individual level and the divisiveness at the group level are diminished. In such a democratic environment, literacy can become a harmonious universal characteristic that benefits all elements of the human stain.

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Paper 2 Maintaining Harmony in Online Chats

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Abstract

With the advent of the electronic media into mainstream communication, one of the developments taking place within the Internet environment has been a shift from face-to-face communication to online chats. Shortis (2001: 92) called this genre "interactive written discourse". This discourse or real-time chat, sometimes referred to as 'instant messaging', is synchronous and offers users the ability to communicate with each other instantly. Although similar to face-to-face talk in terms of spontaneity of response, online chats lack many of the physical cues found in face-to-face communication. This paper examines the nature of coping strategies among undergraduates in maintaining and sustaining harmony in online chats at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Coping strategies adopted in maintaining a harmonious environment in online chats are analysed and the motivations of such adoption of strategies are also investigated. The findings have implications on the development of online communication skills among undergraduates as online chat sessions, once regarded as a simple social communication device, have now gained a significant position particularly in universities, where most undergraduates are known to spend a large part of their time, both formally and informally, in online communication.

INTRODUCTION

One substantial impact of the Internet on the 21st century literacy practices in education is that academic and non-academic discourse amongst students of higher learning have not only moved from face-to-face interaction to online modes but also, the preferred online communication channel has shifted from e-mail and discussion groups to online conversations, commonly referred to as online chats. Shortis (2001: 92) called this genre "interactive written discourse". Almeida d'Eça (2002) included the verbal component in her definition of chat. To her, online chat is a two-way form of computer-mediated communication (CMC), a dialogue in real time as we keyboard or speak our words, an online conversation between two or more people. Unlike e-mails and discussion groups, this "written talk" is synchronous communication in real time. Although almost similar to face-to-face conversation, written chat lacks many of the physical cues found in real conversation.

ONLINE COPING STRATEGIES

The absence of physical cues in online chats can sometimes lead to disharmony in communication because much of the information obtained in face-to-face interaction such as body language, tone of voice and gestures are absent. It is interesting that interactants tend to adopt discernible ways of coping with online chat

discourse which are similar though at times markedly distinct from those adopted in face-to-face interaction due to media differences.

Coping strategies, in general, refer to specific efforts, both behavioral and psychological, that people employ to master, tolerate, reduce, or minimize stressful events (Donovan & MacArthur, 1999). Two general coping strategies have been distinguished: problem-solving strategies are efforts to do something active to alleviate stressful circumstances, whereas emotion-focused coping strategies involve efforts to regulate the emotional consequences of stressful or potentially stressful events (Folkman & Lazarus, 1980).

Whilst the general objectives of both problem-solving and emotion-focused types of strategies are applicable and relevant to online chats, it is not the intention of this paper to categorize the strategies into these two types. This paper focuses on the description of the coping strategies adopted by interactants to sustain conversation if and when there is disharmony in online chats and, the motivation that drives them to do so. Disharmony, in this context, refers to a situation where communication becomes less smooth, uncertain, uncomfortable, or when there is a brief halt or break in communication, usually the result of one interactant failing to respond to the other interactant immediately or appropriately.

METHODOLOGY

Seventy six undergraduates from the Faculty of Language Studies and Faculty of Education volunteered as participants in the research. Permission was sought from them to have their conversations analysed. All efforts were taken to ascertain the confidentiality of the participants for example, through the use of pseudonyms of their choice, which manifested as logon names when they appeared online. The identity of the participants were only known to the researcher and not to the participants. The participants therefore did not know exactly whom they were chatting with but were only aware that the interactants are university students.

Chat can work in three modes; text, audio and video. This research looked at the textual mode. The software mIRC was used as a medium to facilitate the collection of the typed out chats. By using an IRC programme such as the mIRC (an internet relay chat client developed by Khaled Mardam-Bey) text messages can be exchanged interactively with other people. What usually happens is an interactant enters a channel and joins the conversation in real time, sending named contributions which are inserted into a permanently scrolling screen. Internet Relay Chat (IRC) is one of the most popular interactive services on the Internet. This software provided the users a friendly interface for use with the IRC networks.

Three multimedia labs at the Faculty of Language Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia were the location for data collection. To ensure anonymity of participants, three different labs were used for concurrent chatting across the labs. Participants are paired up randomly for a two-way chat. This simulates chatting with strangers as the participants would not know those with whom they were chatting to. The procedure in setting up the computers in the respective laboratories entailed the installation of the mIRC software in all the computers and the configuration of the

mIRC. Administration of data collection procedure included a short briefing to the participants on how to go about chatting online. All the data for this procedure were downloaded after the participants finished talking.

The corpus of 38 chats was 'captured' and downloaded in ascii format or .txt format. However, only 18 chats were deemed to have features of coping strategies.

FINDINGS

Generally, 'disharmony' in the online chats was largely 'softened up' with the use of online coping strategies. The most prevalent coping strategies identified were strategies that were similar to face-to-face conversation such as language and communication strategies such as checking, rephrasing, abandoning followed by topic change, reinitiating, and delayed responses and those that were more electronically inclined such as the use of emoticons, avatars, abbreviations and code-switching.

COPING STRATEGIES

I. The use of harmonizing agents

a) Use of Emoticons

Emoticons are definitely an important aspect of online communication as it conveys the emotional cues of the message. It is a short sequence of keyboard letters and symbols, usually emulating a facial expression. Whilst informational text and content is important, emoticons, which are sometimes amusing and at times meaningful, complements and enriches a text message.

In the data, emoticons were generally used sparingly but with a purpose. Postings on online chats are for most of the time taken literally, so it is sometimes hard to detect non-literal meanings such as irony or sarcasm particularly, when the chat is among apparent strangers as in Example 1 below.

Example 1

<buddy>Anway w is ur father working
<girlypink> in the great KTM... u neo wat he gets very angry if we kutuk aboiut train ... he will start his lecture ...
→ <buddy> wait till ur father hear u kutuk im ah... :-p
<girlypink> wat does that suppose to mean?
→ <buddy> :-p , :-p
<girlypink> ok bro

It appeared that it was not the intention of 'buddy' to be sarcastic or the least, to be threatening, it was just a friendly, harmless comment. The emoticon :-p (emoticon with tongue sticking out) was reiterated three times to 'soften' his message.

Emoticons lend themselves to interpretation and can sometimes be ambiguous. For example, emoticons can pose as an alternative when users do not want to commit to an answer. In Example 2 below, the emoticon :-) can be interpreted as non-committal. 'King Undead' evaded the question or statement by choosing not to submit an answer but by using an emoticon :-). However, in Example 3, the emoticon :-) appeared to indicate agreement.

Example 2	<King Undead>btw, dun make ur chat sound like q & a
→	too much lar
	<Obiwan> Dun like to be asked questions?
	<King Undead> :-)
	<Obiwan> Yes?

Example 3	
001	<sheepoh> But now very sian. Luckily someone
→002	is online
	<twiggy> :-)
003	<twiggy> I can help meh
→004	<sheepoh> You are now
005	<twiggy> :-)

In Example 4, the emoticon :-b seemed to suggest that Darth Vader is joking with sexypink.

Example 4	<Darth Vader>where r u?
	<sexypink> planet hollywood
	<Darth Vader> ???
→	<sexypink> Really, tot u in another lab? Can online from there meh?
	<Darth Vader> I'm in the lab lah, :-b

b) Use of avatars

In this study, the participants or interactants were allowed to choose their own pseudonyms, also known as 'avatars' in the virtual world. An avatar has a special meaning as a symbol of identity in the virtual community (Suler, 1999). Avatars can be expressed not only by graphic images, but also by writing style, repeated use of name and self-description. Jordan (1999) notes that an avatar conveys a stable cyberspace identity and it is through them that users come to recognize their own online personality as well as those of others. Users of IRC tend not to use their real names (Reid, 1991; Danet et al., 1997; Suler, 1999) because the purpose of using an

avatar is to build an identity and to disclose oneself. An avatar can free a person from shyness and allows them to interact more openly and honestly.

From the data, females tend to choose what's slender, slim, sexy while males opted for what's more manly, macho and muscular. There is an injected air of mystery in their choice of avatars. The choice of the IRC avatars generally has imaginary and unearthly characteristics. Some of them with such characteristics are, the females used avatars such as 'girliepink, sexypinkl, twiggy, apple pie' while their male counterparts used avatars such as macho, obiwan, King Undead, Darth Vader, Calif, Cornelius, Dizzy duck, Vladi and Sheepoh. Those that are seemingly genderless are such as unokanini, ukaylele, wekmas and ewbanu. With the exception of dizzy duck and sheepoh, the rest sounds truly fictitious and out of this world.

Recently, with the development of graphical interface on the internet, chatters are even willing to pay a large sum of money to take on an avatar as their agents in a virtual community. The significance of a virtual identity encompassed in an avatar certainly promises new and exciting developments in the virtual world.

c) Use of Abbreviations (Malaysian English features)

The pace of communicative exchange in an online environment is rapid, especially among those who are "veteran" users in an IRC channel. The tendency toward the use of reduced forms may reflect the importance of minimizing the effort required to communicate one's message in terms of economy of space and time.

Two categories of abbreviation were discernible from the data; Graphemic and Graphonemic abbreviations. Graphemic abbreviations are abbreviations which are found only in paper but when it is spoken, it will be pronounced according to the base form and conventional pronunciation. For example, BTW is not pronounced as 'bee-tee-dabble-u but as the conventional base form, 'by the way'. Graphonemic abbreviations are abbreviations that are used in written and spoken language and can be placed on a phonemic level (for example GATT is pronounced as 'get')

There are some regularity in the use of abbreviation among Malaysian speakers, part of the abbreviations are derived from Malaysian English features, shortening standard words in English to abbreviations with Malaysian English features according to Malaysian English pronunciation and lexicon particularly, in the reduction of vowels and diphthongs. Table below illustrates some of the abbreviations used that are typically Malaysian.

Table 1: List of abbreviations with Malaysian English features

Abbreviations (Malaysian English features)	**Meaning**
dowan	don't want
edi/edy	already
oni	only
dono	don't know

oso	also
da	that
nw	now
n2m	not too much
wit	with
din	didn't
tot	thought

The use of abbreviations that reflect the Malaysian English pronunciation creates a sense of belonging, solidarity and harmony in the internet chats. This creates a comfort zone for interactants as they can recognize features of Malaysian English and it would appear that interactants will feel more comfortable chatting with their fellow countryman even if it's online.

d) Face-to-face related strategies

i. **Code Switching**

Code switching is the use of more than one language or variety of language in the course of a single discourse (Nwoye, 1993). Switching between Malay and English or dialects is a prevalent phenomenon in Malaysia. To Asmah (1992) code-switching is a form of strategy in getting their message across to others. Likewise in an online environment, this strategy prevails. Some of the examples of code switching are as illustrated below:

Example 5

<Guardian Angel> Weeiiiiii Korang !!!!
<Macho> Hallluu there
<Macho> Nampaknya bkn main GEMPAK lagi our chatting ni … he!he!
→ <Guardian Angel> Hey, who are you?
<Macho>I'm someone you want to meet …

Example 6

<Dizzy Duck> dunno where to start
<Sheepoh> Amacam kalau bagi salam dulu
<Dizzy Duck> Hi, hello, can you tell me something about yourself
<Sheepoh> Hey, I'm a fssk student, a heart breaker
<Dizzy Duck> out of this world, reaaly! what to say lah

Example 7

<Calif> hey ini mlm u pree ka
<Cornelius> so… who wants to know
→ <Calif> me
<Cornelius> ya y
<Calif> Tanya aje
→ <Cornelius> Too free lah u

<Calif> Sorry ya

ii) Checking, rephrasing, reinitiating and topic change

To ensure that the chat continues smoothly, coping strategies such as checking, rephrasing, reinitiating were used. Topic change was used as an avoidance strategy when the chat becomes uncomfortable. The examples for the respective strategies are illustrated below.

a. Checking

Most of the checkings as a coping strategy to maintain talk were expressed in a direct manner. The function of checking was to verify information expressed previously.

Other instances where lexical item 'what' was not used also tends to check for information, or whether the other party was still online. See examples below:

Example 8

<unokanini4> r u still here

Example 9

<unokanini4> hey hey hey!

Example 10

<unokanini4> halo room

Example 11

<unokanini5> hello, please reply!!!!!!!.

ii. Rephrasing

As a coping strategy, rephrasing rarely occurred in online conversation. There were only two instances out of the whole data collected. Their occurrences usually emphasized a point made. They could exist in the form of a statement or in the interrogative structure.

Example 12

<wekmas2> what your hobby
→ <ewbanu2> what do u like to do as a hobby?

Example 13

<ewbanu4> are you a women in heart?
<wekmas4> what u think?
<ewbanu4> if you are a guy also ok.
<ewbanu4> can have a women heart
<ewbanu4> can have a women heart too!!
<wekmas4> How about u.
<ewbanu4> come on!!!!
<ewbanu4> speeed up
<wekmas4> I don't get u.
<wekmas4> What u meant.

→ <ewbanu4> i like women talk

In these instances, the interactants either corrected his or her own words (Example 13) or those of the other party's words (Example 12) which, according to Cook (1990: 55) edged the conversaton "towards a situation in which maximum communication is achieved". Cook also called these types of events 'repairs'.

iii. Reinitiating

Throughout the data, both parties seemed to agree to reinitiate the conversation when it occurred. In other words, the reinitiating done by the first party was echoed by the other party (see examples 14 - 19). One of the possible reasons for resorting to this strategy could be triggered by technicalities such as a sluggish server.

Example 14

<unokanini2> Hey we have to start all over again!
<unokanini2> How are you doing over there? hello,.
hello- come in..

It could also be due to their eagerness to continue the conversation or the slow response of one party causing the other party to reinitiate.

Example 15

<unokanini2> HUH?? what's 'm'und'???
<ukalayle2> hey say something lah you are so slow lah you wet blanket

Sometimes the reinitiating takes the form of a topic change

Example 16

<ukalayle3> Lets talk about song..can we?
<unokanini3> I AM GOING back to meet my boyfriend

Example 17

<ewbanu2> i like to listen to music, and read...
<ewbanu2> how bout u?
<wekmas2> can u ask me something?

Example 18

<ewbanu5> girl
<wekmas5> what do you want to talk about

At times reinitiating took the form of a negotiation of a topic change.

Example 19

<zilofon2> nolar, i'm not sleepy now b'coz i'm chatting
with you ma
<oxadus2> soo...besides sleep...what else do u do?

And when the same person <wekmas5> (Example 20) perceived no reply from the other party, he or she might reinitiate.

Example 20

<wekmas5> you re too slow tortoise
<wekmas5> are you a guy or a girl

CONCLUSION

Online chat is an emergent register, and we should not deny nor prevent the younger generation of using this mode of communication. What we could do, as academics, is to exploit the interest of higher education students in internet chats and develop this interest into something that is more useful and beneficial. Aspects of English language learning such as developing socialization or social skills such as greeting others, introducing yourself and leave taking can be built in online chats besides teaching communicative, language and technological skills.

Research into online chats is in itself intriguing, particularly when it involves strategies on maintaining a harmonious environment for cyber conversation to take off smoothly. Creating harmony in online chats through the use of online coping strategies helps to create solidarity, thus encouraging more interaction and communication between and amongst students.

The findings of this research have implications on the development of online communication skills among undergraduates as online chat sessions, once regarded as a simple social communication device, have now gained a significant position particularly in universities, where most undergraduates are known to spend a large amount of their time, both formally and informally, in online communication. However, given the nature of informality of online chats, it is imperative that students should know where to draw the line between formal writing and conversational writing (Almeida d'Eça, 2002).

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Paper 3 **An Analysis of Questionable Western Models of Higher Education and their Adoption in Thailand"**

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Abstract

My presentation will represent a study of the ways in which people are being educated here in Thailand, particularly at the undergraduate and graduate level. My main thesis argument is that Western ways of approaching different areas of studies are being adopted "wholesale" without proper reflection upon the veracity and usefulness of these methods. In fact, sometimes these Western methods and ideas contain fallacies in basic common sense logic which, at the very least, should render them as non-authoritative. Non Western countries could add more to Academia by taking Western models and adding their own particular innovations instead of assuming that the Western ideas are authoritative.

Introduction

This paper basically consists of three parts; however, they do not necessarily always unfold in a neat order, nor are they entirely discrete. One portion of this paper will attempt to pinpoint certain negative tendencies within Western Academia; another section will explicate the various manifestations of these tendencies; and finally, a third section will offer some specific examples of the harmful effect of these negative tendencies on student bodies, with a particular focus on incidents at Mahidol University in Thailand, the university at which I am currently stationed.

Now, here, I would like to begin by qualifying the term "Western." This categorization has been used here for lack of a better term, and also because the model of Higher Education that is currently dominant in the world seems to have arisen primarily in Europe and North America. However, this model is now being used elsewhere, and also, there are many variations on this model that the term "Western" is attempting to capture. Thus, this term should be considered to be more of a working attempt to define particular tendencies within modern day institutions of Higher Education rather than as an absolute definition or an attempt to pinpoint a certain geographical area as being at cause for the flaws within the Academy.

Although the Western model has many good things to offer, such as an emphasis on precision and rigor, the weak points that I am attempting to bring to light here primarily center around the following three assertions – a) many Western institutions are profit-oriented, or, at the very least, concentrated upon self-perpetuation or a perpetuation of their ideas; b) many of their ideas arise within the spirit of competition for intellectual dominance and thus self-promotion, and this kind of overly competitive atmosphere actually runs counter to a search for some kind of "truth" concerning one's field, as one's actions begin to be motivated by the wrong sorts of things; c) much of the ideological debates, especially within the Humanities

and Social Sciences, center around a hidden agenda which has to do with a strong desire to prove that their methods are also within the realm of science.

Now, before commencing my arguments, I should openly acknowledge that I will not be able to prove all of my assertions with 100% certainty here for a number of reasons. First of all, this paper is far too short to elaborate upon all of my ideas in detail. Second of all, even if I were to write 1000 pages, I would never be able to prove something so subtle and difficult to ascertain as egocentrism within an institution or an individual. That being said, I have tried to use a method of approach that resembles inductive reasoning. In other words, I have based all of my generalizations upon specific examples that I have observed within the various Academic settings in which I have participated. Since I have worked at a number of institutions in three different countries – Canada, the US and Thailand – I have a fairly good sampling universities and colleges under my belt. In addition, although I have not, as of yet, done a stint in Europe, many of my colleagues have been Europeans, so I have had some exposure the European methods of education in an indirect fashion. Yet, this being said, my central motivation here actually does not stem from a desire to prove all of my assertions with 100% surety; rather, it stems from the fact that I see certain negative tendencies within Western Academia as affecting the world in a deleterious fashion. If certain weaknesses with Western Academia are pointed out, this may serve to stimulate thinking and eventually lead to a much needed reform of Academia. Thus, even though this essay is highly critical, it will hopefully have a certain constructive effect.

Example 1: Jargon and the Accepted Divisions within Institutions of Higher Learning

My first example of questionable methods within Western models of Academia concerns the use of jargon, and the detrimental effect of this phenomenon on the education process. Now, jargon is often remarked upon as a growing problem within Higher Education, yet the term itself is not usually defined clearly. Thus, I would like to offer a clear definition before I embark upon a critique of this phenomenon and its subsequent effect upon students.

Here, the idea of *jargon* will be defined in distinction to the notion of a *technical term*. The idea of jargon will be given a particularly negative connotation, whereas the idea of a technical term will be given a neutral connotation. However, the labels that I am using here are not of central importance; rather it is the phenomenon which they are attempting to describe that is significant. The use of jargon is characterized by the desire to exclude others whereas the use of technical terms is not done with this motivation; in contrast, technical terms are developed to fill a certain need. Usually, technical terms are developed because there is not a word within the particular language which fits the exact idea that is being represented by the technical term: thus there is a clear need for another word or a new definition for an already existing word. Also, technical terms, particularly in sciences such as Physics and Chemistry etc., usually often require years of solid training to understand, and thus, they tend to represent real notions (such as mitochondria, nucleus, electron etc.) that are just not accessible by commonly known vocabulary, as words are necessarily based upon some body of preconceived knowledge.

In contrast to technical terms, jargon-like words (and/or phrases) do *not* fill a real linguistic need. In other words, their meaning is not dichotomous enough with a previously existing word to justify the creation of a whole other word, nor are the definitions of jargon-like words truly dichotomous enough with previous, accepted definitions of an existing word in order to justify the creation of a whole other meaning. Thus, what I am trying to say here is that – jargon is not marked by any true addition to the existing body of knowledge in a particular language as it adds no real, additional concept. *If this statement is true, then the use of jargon has no educational benefit*, and thus the motivation behind its use must be brought into question.

In addition, jargon is marked by a certain vagueness or inexactness. Hence, those who use it have trouble defining its use in contradistinction to the use of another word because there is not really such a true distinction being made. This often has a negative effect upon those who are on the receiving end of jargon. For example, when speeches or papers are written in jargon, one usually leaves feeling as if there have been a lot of words spoken but no clear meaning communicated: it's almost like eating a huge meal that has no nutritional content. Also, jargon tends to be characterized by a kind of mental laziness: it sometimes appears as if the person who is using jargon does not want to take the time to think and express themselves exactly, and thus, settles for a vague approximation.

As is clear from my basic definitions, I am making the judgment here that jargon primarily represents a desire to exclude other people. By excluding others, Academics are actively promoting their status as an elite group with some particular, unattainable knowledge, and this status helps to ensure the perpetuation of Academia. After all, if a group of people can make a certain technical vocabulary their own province, and also prove that their field is essential to society, this is a way of ensuring continued employment, is it not? Now, perhaps these sorts of judgments could be brought into question. After all, certainly, all Academics do not have exactly the same motivations. Nevertheless, when one considers the fact that each Academic field and subfield now has its own jargon (or technical terms), and that this tendency is on the increase rather than the decrease, I feel that, at the very least, it is fair to question the motivation behind such a phenomenon.

I have noticed a rampant tendency to use jargon here during my tenure in Thailand, as well as in my stints in Canada and the US. My conclusions concerning Thailand in particular have been drawn primarily from my experience at Mahidol University; however, I have also had conversations with students and faculty from other Thai universities, such as Thammasat and Chulalonghorn. Part of my job here at Mahidol is to instruct thesis writing courses for graduate students and the other major portion of my job involves editing abstracts from a variety of departments within graduate studies. Prior to this year, I also spent a year working at Mahidol's College of Religious Studies.

In the abstracts which I have reviewed, there is so much jargon and vague English that the task of editing is almost monumental, and it is quite frustrating. One hypothesis that I have developed is that the students, being non-native speakers, are not sure enough of their English to distinguish jargon and vague wording from clear, precise English. Sometimes, in contemplating this problem, I often feel that the students are being unfairly treated, as the learning of jargon really cannot be a

substitute for the absorption of a real technical term, nor can it be a substitute for truly learning how to express oneself in English in a clear fashion. After all, it is much tougher for non-native speakers of English to distinguish between clear, concise English and jargon, and thus, they are more easily fooled than native speakers. *This puts students in Thailand and other non-English-speaking countries at an unfair disadvantage when it comes to weeding out jargon.*

Here, let me offer two brief examples of jargon-like terms that are used frequently by students here at Mahidol: a) "psychological self-care behavior"; b) "complex multidimensional form of human behavior". When I questioned the students on these terms, they could not explain them clearly. Yet, they insisted that, since they were quoted from articles written in the West, they should be considered as legitimate expressions in the English language. Now, it could be that these terms are indeed technical terms in a specific field, as the students claimed, or, it could be that they are closer to jargon. But, the most important thing here is that, in analyzing these terms, we have to put them to certain tests in order to be intelligent consumers of Academic products. First of all, does a term like "complex multidimensional form of human behavior" offer a clear description of any phenomenon; secondly, how is the creation of such a term adding to the current body of knowledge in English about the subject; and thirdly, are there other words which already exist in the English language that could explain this concept, thus negating the need for the term. Furthermore, does a term like "psychological self-care behavior" even make basic sense? Words like "behavior" and "psychological" seem inherently contradictory, in that behavior is usually physical and observable whereas the psyche is not. If this term is attempting to bring into question the dichotomy between physical behavior and psychological phenomena, then this should be clearly expressed.

When one examines this phenomenon of jargon, it may be important to ask the question as to "why" this is an issue at all. To answer this question, one needs to look at the basic structure of most of the universities and colleges in the West. If one looks through the literature and websites of most Western universities, the curriculum is usually divided up into certain "fields" of study, usually called "departments." These fields are often divided up further into smaller categories called "subfields." Also, larger categories such as Human Sciences (or Humanities), Social Sciences, Natural or Physical Sciences, Applied Sciences and Fine Arts etc. tend to house departments or disciplines that have been deemed to be similar in method and approach. For example, Religion, Literature and Philosophy etc. departments are usually grouped under the Human Sciences; Anthropology, Economics, Sociology, Political Science etc. departments are usually grouped under Social Sciences; Biology, Physics, Chemistry etc. departments are usually grouped under the Natural Sciences (or some similar appellation).

Now, what has happened in the West is that the creation of all these categories has produced a need within each department to justify or explain itself as an entity that exists separate from the other disciplines. This is somewhat understandable from a practical standpoint, as battles over funding for research projects, faculty additions etc. can be based upon such justifications. It is also somewhat understandable from a psychological standpoint, as any professor who is reflective will most certainly ask the question as to why these different departments even exist as discrete units. Thus, in response to certain psychological needs as well as to certain economic ones,

countless articles and books have been written on the scope, content and limits of the various fields of Academia, such as Religious Studies, Philosophy, Anthropology etc. And, each year, the literature within each field becomes larger and larger, as does the list of "technical terms" associated with each field. Thus, subfields are created and then even fields within subfields, and it seems uncertain when this process will end. We can also see this division into smaller and smaller fields within other areas like Medicine and Law. This is the current state of affairs within Academic life in most Western countries.

In addition, there is an additional important issue to consider: judging from their literature, most Social Science and Humanities departments seem intent upon marketing their method of approach as scientific. Even those who do not overtly assert this end up advocating it in a subtle way by the mere fact that their style of writing has the same disinterested tenor of more scientific pieces of writing. And, as far as I can tell from my work with abstracts, this style has been imitated by students from all of the graduate departments at Mahidol University. Yet, their style is often so dispassionate that they go even further than their Western counterparts and offer little in terms of substantial thesis arguments or real ideas of their own. This is a whole other issue that I will not explore in-depth, at least in this paper, but the phenomenon is still significant enough to be worthy of mention.

Example 2: Social Sciences as "Science"

I am offering a number of courses at Mahidol University for graduate students who are working on their Academic writing and reading skills. Recently, one group of students asked me to help them with a number of articles on Social Science research methods. Even though my primary field is Religious Studies, which makes my work more closely allied to the Humanities than to the Social Sciences, I agreed to undertake the task.

In preparing for my lectures, I focused particularly on one of the articles given to me from W. Lawrence Neumann's *Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. One chapter within this book concentrated upon the "method of inquiry" within the Social Sciences, and outlined three basic approaches: "positivist social science", "interpretive social science", and "critical social science" (Neuman, 79). This chapter contained a very detailed analysis of the philosophical underpinnings of each approach, with a particular emphasis upon how each of them could be considered scientific, especially if one were to expand the "positivist" definition of science that is prevalent in "hard" sciences, such as physics, biology, chemistry etc.

Now, although this theoretical discussion was interesting in a certain way and it brought up a valid point concerning the possibility for defining "the scientific" in different ways, there was something left unstated that is very central to the argument: namely, what could be the motivation behind such assertions? More specifically, why would it be in the interest of "Social Scientists" to argue in such a way? In this particular chapter that I read, one could often sense a strong desire to prove that social science is indeed scientific. This conclusion comes from the following three observations – a) first of all, all of the three major methods of social science research

were labeled as scientific; b) secondly, not once were the authors' motivations for writing the chapter discussed in a frank and open manner; c) thirdly, not once was a counter-argument explored such as, for example, the possibility that some or all Social Science methods are indeed not scientific.

These three observations aroused my curiosity, so I went back and checked the introductory chapters of Neuman's work. Chapter 1 was particularly telling. In chapter 1, Neuman defines "social research" as scientific and as the kind of research that social scientists do, and then distinguishes scientific methods from such alternative ways of knowing, such as – authority, tradition, common sense, media myths and personal experience (Neuman, 2-6).

"Social research (is) a collection of methods and methodologies that researchers apply systematically to produce scientifically based knowledge about the social world....
In addition to being a collection of methods, social research is a process for producing knowledge. It is a more structured, organized and systematic process than the alternatives. Knowledge from the alternatives is often correct, but knowledge based on research is more likely to be true and has fewer errors" (Neuman, 2).

Thus, the message of Neuman's book is that scientific methods of knowing are superior to the other ways of knowing, such as experience, common sense or authority etc. Now, if we see the role of scholars in a university as one of questioning all dogmatic assertions (as I do), then it would make sense for us to question this assertion too. So, when I read this, I asked myself two questions that I felt were central. First of all, why would it be so essential for Social "Scientists" to convince *others* that they are, indeed, scientific? And, why is it so important to think of *themselves* as scientific? In fact, this is not the first time that I have encountered such statements in Academic writing. After pondering questions such as these a number of years, I have developed a certain hypothesis about the Western model of Academic learning, particularly with regard to the Human and Social Sciences: *science seems to be revered to such a point in the West that it is almost unthinkable to see oneself as doing something unscientific.* Even in a field like Religious Studies (my own field), a more disinterested, "objective" approach method of approach holds sway, in spite of the fact that religious ideas seem to be based on primarily subjective forms of knowing.

Of course, this conclusion of mine is more inductive in nature and it is difficult to prove it in entirety, but nevertheless, let us assume, for a moment, that it is true and examine this idea in more detail. First of all, are scientific methods of attaining knowledge truly superior? And, if this is being asserted, where would be the proof for such a claim? Also, what would be an example of a non scientific method? Here, I would like to offer my own field – religion – as an example of a method of acquiring knowledge that is not scientific.

Since science versus religion is not the central point of this paper, I would like to avoid going into an elaborate definition of these two fields, but instead, offer a brief definition, just so the reader gets an idea of the contrast that is being made. One could say that religion relies on subjective knowledge and science relies on objective knowledge. By this, I mean that religions believe that the truth of an idea can be

ascertained in one's own mind, whereas science would require a reduplication of an asserted truth by many different people in order to consider it to be even a working truth. Also, science would argue that, because of the very fact that the results of an experiment can be reduplicated in different laboratories across the world and with different people in charge of each laboratory, this makes the particular result objectively verifiable, or verifiable outside of the confines of one's own mind, and thus, more believable.

Now, at first glance, the scientific argument sounds more convincing. After all, religious people can provide no real proof for their ideas, and neither can their ideas be objectively analyzed or truly ascertained by someone else. However, let us take a deeper look at this by examining more down-to-earth examples instead of focusing on monumental religious truths whose understanding almost requires us to be religious saints. Let us take the simple experience of love. The only way to ascertain the truth as to whether or not you love someone is to use a method similar to that of religious mystics. You have to look in to your own mind and know the truth about it internally. This kind of thing cannot be verified independently by another person and it also cannot be proved. Only the person experiencing the whole range of emotions can know if they truly feel love in their heart.

Let us take another example – the recalling of our own address. How do we know whether we have indeed correctly remembered our own address? Do we have, at our fingers, some way of objectively measuring whether we have recalled our home address correctly every time that we are asked for it? I would argue that there is, in fact, a subjective quality to memory as well as an objectively verifiable one. This subjective quality lets us know whether a memory is correct or not.

If we accept even one of these arguments, then it seems that both objective and subjective ways of knowing have some validity. If this is so, then the question still remains – why would it be so important for Social Scientists to be included in science? My answer to this is – not only is science so revered in the West that other methods of knowing are completely neglected, but it is almost as if scientific methods of knowing are so dominant that a counter-argument to scientific ways of thinking no longer exists. Movements that have attempted to mount counter-arguments, such as Feminism and Postmodernism, also buy into the scientific ways of thinking. Feminists and Postmodernists tend to write in the same disinterested style, and they also tend to cultivate the same sort of elitism that they purport to criticize, in that they have created a whole list of jargon-like terms of their own.

Conclusions

Now, the final question here is – does Thailand really want to adopt the Western model of education wholesale, without a very careful questioning of its motives? I think it would *not* be entirely beneficial for the students here. There should always be an atmosphere of argument and counter-argumentation in Academia. It should be a place where freedom of thought reigns. However, in most Western institutions, non-scientific methods are being subtlely and not so subtlely squashed, so there is actually not much freedom of thought, particularly within many Humanities and Social Science disciplines.

I am not saying that the entire scientific method is flawed, but rather, that applying it to the Humanities and certain Social Science departments is a *misapplication* of the scientific method or an *overapplication* of it. This desire to apply the scientific method to every subject is what is causing the elimination of a counter-argument to science. In my opinion, this is a dangerous state of affairs, as no one ideology should be allowed to dominate so thoroughly. Ironically enough, this was the state of affairs that the French Enlightenment thinkers, many of whom are foundational thinkers in scientific method, found themselves in when they protested against the dominant ideology of Catholicism.

Also, what seems to have been forgotten in many developing countries is that Western Academia is only one vision or model of Higher Education. To take its view as the absolute truth would be, to take a concept from many Asian religions, a kind of delusion. In fact, an effective argument against overapplying the scientific method could be launched based on certain religious ideas that have been known in Southeast Asia for centuries. For example, Buddhism (as well as other religions) has a vast literature explaining the persistent tendency within all human beings to project their own conceptions of reality onto reality itself, and then believe in these projections. In addition, most of the world's religions speak at length on the insidious effects of egocentrism within all of our endeavors.

In conclusion, while the Western model may have some good points and while it also may be useful to have some structure to university education, it is never useful to be too attached to any codified structure or vision. This makes for a rigidity of thinking within the Administration and this rigidity often carries down into the faculty and the student body. Also, any rigidity in one's approach towards learning can cause a person to project their own conceptions onto reality rather than just listening to experience and letting it unfold in and of itself. Of course, these last thoughts here are inspired by Eastern religious thought as well, yet, in a sense, they are also scientific ones. After all, true science is based upon the spirit of open inquiry. True scientists listen to all experience, not just scientifically-obtained results, and they certainly question all dogmatic assertions, even their own.

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Paper 4 Cultural Globalization in Thailand: The Impact of the Farang on Thai Identity

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Abstract

Cultural Globalization leads to new forms of cultures and identities, melting both global and local elements into new hybrid forms. The process of hybridization is supported by stereotyping other cultural forms and referring to them as cultural "Others". This paper shows how this applies to contemporary Thailand, starting with an overview over postcolonial approaches to cultural globalization, and following that analyzing Thai society under the influence of globalization. In this respect, it identifies the white Westerner, called "Farang", as a constitutive outside for an increasing part of the Thai population, describes the attributes ascribed to the Farang and explains how the interaction with the Farang both stabilizes and alters Thai identity.

Introduction

The "Farang", that is the (white) Westerner, is the "Other" of globalized Thai society. As a representative of the Western culture, he functions as a constitutive outside for an increasing part of the Thai population, and has thereby become a crucial element in the constitution of modern Thai identity.
Cultural globalization is defined as the cross linking of different geographical regions irrespective of national borders. The result of this process is the emergence of hybrid cultural forms, consisting of both, global and local attributes, concertedly constructing national identities. For many Eastern countries, this means a fusion of traditional Eastern and modern Western patterns, whereas the West functions as a constitutive outside.

How does this apply to Thailand? I argue that the part of Thai society which faces the consequences of cultural globalization on a regular basis must be seen as a hybrid, whose identity is based on traditional Thai as well as modern global influences. A major part of these influences originates from the personal or medial interaction with Farangs. Stating this I do neither refer to the personal relationships between Thais and Farangs, nor to any persons as individuals. Instead, I aim at illustrating the concept of the Farang as a general cultural construction, at lining out its impact on modern Thai identity. I support the idea that there is a "Farang stereotype" associated with a set of both positive and negative attributes, complementary to those assigned to the concept of being "Thai". This Farang stereotype contributes to constituting the concept of modern "Thai-ness" itself: as the cultural "Other" of Thai society.

The analysis of the concept of the Farang will be conducted in two steps: first I will locate this paper within the context of postcolonial studies, introducing technical terms and explaining different theoretical approaches to the analysis of cultural globalization. In the second step, I will apply the theories portrayed to contemporary Thailand. This involves examining the structure of Thai society, reconstructing the cultural concept of the Farang, and following that figuring out its impact on Thai identity.

1. Globalization from Post-Colonial Perspective

1.1 Fundamentals of Cultural Globalization

Globalization, understood as the cross linking of geographical regions all over the world, can be approached from an economic perspective, emphasizing the rise of capitalism and new economic forms after the decline of socialism. Another perspective is the notion of cultural globalization as a cultural phenomenon, creating new forms of cultures as a result of diverse transnational processes in modernized societies.

Globalization is strongly intertwined with modernization, however, the term globalization must not be used as an equivalent for global modernization and, since modernity originated in Europe, Westernization. Modern societies are distinguished by a whole set of cultural patterns originating from former European developments, such as capitalism, democracy and the Enlightenment, which altogether keep on influencing modern societies around the globe. Hence from a global perspective, modernization and Westernization are for the most part the same. This, however, must not be confused with globalization, which unlike modernization is not Eurocentric (Nederveen Pieterse 1993). Instead, it is the process of permanent exchange between various geographical regions, irrespective of the actual distance in between, weaving a dense network between different nations and cultural areas. Even if the West has a strong impact on other cultures, globalization itself is too complex and diverse to be reduced to a spread of Western hegemonies.

1.2 The Interrelation of Cultures

In the social sciences, there is one question controversially discussed: does globalization enforce the establishment of one single world culture, eliminating traditional hegemonies in aid of one homogeneous global hegemony (Giddens 1991)? Or should it be understood as a process of increasing heterogenization, enhancing the emergence of various "global mélange cultures" (Nederveen Pieterse 1993)?
I assume that *any* modern society is a hybrid that consists of a plurality of different elements, forming a heterogeneous and sometimes inconsistent culture. Hybridity is one of the essential characteristics of all cultures, as they can only exist as constellations of combination (Bhabha 1995). Accordingly, cultural forms and identities do not emerge out of their own essence, but are constructed by a dynamics of differences towards other cultural forms. According to Jan Nederveen Pieterse (1993, 2002), cultural globalization creates cultural hybrids, which are made up by a dichotomy of global versus local orientations. Pieterse identifies an increasing standardization of cultural forms on a global level, linked with an overall rise of

localism attaching people to their local cultures even stronger than before. People from all over the world, so Pieterse, face the same social, technological and economic influence as the corollary of globalization, yet the multiplicity of impacts does not lead to cultural uniformity. Instead, it produces "crossover cultures", consisting of standardized global as well as particular local elements (Pieterse 1993: 7). Cultural hybridization therefore denotes the process "in which [cultural] forms become separated from existing practices and recombine with new forms in new practices" (Pieterse 1991: 231).

Concerning the relationship between different cultures, this approach disputes two common notions. Firstly it contradicts the idea of multiculturalism, as it assumes that different cultures are getting mutually intertwined, instead of existing as separate parallel cultures. Secondly, hybridization is opposed to the idea of homogenization: although several cultures can be melted into one new one, they still maintain the characteristics of their respective origins.

1.3 The Construction of the Other

The construction of hybrid cultures is connected to the process of "othering". Subjects develop their cultural identity in reciprocity with other cultural forms: these are associated with attributes complementary to those of the own culture, and thereby help to define its scope. Thus, it is only the differentiation from the outside that enables the inside to create a distinct identity. The representation of the Other, that is a different cultural subject, is marked by ambivalence and inconsistence (Bhabha 1995). Ambivalence means that the image of the other is the negative counterpart of the image of the self. However, since the representation of the Other is not psychologically neutral but linked to both, antipathy and fascination, the outside tends to appear in a positive connotation as well.

Cultures or hegemonies serving as constitutive outsides involve the stereotyping of the Other, that is the construction of "otherness" by reducing cultures on only few, non-objective and simplified attributes. Stereotyping is a sub-form of social typing in general, which in turn is the basis for all social life and necessary for the orientation within the life-world (Hall 1997). The process of stereotyping maintains the social and symbolic order within a culture, deciding over social affiliations and the distributions of power: within clear-cut power divides, the dominant group is the one who stereotypes the subordinated group, assigning it with attributes antagonistic to those of the own culture. The construction of "otherness" is always ethnocentric, so that the dominant group will be the measure for any other (Hall 1997, Said 1978). Since the process of stereotyping is unidirectional, phantasy plays an important role in the construction of the other (Bhabha 1995, Hall 1997) - thus, once again, stereotypes are collective images which one culture associates with other cultural groups, rather than accurate and objective representations.

A famous example for the othering of a whole hemisphere is the construction of the "Oriental" as it has been described by Edward Said (1979). Said claimed that the Orient was an invention of the West, constructed by European discourses of the 18th century. In these discourses, so Said, the Orient appeared as the "other West", as a mystical sphere that "helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience" (Said 1979: 1f). From the Western perspective, the

Oriental is described as a static subject being incapable of development, wherefore the European subject as its counterpart appears to be dynamic and innovative. In the European discourse the Oriental languages as identified as plurivalent, an attribute that was supposed to be linked to falsehood and irrationality of the Oriental subject. Consequently, this confirmed the European self-definition of being veritable, rational subjects, expressing their logical ideas in an unambiguous language.

I argue that there are analogies between the phenomenon described by Said and the cultural situation in contemporary Thailand. Firstly, Thai culture and Thai identity are essentially heterogeneous. Within the variety of Thai cultural forms, each of them again is a hybrid of several countercurrents. Secondly, the stereotypical Farang is an invention of globalized Thai culture. He represents the West as perceived from Thai perspective, and thereby functions as a constitutive outside for the construction of Thai identity.

2. Thai Culture as a Hybrid

2.1 Diverse Thai Cultures

Despite the common impression, Thailand is far from being a homogeneous nation. The invention of a homogeneous Thai national identity is a rather new one, originating form the attempts to westernize Thailand made by King Chulalongkorn. Until that time, "Thai empires [...] were loosely integrated conglomerates, in which the different nationalities and ethnic groups [...] preserved their particular identities" (Cohen 1991: 20). Since King Chulalongkorn declared nation, religion and monarchy as the three pillars of Thailand, the devotion to this nation, to Buddhism and to the King are supposed to melt the Thai people into one homogeneous society. However, until the present Thai society keeps on remaining a hybrid, combining the general national identity with the singularity of various communities. Different ethnic, linguistic and religious groups make Thai society a patchwork society, in addition to social stratifications such as class, gender, religion and occupation.
Furthermore, each of these social spheres is influenced by a variety of competing hegemonies, so that there is never only one dominant culture, being supported by one constitutive outside. In the age of Globalization, international role models for both dissociation and imitation gain increasing significance, whereas in the case of Thailand, the Farang is of particular importance. Naturally there are several cultural groups determining Thai self-definition and challenging traditional Thai culture, like the Japanese or the Chinese. However, due to its physical appearance which is obviously different from Thai people, the stereotypical Farang holds an outstanding position among these constitutive outsides. It is a *visual representation* of cultural otherness, and therefore particularly easy to be stereotyped.

2.2 The Scope of Globalized Thai Society

It is evident that within the diversity of Thai culture, the extent of globalization varies greatly across society. In this respect it is the divide between rural and urban areas that is of largest impact. Globalizing factors, such as the consumption of global goods, contact with the mass media or interaction with foreign persons, accumulate in big cities. That is, the larger the cities are, the stronger is the impact

which globalization has on society, whereas in many rural areas people still remain largely unaffected by globalization.
Another major factor influencing the extent of globalization is the present age gap between the adult and the youth generation. Unlike their parents, many teenagers and young adults grew up in the age of mass media. The use of the internet, mobile phones or international TV channels lead to a specific perception of the (international) world, and engage in new modes of communication and social interaction.

Eventually, the impact which globalization has on different strata of Thai society is closely linked to occupational groups. Middle and higher class Thais tend to be in more frequent interaction with foreign people than working class Thais. Thus, they and are more likely to think and act globally. Finally one should not forget about the tourism industry, an economic sector employing workers across all classes. This sector is characterized by an outstanding extent of globalization, since the market is globally oriented, and the workers in the tourism industry are in particular frequent contact to foreign cultures.

Since Thai culture is not homogenous and the different social groups of Thai society are not equally globalized, the impact of Western influences on Thai identity is not equally strong. When defining the Farang as the Other of Thai culture, I thereby narrow that claim to globalized cultural forms: referring to young people rather than the older generation, to urban rather than rural areas, to middle and upper class rather than lower class Thais, and to workers in the tourism industry irrespective of their social status.

3. Othering: When the Farang Meet the Thai

3.1 Stereotyping the Farang

Despite of the differences and incoherences within Thai culture, there is a set of typically Thai attributes shared by the vast majority of Thais. These attributes are mirrored by the Farang, who, for the group of "globalized Thais" as identified above, plays a major role in the construction of Thai identity. When making claims about Thai people, I will below exclusively refer to the group of globalized Thais. Concerning the Farang, the subject of analysis is the general stereotype as a cultural construction, not a description of a group of actual individuals. In the following, I will refer to the terms "Thai" and "Farang" as specified without giving particular notice.

Mirroring Thai culture means that the Farang reflects elements or Thai culture as their negative image, representing the negative parameter value of Thai cultural characteristics. Namely there can be at least four general character traits assigned to the stereotypical Farang: being hot in emotions, impolite in personal interactions, indecent in general behaviour and top-heavy in the perception of the world.

In contrast to the Thai people, who consider in inappropriate to display their emotions in public, the Farang is renowned for having a hot temper, expressing this whenever emotions emerge. Both positive and negative emotional reactions on a situation can be very intense, wherefore loud laughter or joyous cries, as well as angry gesturing or raising the voice are typical ways of the Farang to express its feelings.

Concerning its personal interactions, the Farang lacks the kind of politeness Thai people claim for their selves. Not only the hot temper of the Farang is considered an affront, but also the direct way of verbal communication. Telling people directly what it thinks, the Farang tends to openly criticize others, make complaints, and state its opinions without taking into consideration that this may affect its conversational partner. Furthermore, Farangs are individualistic rather than "position and group oriented" (Mulder 1994: 231), that is power relationships are not per se determined by age or occupation. Instead, the respective status emerges from individual interactions rather than fixed social rules, wherefore the Farang tends to confuse or ignore what is considered proper status behaviour. Accordingly, the Farang is ascribed as disrespectful or socially incompetent.

Another feature of the stereotypical Farang is indecency. Due to a liberal attitude towards clothing and sexuality, Farangs feel free to show much more of their body than Thai people do. Affectionate feelings between a couple, like holding hands, hugging or kissing, are not hidden from the public. In addition to their open display of sexuality, Farangs are renowned for having romantic relationships starting from a very young age, and changing their partners frequently.
Eventually, the stereotypical Farang "lives in his head" (Redmond 1998: 202), assessing any situation or problem intellectually. Thereby the Farang is used to analyze and categorize details of its life-world to an extent which for Thai people is completely redundant.

3.2 Remaking Thai Identity

The character traits of the stereotypical Farang refer to crucial elements of Thai culture. While the stereotypical Thai is "calm, good-tempered and tolerant, [...], makes no complaints, does not show its feelings" (Toatong: 12) and pays "respect to one's superiors, elders, patrons" (Klausner 2000: 253), Farangs are perceived as harsh, hot tempered, argumentative and disrespectful.

Contrasting the Thai hegemony means at the same time doubling its visibility: deviations from cultural norms produced by Farangs lead to an instant awareness of these norms among Thais. As a result, the negative example of conduct encourages Thai people to preserve their norms which have been violated. Thus, the dissociation from the Farang stabilizes the sense of being Thai.

Besides the rejection of the Farang, however, there are other attributes of this stereotype which tend to be admired or imitated. Physically, this applies to the relatively long noses and big physiques, which both are considered desirable. Financially, the Farang is generally supposed to be rich (that is richer than the average Thai), what grants it per se a higher status than it had with less money. Concerning sexuality the Farang has a particular impact on the younger generation. For many young Thais, it becomes increasingly common to have several girlfriends or boyfriends before marriage, to show affection in public, or, with respect to girls, to wear sexy clothes displaying knees, shoulders or the décolleté. Consequently, there is a social shift towards more permissiveness provoked by the Farang.

4.Conclusion

Considering the ambiguous impact which the Farang has on Thai identity, Farang people are a means of both, stabilizing traditional cultural patterns and advancing continuous cultural change. In various social roles, Farangs contribute to the ongoing Westernization of Thailand, while at the same time they ensure the preservation of crucial Thai cultural traits. The Farang contributed modeling a globalized hybrid identity, consisting of traditional Thai and modern Western elements, in other words: a modern Thai identity.

Naturally, the image of the Farang equaling the average Westerner is extremely biased. Those Westerners traveling to Thailand belong only to few groups, which in no way are representative for the entire Western culture area. Especially Farang tourists, who are crowding vast stretches of Thailand, occupy the dominant share in modeling the stereotypical Westerner. Due to its overwhelming visibility in everyday life, together with the little effort made to assimilate into Thai culture, the Farang tourist is a fundamental and unspoiled representative of the West. Yet it represents only a fractional amount of the Western population, wherefore in actual fact, it might be considered inappropriate that Thai people draw conclusions from this highly selective group to the entire population. The same is true for other common roles in which Farangs interact with Thais, such as business people or celebrities from the film or pop music industry.

However, although firstly the Farang stereotype is not congruent to Farangs as actual persons, and secondly those Farangs traveling to Thailand do not represent the average Westerner, these deviations do not impede the construction of the Farang as a constitutive outside. What matters is the actual fact that by othering a group of obviously alien people, the Thai nation maintains its particular Thai identity while keeping pace with developments in the age of globalization. The Thai case is thereby an example of how new hybrid forms emerge as a result of globalization, combining global and local influences into a culture ready for the challenges of a global society.

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SESSION 7
MIGRANT WORKERS

Chairperson: Dr. Tang Siew Mun

1. Ethnic Diversity & Cross-Border Migration in Malaysia: Identifying Areas of Conflicts & Coalition. - *Azizah Kassim*

2. Migrant Worker and Cultural Identity: A Bridge between Cultures. - *Ismail Suardi Wekke & Cholichul Hadu*

3. Hidden Inbetween-ness: An Exploration of Taiwanese Transnational Identity in Contemporary Japan. – *Peichun Han*

4. Legal Protection, Integration and Development for Migrant Worker in GMS. - *Jan Tahir Babar*

Managing Migrant Workers in a Multi-Ethnic Society: The Case of Malaysia.[1]

Azizah Kassim

1.0 Introduction

British colonial administration in Malaysia (then Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak) which began in the late eighteenth century, introduced capitalistic economic enterprises which was accompanied by the importation of foreign labour mainly from China, the Indian sub-continent and Indonesia. This laid the foundation for the country's multi-ethnic population which according to its last Census in 2000, was around 23.274 million. Of these, about 5.6% were immigrants. Among the Malaysians population, 63% were Bumiputra (lit. "sons of the soil" i.e. indigenous groups); 26 % Chinese; 7.5% Indians, and the rest of the "others" category.

After independence in 1957, Malaysia once again becomes a popular destination for foreign workers. Socio-economic development, especially from 1970, created ample job opportunities particularly in agriculture, construction and the service sector. But Malaysians rejected these jobs thus creating labour shortage in some sectors of the economy. Employers resorted to the recruitment and employment of foreign workers, albeit clandestinely for over a decade. With the expansion of irregular migrant workers, then estimated at about a quarter million, and their attendant problems, the government was forced to formulate and implement a policy on foreign workers in the early eighties. Despite the policy, Malaysia is still inundated with irregular migrant workers. In 2007, Malaysia has around 2 million legally recruited foreign workers, forming 10% of the population and 16.8% of the workforce. In addition, there are a large number of irregular migrants estimated between 200,000 and one million. The sheer number alone can lead to complex problems that can make their management an extremely difficult task.

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[1] Draft paper for the 3rd Malaysia -Thailand International Conference of Southeast Asian Studies, Mahidol University, Bangkok, 29th November-1st December, 2007. Not to be quoted without the author's permission.

This paper examines how Malaysia manages in-migration and treats its foreign workers against the backdrop of cultural and ethnic diversity where ethnic division is officially sanctioned and political parties are ethnically based. It seeks to answer such question as: What are the factors which influence the formulation of Malaysia's foreign workers' policy? What are the objectives of the policy and how are its measures implemented? How do Malaysia's multi-ethnic population and multi-ethnic politics impact on migration policy and its implementation; and on migration in-flows and migrants' integration? These are some of the questions being addressed in this paper. The paper is guided by the following assumptions:

- That the multi-ethnic population with its ethnically based political parties (i) negatively influence policy decisions, giving way to a flawed policy on migrant workers, and, (ii) hinders the policy implementation causing a wide gap between policy objectives and its outcome.

2.0 The Colonial Legacy: In-migration, Development of a Multi-Ethnic Society and the Nation State.

2.1 Development and Migration

Inter-islands migration has been going on for centuries in the ASEAN region but it was the penetration of western colonialism which boosted its pace. In the case of Malaysia, massive in-migration took place under the British colonial rule, with the introduction of capitalistic economic enterprises which began in the early nineteenth century. With the small indigenous population engaged in subsistence economy, and their reluctance to work as "coolies" in the new enterprises, the colonial authorities sanctioned the importation of millions of foreign workers mainly from India (inclusive of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan), China and Indonesia. In the case of Peninsular Malaysia (then known as Malaya), the result of the influx was amply demonstrated by the result of the country's Census which began at the end of the nineteenth century (see Table 1). By 1891 Malaya already had a substantial number of foreigners among its population.

Table 1: Peninsular Malaysia: The Emergence and Expansion of a Multi-Ethnic Society

Colonial Period	Total	Malays & Other Ind Grps.	Immig. Chinese	Immig. Indians	Immig. "Others"	
1891	746,297	409,235	**269,902**	**58,069**	**9,091**	
	(100)	(54.8)	**(36.2)**	**(7.8)**	**(1.2)**	
1901	1,022,289	492,183	**419,355**	**9,7687**	**13,064**	
	(100)	(48.1)	**(40.4)**	**(9.6)**	**(1.3)**	
1911	2,342,248	1,372,290	**694,970**	**239,786**	**35,202**	
	(100)	(58.6)	**(29.7)**	**(10.2)**	**(1.5)**	
1921	2,910,214	1,569,279	**857,653**	**439,510**	**43,862**	
	(100)	(53.9)	**(15.1)**	**(1.5)**		
1931	3,788,530	1,864,135	**1,285,173**	**572,690**	**66,532**	
	(100)	(49.2)	**(33.9)**	**(15.1)**	**(1.8)**	
1947	4,908,086	2,427,834	**1,884,534**	**530,638**	**65,080**	
	(100)	(49.4)	**(38.5)**	**(0.8)**	**(1.3)**	
Post Independence		**Bumiputra**	**Mal. Chinese**	**Mal. Indians**	**Mal. "Others"**	**Non-Citizens**
1957	6,278,758	3,125,474	2,333,756	707,108	112,420	
	(100)	(49.8)	(37.2)	(11.2)	(1.8)	
1970	9,181,674	4,841,268	3,285,991	981,449	72,966	
	(100)	(52.7)	(35.8)	(10.7)	(	
1980	11,442,086	6,325,444	3,869,423	1,172,688	74,531	
	(100)	(55.3)	(33.8)	(10.2)	(0.7)	
1991	14,797,616	8,433,826*	4,250,969	1,380,048	410,544	**322,229**
	(100)	(57)	(28.7)	(9.3)	(2.8)	(2.2)
2000	18,523,632	11,135,694	4,883,079	1,680,132	133,665	**691,062**
	(100)	(60.1)	(26.4)	(9.1)	(0.7)	(3.7)

Source: Adapted from Tey, 2007.

Nonetheless, the local Malay community was still the majority. A decade later, due to further inflow of foreign workers, the local population lost its majority status. In 1911 and 1921 the number and percentage of the local population rose, only to decline again in the subsequent years. Sabah and Sarawak gained independence on joining Malaya to form the Federation of Malaysia in 1963. The two states too were under British administration and like Malaya, they were also subjected to the in-flow of immigrant labour. However, in the case of Sabah, foreign workers were brought in not only from China, India and Indonesia, but also from neighbouring Philippines.

On independence (1957 for Malaya and 1963 for Sabah and Sarawak), the foreign population were given the option to become citizens and many did; resulting in the multi-ethnic population in Malaysia. By the early seventies, most of the immigrants (the largest of which were Chinese and Indians) who came to Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak and their off springs were no longer "foreign nationals". They were Malaysians even though in subsequent Census Reports they are still categorised as "Chinese" or "Indians".

As from 1970, the Malaysian government re-arranged the ethnic categorisation in the country. The population were divided into two major groups: the Bumiputra (lit. "sons of the soil") and non-Bumiputra. In the Peninsula, the former comprise the Malays and aboriginal groups. In Sabah, they comprise at least five major groups such as the Kadazan-Dusun, Murut, Rungus and Bajaus; and in Sarawak, the Ibans, Melanau, Bidayuh etc. The non-Bumiputra comprised mainly Chinese and Indians, and the rest (such as Eurasians, Europeans, etc.) are simply referred to as "Others". These new categorisation can be seen in Table 2. In 1991, the population was around 18.55 million of which the Bumiputra formed the majority. In the last population census in Malaysia in 2000, their number increased accounting for over 63% of the population of about 23.26 million. Over 26% were Chinese , 7.4 % Indians and 3.2% "Others". Due to in-migration in the post independence era, the number of foreign nationals too has increased both in number and in percentage terms.

Table 2: Malaysian Population 1991-2000
('000)

	1991	2000	Average Ann. Growth 1991-1995	Average Ann. Growth 1196-2000
Total Population	18.55	23.26	(2.7)	(2.3)
Malaysian Citizens	17.75	21.95	(2.2)	(2.1)
• **Bumiputra**	10.75 (60.5)	13.61 (63.2)	(2.7)	(2.6)
• **Chinese**	5.02 (28.3)	5.6 (26.0)	(1.3)	(1.1)
• **Indians**	1.41 (7.9)	1.61 (7.48)	(1.5)	(1.4)
• **Others**	0.59 (3.3)	0.70 (3.3)	(2.0)	(1.8)
• **Non-Citizens**	0.80 (4.3)	1.31 (5.6)	(12.3)	(5.7)

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages.
Source: Adapted from the Seventh Malaysia Plan, 1996-2000,pp 105.

2.2 Salient Features of the Malaysian Multi-Ethnic Society

There are several features of the Malaysian multi-ethnic population which need highlighting as it has implications on trans-border in-migration in the post independence era. These are:

i. Ethnic Division is Officially Sanctioned.

Ethnic divisions are officially sanctioned. Birth certificates and identity cards indicate a citizens ethnic group - Malay, Iban or Bidayuh, etc. in the case of the Bumiputra category; or a Chinese, Indians, etc. for non-Bumiputra. Ethnic boundaries are marked by cultural differences as expressed in religious practices and language. Such being the case, the perpetuation of these ethnic indicators is important through education and the media. Thus, despite the establishment of national schools in the years after independence, the Chinese and Indians are allowed to have their own vernacular schools, should they not want to enter the national school system which uses Malay medium of education. They

are also permitted to have their own newspapers, radio and television channels. Ethnic religious festivals too are accorded public holidays. Malaysia is a show case for multi-culturalism.

ii. Religious Divide

Associated with the ethnic divide is that of religion. While the official religion of Malaysia is Islam, the population is given the freedom to practice other faiths. Major religions among the population are Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confusionism. While all Malays are Muslims, other Bumiputra's are free to choose their religion. A Rungus in Sabah can be a Christian, a Muslim or an animist. A Chinese may be a Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or Taoist and an Indian could be a Muslim, a Christian, a Hindus or a Sikh. Religious and ethnic divide do not always overlap each other.

iii. Political Parties are Ethnically Based.

Another feature of ethnic diversity in Malaysia is presence of ethnic based political parties, which is seen by many as the root cause of ethnic division and its continuity. In the Peninsula, Malays have their United Malay National Organisation (UMNO) and the Malaysian Islamic Party (known locally as PAS). The Chinese have their Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Indians, the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) and Peoples Progressive Party (PPP). There are attempts to bridge the political/ethnic divide by forming multi-ethnic parties such as the Gerakan (Malaysian Peoples Movement) and the DAP (Democratic Action Party), but these parties are usually dominated by one ethnic group - the Chinese. In Sabah and Sarawak too, the same political tendency prevails, with major ethnic groups forming their own political organization to further ethnic interest. Examples are the Party Bansa Dayak[2] in Sarawak; and UPKO (United Pasokmomogan Kadazan Organisation) and Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) in Sabah.

[2] In 2007, the party changed its name to Parti Rakyat Sarawak.

By forming a coalition, the Barisan Nasional (BN) some of these political have been able to gain power and rule the country for the last fifty years. The BN, formed in 1970 based on an earlier coalition of UMNO, MCA and MIC, has 13 member political parties from Sabah and Sarawak since 2003.

To remain in power, each ethnic party must retain its ethnic boundary, their "Malayness", "Chineseness", "Indianess" or "Kadazanness" must be maintained through preservation of their language, culture, religion, etc. Political leaders must pursue the socio-economic and political interests of their own ethnic communities and in doing so, they often come into conflict with their partners in the coalition and with others.

iv. Entrenched Kinship/Ethnic Networks Across National Boundaries.

As a large proportion of the Malaysian population are of recent immigrant descent, many still have relatives in their country of origin with whom they have close contacts. Among Malaysian Indian families, for example, it is not uncommon for parents to look for marriage partners for their children from their family members in India or among Indian diaspora elsewhere. Some Malays/Bumiputra of Indonesian descent are also in touch with their relatives from the land of their ancestors. The same tendency applies to other ethnic groups in the country. As a result many Malaysians have entrenched kinship and ethnic network systems cutting across national boundaries.

2.3 Challenged Borders

The establishment of colonial administration (the British, Dutch, Spanish, French, Portuguese and the Americans) in the ASEAN region laid the foundation of the nation state and with it the institution of state boundaries which was drawn to suit the economic and political interests of the colonial powers. These boundaries cut across cultural areas dividing families and ethnic groups into separate nationalities. In spite of the national divide, social and economic interactions between these separated peoples persisted. They cross these borders as if they were non existent, perhaps unaware of the official immigration control and its significance. These borders, at least on the Malaysian side, were highly porous, perhaps intentionally made so in view of the lack of manpower faced by the expanding capitalistic enterprises.

3.0 Migration in the Post Independent Era

For the Peninsula, in the post independent era, immigration control was imposed with the establishment of the 1959/1963 Immigration Act. However, along the borders, clandestine entry proceeded at a subdued rate. The early years of independence was marked by internal migration, especially the rural-rural and rural-urban flow. It was only in the seventies that trans-border in-migration began to accelerate with the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP-1970-1990). The NEP's emphasis on socio-economic and infra-structural development created ample employment opportunities at the lower rung of the job hierarchy. Unfortunately, these jobs were rejected by most of the locals who have by then benefited from the expansion of formal education in the years after independence. The overcome this labour shortfall employers had to recruit and employ foreign nationals clandestinely. The result was an influx of foreign workers mainly from Indonesia islands of Java, Sumatra and Bawean and nationals of Thailand, in the case of the Peninsula.

In Sabah, the state sanctioned in-migration of workers from Indonesian under the Malaysian Migration Fund Board (MMF) which brought in over 200,000 Indonesians from Kalimantan and Sulawesi (Labour Report, 1983/84). In addition, migrant workers also came from neighbouring islands of the Philippines especially the Mindanao area and from Sarawak. These foreign workers were needed to work in logging and the agricultural sector especially in the plantations. In Sarawak, migrant workers came mainly from across the border with Indonesian Kalimantan.

Other economic factors external to Malaysia also helped boosted migration into the country. Some of the neighbouring countries were and still are experiencing a high rate of unemployment and lower wage levels than in Malaysia. In addition the exchange rate of the Ringgit was high in favour of the Indonesian Rupiahs, the Baht or the Filipino Pesos. There was a strong economic motive to work in Malaysia and passage to the country was made easy with improved air, sea and land transportation.

Apart from the economic migrants, the early seventies saw Malaysia being inundated by refugees. The Peninsula was forced to accommodate thousands of Vietnamese and, to a smaller extent, Cambodians refugees. Sabah became the landing ground for a large number of Filipino refugees escaping political unrest under the Marcos regime in the Southern Philippines islands of Mindanao (Dorall, 1987; Bahrin & Rachagan 1984 and Wong, 2001). While the Vietnamese refugees were isolated and prohibited from integration until their repatriation in the mid nineties, attempts were made to integrate the Cambodians and the Filipino. The Filipinos were given a special pass, the IMM13, to stay and work in Sabah, where they remain as refugees until today (Azizah Kassim, 2004).

The lax immigration control for over a decade in the seventies allowed irregular migrant workers to proliferate and as their number grew and as they moved into a wider range of work sectors in the urban areas, they became more visible, thus attracting the attention of the public. The situation was exacerbated when the immigrant communities began to compete with the local poor for affordable housing in the squatter areas and for economic opportunities especially in petty businesses; and the involvement of a few in violent crimes. By the early eighties, their presence was beginning to be seen as problematic and soon the issue and problems of their employment became an agenda for mainstream political discourse. With political leaders from both the ruling and opposition parties voicing their concern about the negative impacts of foreign labour employment, especially to national security, the government was compelled to take steps to resolve the problems of the "illegal immigrants" who by then was believed to be at least around half a million.

Thus economic and political factors play a major role in influencing policy formulation. There was an acute need for foreign labour but their uncontrolled entry was detrimental to national security and to ensure political stability a policy on foreign workers must be formulated.

4.0 Policy on Unskilled and Semi-Skilled Foreign Workers

Malaysia's Employment Act 1955 already had provisions for the employment of foreign nationals, but it was for the expatriate category. What it lacked was one to deal with the unskilled and semi-skilled. The policy on the latter category came into effect in the early eighties. Its main objectives are to sanction legal recruitment of foreign workers to overcome labour shortages in some sectors of the economy. To facilitate legal recruitment it was incumbent on the government to resolve the problem of irregular migrant workers, known initially in the local vernacular as "*pendatang haram*" and later changed to "*pendatang tanpa izin*"[3] (illegal immigrants). Thus a parallel programme to reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the country was initiated.

The employment of foreign workers was seen as a temporary phase and accordingly, policy measures which were subsequently devised were designed to accommodate their temporary stay. While the policy objectives have remained constant, its measures have been changed several times in response to economic and political situation as well as public sentiments. Measures taken to control and monitor foreign workers are discussed subsequently

4.1 Policy Measures in 1980's

It was in the Peninsula where initial measures were taken to pave the way for legal recruitment of foreign workers. Among these was the signing of the Medan Agreement with Indonesia, aimed at legal recruitment in May 1984.. This was followed by the signing of memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with source countries such as Bangladesh and the Philippines to recruit workers. In 1989, the first regularization exercise was launched in the Peninsula aimed at registering and legalizing Indonesians in the agricultural sector. At the same time, legal mechanisms were established to facilitate legal recruitment which include the following:

[3] Apparently the term "*pendatang haram*" was strongly objected to by the Indonesians because the term *haram* in Islam also refers to pigs. The Malaysian authorities had to use a more palatable terminology i.e. "*pendatang tanpa izin*" which in essence means the same in Malay.

- The formation of a policy making committee (*Jawatankuasa Kabinet Pengambilan Pekerja Asing*) entrusted with the task of establishing procedures and mode of recruitment, to decide on the source countries and sectors eligible to engage foreign workers; the terms and conditions of foreign workers' employment, fees and levy, etc.
- The formation of an implementing agency (*Jawatankuasa Teknikal Pengambilan Pekerja Asing*) comprising representatives of related state agencies such as the Department of Immigration, Department of Labour, etc.

4.2 Policy Measures in 1990's Onwards

In the following years, the policy measures were further improved to include the following:

i. Regularization Exercise in 1990 to June 1992. This was an extension of regularization exercises carried out in 1989. It was aimed at irregular migrant workers in domestic services. The good response from employers in this sector encouraged the government to extend the exercise to the construction and later to the service sectors. The exercise was stopped in 1992.

ii. Formation of Ops Nyah 1, January 1992. This was to stop further illegal incursion into the country by foreign nationals by patrolling land and sea borders especially areas identified as illegal entry points. This is an on-going operation.

iii. Formation of Ops Nyah 2, July 1992. This is also an on-going exercise to root out illegals already in the country who refused to co-operate with the regularization programme. It involves making spot checks at worksites where foreigners are employed or in places where they live. The Ops Nyah 2 was disbanded in March 2005 and replaced with Ops Tegas.

iv. In the mid-nineties, the Malaysian government introduced compulsory medical examination for foreign workers. An agency, FOMEMA (Foreign Workers Medical Examination and Monitoring Agency) was entrusted with the responsibility of conducting medical examination on all foreign workers brought into the country to ensure that only healthy ones are employed.

v. Amendments to the Immigration Act 1959/63 were made in 1997 and 2002. The Immigration Act was found inadequate to deal with violations of immigration laws and new problems related to immigration. The new amendments, among others introduced higher fines, longer jail sentences and canning for violations of immigration laws. It also makes harbouring, trafficking and employment of irregular migrants an offence punishable by jail or fines, or both. In addition there are also provisions to charge those who falsify official documents or official endorsements.

vi. Amnesty Exercise. These were launched in the Peninsula in 1997 and in Sabah and Sarawak in 1998. In 2002 and 2004-2005, the exercise was done on a nationwide basis. Under this exercise, a specific period was allocated for irregular migrants in the country to leave without being charged under the Immigration Act 1959/63. If they wish to re-enter Malaysia and work, they can do so legally according to given procedures. Although over a million irregular migrants participated in these exercises, it is generally agreed that they represent only a fraction of the irregular migrant population in the country. This is evidenced by the number of arrests made in the Ops Nyah 2 Operations which follows the end of each amnesty exercises.

vii. Implementation of a Special Immigration Court to hear cases of irregular workers and migrants in December 2006. The court was set up to facilitate hearing of cases involving violations of immigration laws in the country. Prior to this, such cases were heard in the ordinary court and as the Malaysian courts have a backlog of thousand of cases, delays in hearing of immigration cases were common. This caused overcrowding in

immigration detention camps and slowed down operations to weed out irregular migrants under the Ops Nyah 2 exercises.

5.0 The Expansion of the Foreign Workers

With the migrant workers policy in place, two ministries were given the responsibility of managing the foreign workers i.e. the Ministry of Home Affairs through its Department of Immigration (*Jabatan Imigresen*) and the Ministry of Human Resources under it Department of Labour (*Jabatan Tenaga Kerja*). The former is responsible for issuing their visas and work permits and the latter for matters relating to their employment, except for those in domestic services. Through these departments especially the Immigration, records on foreign workers began to be kept. These records enable us to examine the expansion of the foreign work force in Malaysia.

5.1 The Expansion of the Unskilled and Semi-skilled Contract Workers

Foreign workers in Malaysia comprise two main groups: the expatriates; and the unskilled and semi-skilled. The former are the technical, managerial and professional category whose presence in Malaysia is much sought after by the state. They are administered separately from the unskilled and semi-skilled and subjected to different terms and condition of service. As they are highly paid and their number is small (around 50,000 in 2007), they are not seen as a problem. Thus much of the discourse on foreign workers excludes them.

The unskilled and semi-skilled contract workers are issued temporary work passes (*Pas Lawatan Kerja Sementara*). The issuance of these passes, which are renewable every year upon payment of a levy[4] and the worker passing a medical check-up by FOMEMA, provides a glimpse of the expansion of migrant contract workers in Malaysia (see Table 3). As shown in the Table the number of these legally recruited workers have

[4] The cost of levy varies according to sectors. The lowest is for agricultural/plantation workers and domestic maids (RM360) per annum and RM1,200 for others sectors, except in Sarawak and Sabah where it is much lower (RM950).

expanded in the last two decades. However, the yearly intake fluctuates in response to the economic situation in the country. The number increases when the economy is booming and declined in periods of economic downturn such as during the financial crisis in 1998. In the following years, as the economy recovered, it rose again to over 1.87 million in 2006. In 2007, their number increased further to around two million.

Table 3: Expansion of Foreign Workers Based on Issuance of Work Passes by the Malaysia Immigration Department

Year	Peninsular Malaysia	Sabah	Sarawak	Malaysia	Notes
1985-1991 (May)	66,758	N.A	N.A	N.A	Regularization of irregular migrant workers
1993				532,723	
	(77.78)	(18.77)	(3.45)	(100)	
1994				642,057	
	(80.36)	(15.57)	(4.06)	(100)	
1995				726,689	
	(79.32)	(16.61)	(4.06)	(100%)	
1996					Ban on Bangladeshi workers
	(78.74)	(16.26)	(5.00)	(100)	
1997					
	(80.89)	(15.40)	(3.71)	(100)	
1998				1,127,652	Asian Financial crisis-,recruitment stopped; voluntary repatriation .
	(70.03)	(25.18)	(4.79)	(100)	
1999				918,317	
	(74.14)	(17.67)	(8.19)	(100)	Ban on Bangladeshi Workers
2000				799,685	
	(79.12)	(9.41)	(11.47)	(100)	
2001				769,566	
	(74.85)	(13.67)	(11.49)	(100)	
2002				1,057,156	Econ. Recovery
	(76.87)	(14.06)	(9.06)	(100)	
2003				1,412,697	
	(79.69)	(12.06)	(8.25)	(100)	
2004				1,474,686	
	(78.38)	(13.53)	(8.09)	(100)	
2005				1,821,750	
	(79.86)	(12.96)	(7.18)	(100)	
2006				1,871,038	
	(80.84)	(11.84)	(7.32)	(100)	

Notes: Figures in brackets are percentages.
Source: Adapted from Azizah Kassim, 2007.

Table 4: Foreign Workers in Malaysia by Source Countries (1985-2007)

Source Countries	1985	1990	2001	2006
Bangladesh	1,126	361	105,744	62,669
	(32.3)	(1.5)	(13.74)	(3.6)
Cambodia				8,222
				(0.4)
China				2,482
				(0.1)
India				138,313
				(7.4)
Indonesia	998	14,125	566,983	1,174,013
	(28.7)	(58.5)	(73.67)	(62.8)
Myanmar				109,219
				(5.8)
Nepal				213,551
				(11.4)
Pakistan			2,218	11,551
			(0.28)	(0.6)
Philippine	374	5,340	17,287	24,088
	(10.7)	(22.1)	(2.25)	(1.3)
Thailand	986	4,326	2,440	13,811
	(28.3)	(17.9)	(0.32)	(0.7)
Vietnam				106,751
				(5.7)
Others:			74,894	4,537
• Sri Lanka			(9.72)	4,421
• Laos				58
• Other Countries				48
				(0.2)
Total	**3,484**	**24,152**	**769,566**	**1,869,209**
Percentages	**(100)**	**(100)**	**(100)**	**(100)**

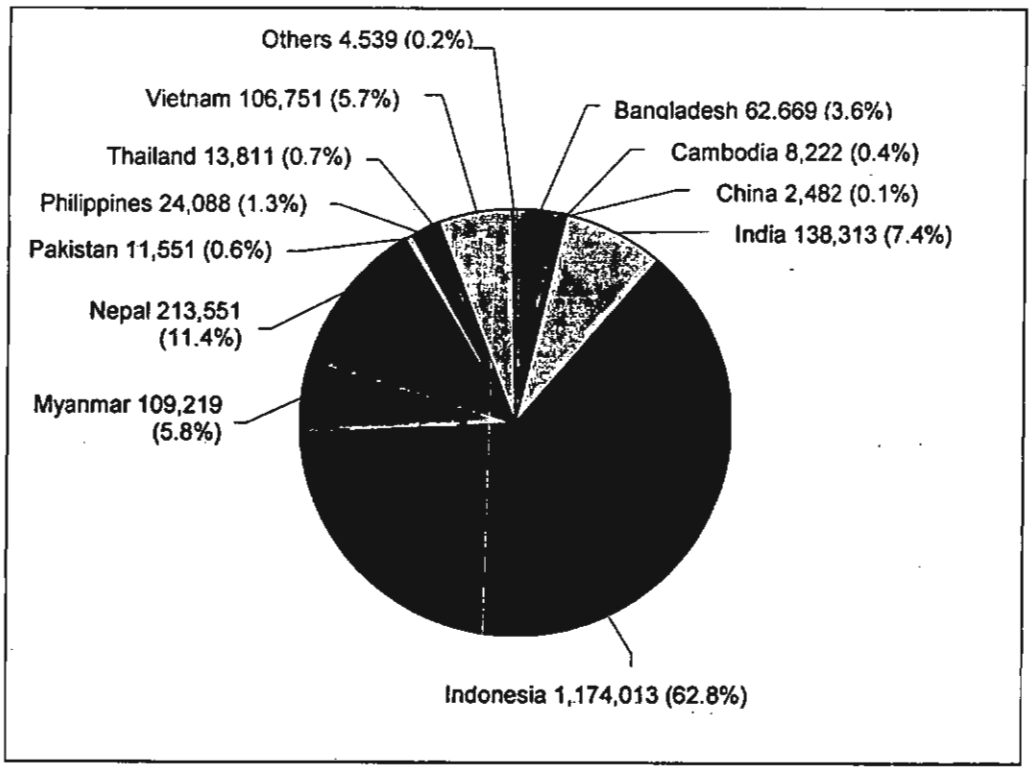
Notes:

- The "Other Countries" category includes nationals of Austria, Egypt, Fiji, Ethiopia, Morocco, Russia, Singapore, Syria, Uzbekistan, with workers ranging from 1-36.
- Numbers in brackets are percentages.

Source: Department of Immigration Malaysia, Putrajaya & Azizah Kassim, 2007.

In the seventies most of the workers in Malaysia were from Indonesia, Philippines and Thais. The number of source countries rose to four in 1990 and five in 2001. In 2002, following a riot by Indonesian workers in a factory in Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, steps were taken to open up employment to workers from other countries especially among ASEAN members. and Nepal. By 2006, Malaysia imports workers from thirteen source countries (see Table 4 & Chart 1). As shown in the Table, the majority are from the ASEAN region with the Indonesians retaining their position as the largest group. In 2006, Indonesians form over 62% of the foreign labour workforce), followed by those from Nepal (11.4%);India (7.4%); Myanmar (5.8%) and Vietnam (5.7%) and Bangladesh (3.6%).

Chart 1: Issuance of Work Passes (PLKS) by Country of Origin, Year 2006. (Total 1,869,209)



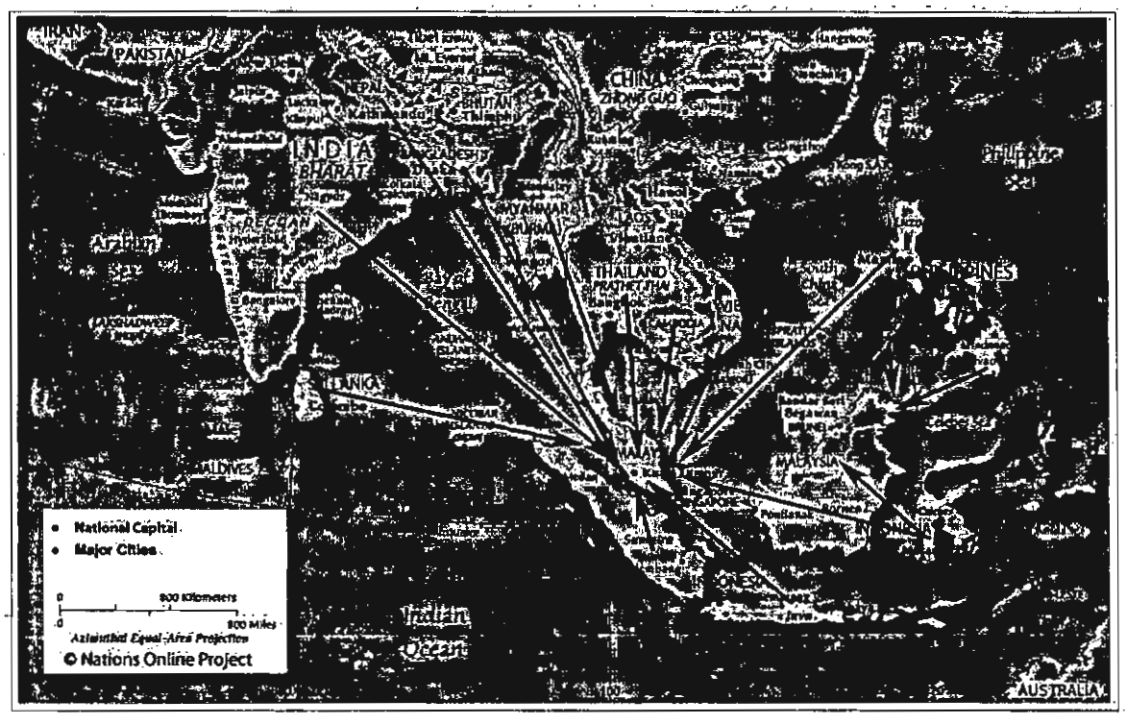


Table 5: Foreign Workers in Malaysia by Job Sectors.

Job Sectors	1985	1990	2001	2006
Agriculture				123,373
Construction		288	60,197	267,809
Domestic Maid	566	5,838	155,883	310,662
Plantation	2,918	18,026	214,595	354,124
Manufacturing			283,401	646,412
Services			55,309	166,829
Others			181	
Total	**3,484**	**24,152**	**769,566**	**1,869,209**

Source: Azizah Kassim, 2007.b. based on data provided by the Department of Immigration, Malaysia, Putrajaya.

Patterns of their labour utilization have also changed over the years. In 1985, they were engaged only in domestic services and plantations. By 1990 they were also found in the construction sector. By the 1990's two others sectors i.e. manufacturing and general services were allowed to use foreign labour. In the following decade they were given permission to work in many sub-sectors especially in services such as in laundry outlets, in restaurants, welfare homes, industrial spa, textile retail shops, and island resorts and as barbers, cleaners, security guard, as caddies at golf courses and cargo handlers. .

Table 6: Foreign Workers by Gender & Country of Origin (2003 & 2006)

	2003			2006		
	Peninsula	Sabah	Sarawak	Peninsula	Sabah	Sarawak
Indonesia	720,479	162,636	115,241	840,358	207,651	130,315
(F)	*(44.60)*	*(32.70)*	*(38.20)*	*(52.70)*	*(3.20)*	*(34.20)*
Nepal	107,896			210,074	1	11
(F)	*(0.01)*			*(0.20)*	0	
Bangladesh	93,846			54,472		3,254
(F)	*(0.40)*			*(0.30)*		0
Philippines	7,083	7,644	412	11,126	13,538	616
(F)	*(8.20)*	*(32.80)*	*(1.50)*	*(88.40)*	*(39.10)*	*(3.30)*
Thailand	10,003	10	28	13,538	69	385
(F)	*(17.80)*	*0*	*(17.90)*	*(27.00)*	*(47.80)*	*(1.30)*
India	63,743	134		139,423	220	98
(F)	*(0.30)*	*(2.20)*		*(0.30)*	*0*	0
Myanmar	47,952			108,395	18	3
(F)	*(0.06)*			*(5.50)*	0	0
Pakistan	2,242			11,406	4	101
(F)	*(0.30)*			*(0.10)*	*0*	*0*
Sri Lanka	1,067			4,241	1	6
(F)	*(57.80)*			*(23.20)*	0	0
Cambodia	2,914			8,200		1
(F)	*(58.10)*			*(83.50)*		0
Others	69,451		297	106,352	39	2,124
(F)	*(0.10)*		*(71.00)*	*(34.20)*	0	0
Total	**1,126,676**	**170,424**	**115,978**	**1,507,585**	**221,541**	**136,914**
(F)	*(29.60)*	*(32.30)*	*(38.20)*	*(31.00)*	*35.60%*	

Note: (F) = Females.
Figures in brackets are percentages.

Source: Computed from raw data provided by Bahagian Sistem Maklumat, Jabatan Imigresen, Malaysia, Putrajaya.

Another interesting feature in the expansion of foreign workers in Malaysia is the increasing number of women among them. As shown in Table 6, in 2003 and 2006, between 29% and 35% of migrant workers in Malaysia were females. They are found in almost all sectors, but their dominance is in the domestic service and as carers in welfare homes. They are also visible in manufacturing, working mainly as production operators, where they form about 30 % of the workforce

5.2 Irregular Migrant Workers

Besides the legal contract workers, Malaysia also has a large number of irregular workers comprising the undocumented, over-stayers, contract defaulters, pass abusers, stateless persons and refugees. (see Azizah Kassim, 2007.b). As indicated earlier, Malaysia is not a signatory to the Geneva Convention on Refugees, but it continued to provide temporary abode to asylum seekers and refugees who in the last two decades came from countries such as Myanmar and Indonesian Acheh. To date a UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) source estimates that there are around 40,000 people of concerns in Malaysia (Fradot, 2007). The Malaysian government views refugees and asylum seekers as irregular migrants (New Straits Times, 3 March 2007). But unlike other irregular migrants, they are permitted to stay once they are verified as genuine asylum seekers and refugees by UNHCR. With their verification card they cannot be arrested, detained and deported for violations of immigration laws.

The Immigration Department estimates the irregular migrants at around 200,000, but other parties give higher figures. The MTUC (Malaysian Trade Union Congress) for example, put their number at around 500,000 and MEF (Malaysian Employers Federation) at three times the number of legal contract workers i.e. around six million. The actual number cannot be ascertained, however, what is certain is their persistently high number in spite of the various measures taken by the state to reduce their number as alluded to above. This is evidenced by the results of the regularization, amnesty, Ops Nyah 1 and Ops Nyah 2 exercises which apprehended over three million irregular migrants in the last two decades (see Azizah Kassim, 2007a). A majority of them are economically active, engaged in the same jobs as the legal contract workers. In fact, they are found in a wider

range of jobs as they feel that they are not subject to any employment rules and regulations. The consistently high number of irregular migrants put into question the efficacy of the present policy on foreign workers.

6.0 Factors Influencing Policy Decision and Implementation: Is Ethnic Diversity a Relevant Factor?

It can be said that the Malaysian foreign workers' policy has limited success. While it has been successful in encouraging legal recruitment and employment of alien workers, it has failed to reduce the number of irregular migrants. There is a gap between policy objectives and its outcome which needs explanation.

Studies on policy implementation has proposed that the gap between policy objectives and its outcome can be attributed to at least three factors – policy flaw; macro-structural factors; and domestic and international political constraints (Cornelius and Tsuda 2004:1-48). These three factors apply to the Malaysian case. The writer had elsewhere discussed the policy flaw, attributed to its faulty assumption .i.e that labour importation is temporary when in reality it is not as the use of migrant labour has been going on for more three decades (Azizah Kassim, 2007a.) Its implementation is also difficult due to "embedded" structural factors – viz. the expansion of formal education, the increasing number of women in the formal economy, the continued rejection by the locals of the 3D's jobs, and most importantly the ethnic diversity of the population with its entrenched cross-border networks. Ethnic political parties in Malaysia too put demands on policy decisions just as international and regional regimes.

As a member of the global community Malaysia is expected to acceded to or abide by such regimes as the ILO Conventions on Migrant Workers, the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Conventions on the Eliminations of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW), the Declaration of Human Rights 1947, UNHCR, etc.. Policy makers have to find a balance between national and supra-national interests. The difficulty faced by policy implementers in trying to balance between these two interests is

well expressed in a special report by the Department of Immigration which mentions the "interference" by UNHCR in some of its raids on irregular migrants. The misunderstanding lies in the fact that some economic migrants arrived in Malaysia disguised as refugees.

How ethnic diversity can affect the making and implementation of the policy on migrant workers will be discussed below.

6.1 Ethnic Diversity and Accommodating Attitude Towards Immigrants

As alluded to in section 2, the Malaysian society is born out of in-migration and multi-culturalism, multi-lingualism and multi-religiosity is a common aspect of Malaysian daily life especially in the urban areas. This gives way to a high degree of tolerance towards foreign nationals. It can be said that until the influx of foreign nationals showed its ugly impacts in the early eighties, Malaysians generally accepts migrants especially as they are performing an important economic function. They are a solution to their problem. Such a favourable attitude partly accounts for the delay in addressing the issue of irregular workers. This attitude may have changed among some sections of the public in the last decade, as more people are voicing their resentment against contract worker and irregular migrants in the media. They are increasingly being seen as a threat to national security. Never the less there is still a large section of the population who are willing to harbour and employ them legally or otherwise.

The multi-ethnic population makes identifying aliens in their midst is difficult. In a mono-ethnic society such as Japan, a non-citizen can easily be identified by his physical appearance and cultural bearings (language use, attire etc.). However, this is almost impossible in multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Malaysia where the population can trace descent to China, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Arab countries Indonesia and Europe.

Thus identifying irregular migrants is no easy task[5] and this negatively affects the implementation of the migrant workers' policy.

6.2 The Politics of Migration: Who Can Come and Who Can Stay?

In spite Malaysia's long history of hosting migrants, public administrators in post independent Malaysia has no experience in dealing with migrant workers except for expatriates. This partly accounts for the period of neglect of foreign workers in the seventies. When it was incumbent on them to formulate a policy on foreign workers, one major question confronting them was "who can be allowed to come"? Initially, in the Peninsula, it was the Indonesians who were most preferred, not only because a large number were already working in the country illegally, but also because of their historical link and cultural affinity with the local Malay population. Such a decision did not go well with some opposition Chinese political leaders who accused the Malay dominated government of allowing the Indonesians in to increase the number of Malays in the country. They believe Indonesians can easily assimilate with the Malay population, and should they be conferred permanent resident status, their children will become citizens, thus bolstering the Malay population which in turn will increase the voting and political strength in the Malays in the long term. It was to avoid prolonging such allegations that the door was opened to other nationalities except for Chinese, for fear on the part of the Bumiputras that they will bolster the Chinese population, and with it their political strength.[6] Until today such suspicion remains in the minds of non-Malay/Bumiputra political leaders as evidenced by the November 2007 parliamentary debate. A non-Bumiputra parliamentarian, from the opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP) is

[5] In an Ops Nyah exercise after the 2002 amnesty in Sabah, a young girl, a Sabahan of Filipino descent was wrongly deported to the Philippines. The case gained wide publicity, partly because of her claim that she was sexually harassed by officers at the detention camp where she was held prior to deportation. In another exercise after the 2004-2005 amnesty, a man from Peninsula Malaysia on a visit to Sabah was mistaken for an irregular migrant. He was arrested and detained at one of the detention camps. The error was later realised and the man released after media publicity. In June 2006, a Bajau girl of Filipino descent was arrested and detained in Kota Kinabalu. The writer assisted in getting her out of the immigration depot.

[6] In 2007, however, there was a move by some quarters to persuade the government to allow the importation of maids from China. The opposition, however, did not come from the non-Chinese Malaysians but from Chinese women themselves for non-political reasons. They view Chinese women from the mainland as "China dolls" who are capable of breaking their marriages (New Straits Times, 2007).

reported to have ..."alleged that the government practiced favouritism when awarding permanent resident status" (New Straits Times, 22 November, 2007). Although he did not mention which country being favoured, it is public knowledge that he is referring to Indonesia and that he is in fact voicing his concern that Indonesian migrants given PR will benefit the Malays politically.

The influence of ethnic diversity /politics on the management of migrants is also well demonstrated in Sabah, especially with regards to the Muslim Filipino refugees who now form a substantial portion of the state's workforce. Amidst political unrest in their country in the seventies, they escaped to Sabah and were allowed to stay by the former Chief Minister, Tun Mustapha (1968-76), himself a Suluk Muslims with paternal link to the Sulu Sultanate which is now a part of the Philippines Republic. His permission to accommodate the refugees was hailed as good move for the economy as Sabah was then facing acute labour shortage in its plantation and agricultural sectors. However, as he was head of a Muslim based political party, USNO, (United Sabah National Organisation)[7] his move was interpreted as politically motivated i.e. to increase the Muslim population and attain Muslim political dominance in the state. This is well articulate by Bahrin & Rachagan (1984), as follows,

" For Sabah, the existence of a large number of Filipinos, even while satisfying the current critical labour needs of the state , has immense social and political implications. The Filipinos now perhaps constitute the second largest community in Sabah and their numbers further inflate the percentage of Muslims in the state. The predominantly non-Muslim Kadazans who consider themselves the "definitive people" of Sabah already fear that the influx of Filipino Muslims would jeopardize their tenuous claim to numerical and therefore, cultural and political supremacy in Sabah. ..... The Kadazans are not alone in their fear. The Chinese community, amongst whom are the principal beneficiaries of the cheap labour of the Filipinos have also been responsive to the alarm raised by the politicians...." (P. 210).

[7] USNO was disbanded in the early nineties and its members absorbed into the Peninsula based United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), the major partner in the ruling coalition Barisan Nasioanl.

Referring to such fears at the Federal level, the two writers added, ..." *Given the communal nature of politics in Malaysia's plural society, ...such inconsistencies are readily converted into communal fears. Some non-Muslim Malaysians fear that the government recent decision to inhibit the entry of foreign wives, the tough stand against the Vietnamese displaced persons, the selection and resettlement in Malaysia of displaced Muslims from Kampuchea, the tolerance shown to the estimated quarter million illegal immigrants from Indonesia and the accommodation of 100,000 persons from the Southen Philippines are all part of a carefully co-ordinated population policy aimed at restructuring the communal balance in Malaysia"* (P.210).

The communal balance referred to is to increase the Muslim Malay/Bumiputra demographic majority and with it, its political supremacy.

Attempts made to accommodate and assimilate the refugees under Mustapha and his successor Haris Salleh, also a Muslim, were later abandoned by the state authorities. Subsequently, the leadership of the state passed to non-Muslim hands, and the Filipino refugees became a neglected group until their case was taken up by the Federal authority at the end of the eighties and put under the care of a special unit, the Federal Task Force for Sabah and Labuan. There are now repeated calls among non-Muslim political leaders to repatriate them. In June 2007, a statement by a Federal Minister announced that part of the long term plan of the Federal government to solve the refugee problems in Sabah is to confer the refugees Permanent Resident status was strongly opposed by many quarters. Objections came from UPKO's (United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation.) as expressed by its Youth Chief Peter Mojuntin (Daily Express 1 July, 2007), Parti Bersatu Sabah and Democratic Party (New Straits Times, 13 November 2007). The former is an ethnically based party and the latter two multi-ethnic parties which are dominated by Christian ethnic groups, who will lose out in terms of political strength and votes if the Filipino Muslims are assimilated and their descendents become citizens. On the contrary, responses from Muslim political leaders in Sabah are somewhat subdued and neutral. Such strong opposition makes the management of refugees in Sabah almost impossible.

6.3 Ethnic Cross-Border Networks as Informal Recruiting Agency.

Since the mid eighties the government has established recruiting procedure for foreign workers. They have to be recruited formally, either by formal recruiting agencies or by individuals using the "calling visa". However, such formal channels are costly and time consuming and to overcome these, ethnic network are often utilised by prospective job seekers to look for employment; or by prospective employers to recruit workers, viz. illegally. Prospective workers are usually asked to come legally using visit passes and on arrival in Malaysia, they are hired. This practice is common among small enterprises with few workers such as food vendors, hair dressing salons, laundry and restaurant operators, cleaning contractors and domestic services. The following cases serve as examples.

Case I. The Indian *Rojak* and *Cendol* Vendors in Petaling Jaya

The rojak and cendol vendors, who are usually of Indian origin, operate an ambulatory business, on the back of a van. He is assisted by another Indian, usually a younger man, in his daily business operations which begins at around 11 am until 9 pm every day of the week. Our enquiry on twenty such operators in Petaling Jaya revealed that the assistants are usually relatives from their home town in (Tamil Nadu) who they have brought in as trainees. Some claimed to have brought in these relatives legally on tourist visas and whether or not they subsequently register them as legal foreign workers, they refused to say.

Based on these lead, the writer also checked on Indian restaurants in Petaling Jaya and a cleaning contractor in an academic institution in Bangi, Selangor. Ethnic recruitment seems common as news of job vacancies are passed on by Malaysians to their relatives in the country of origin by electronic media. A Malaysian citizen of Indian origin who operates a business will recruit workers from their land of origin, first among close relatives before employing others. This kind of recruitment is also practised among Malaysians of Indonesians and Nepalese origin because it is fast and cheap. This mode of recruitment is beneficial to both employer and employee but it is contrary to national interest as it leads to the expansion of irregular workers.

6.4 Ethnic Networks as Harbourers Irregular Migrants

Ethnic groups of foreign descent are also known to harbour irregular migrants either out of a desire to help foreign relatives or forced to do so by circumstances. In our research on migrant workers in Kuala Lumpur in the late nineties, we came across many newly arrived Indonesians in a village inhabited by Malaysians of Indonesian origin. Many arrived clandestinely by taxi in the wee hours of the morning knocking on the doors of distant relatives in the village seeking accommodation and assistance to get jobs. The locals were forced to help them at the risk of being charged for abetting in violations of immigration laws. The villagers eventually sort out their problems by allowing the newly arrived irregular migrants to build their own accommodation in a land reserve next to a Muslim burial ground (Azizah Kassim, 2000).

Some local people feel save to harbour foreign relatives who overstay or who came in clandestinely in their homes as these are rarely the target of the Ops Nyah 2 operations. As long as irregular migrants stay indoors, or if they go out, they are not conspicuous (by dressing like Malaysians, not talking in their ethnic dialects, etc.) they can avoid detection.

6.5 Limiting Integration and Avoiding Assimilation.

Ethnic relations are tainted with suspicions. With regards to cross-border in-migration, the political leaders of each ethnic group is always keeping an eye on the others to ensure they do not abuse migration as a tool to bolster their numerical strength and political power. Hence, policy measures are tailored towards migrants' temporary stay to avoid full integration and assimilation. They can work to a maximum period of five years only after which they must go home. They can only return to Malaysia and resume work after a period of six months. This policy is to stop the foreign workers from applying for the permanent resident status, for which they are eligible if their stay is longer. Other the terms and conditions of employment aimed at their short stay include prohibitions to take along family members and to get married while in service. As these

terms and conditions deny the workers their basic rights to family life, they are not observed. For example, many foreign workers send for their family members once they are settled, asking them to come as tourists and then overstay. In due course, more children are born, their births unregistered for fear of detection by the authorities, adding to the number of irregular migrants in the country.

6.6 Cross-Religious Employments and Its Problems

Other problems relating to migrant workers in multi-cultural Malaysia are cross religious employments. Problems arise when employers are non-Muslims and the workers are Muslim. In the case of domestic maids, employers are known to make their Muslim maids handle and cook non-halal products such as pork which is abhorrent to Muslims. Religiously insensitive employers forbid their maids to observe basic Islamic rituals such as the five daily prayers and fasting in the month of Ramadan.

Case 2: *A Muslim Indonesian maid in the employ of a Chinese Christian Family.*

Yanti, the maid told the writer, she was told by the recruiting agent in Indonesia that she would be working for a Malay family. On arrival in Kuala Lumpur she was given to a Chinese family, but she could not voice her objection for fear of losing her job. Initially, her employer allowed her time for prayer, but this permission was later withdrawn as the employer was concerned that she takes time off five times a day to pray. " Why do you pray so many times in a day?" the employer once asked angrily, thinking that she was just finding excuses not to work. His prohibition to her fasting is born out of fear that she will be too weak to be able to work for a month.

There are also reported cases of employers in the food making businesses asking their Muslim workers to handle non-halal stuff. A much publicized case some years ago involved a pork sausage manufacturer who hired Muslim Indonesian women to mince pork using their bare hands. They were so traumatised by the job that one of them leaked it to the press leading to a raid by the state Muslim agency to the factory. Another involved Bangladeshi workers hired in a farm rearing pigs.

Other cross-religious faux pas involved Malay families employing Filipino nannies. It was reported that the nannies took their Muslim young charges to church on Sundays without the knowledge of their parents.

Incidences such as these require the state to institute special procedures in migrant management. There was a move to confine Muslim workers to Muslim employers only, but the ruling proved impossible to enforce. Very recently, the Malaysian Immigration Department makes it incumbent of non-Muslim employers wishing to engage Muslim maids to agree to certain conditions. They are made to sign a formal contract not to prohibit the workers from performing their religious duties and not to make them perform duties contrary to their beliefs. Although these forms are signed and stamped by the employers, the terms and conditions are not always observed as there are no checking mechanisms to ensure employers compliance. Thus the affected maids are often left in a state of despair as the employers' neighbours and friends who often know of such violations would not report such matters to the authorities.

7.0 Concluding Remarks

Malaysia's foreign workers' policy, instituted about two decades ago, seems to have had limited success. There is a gap between policy objectives and its outcome due to policy flaw and problems of its implementation caused by macro-structural factors and constraints from regional and international regimes. Of the many factors affecting policy decision and measures, ethnic divisions among its population and the presence of ethnically based political parties proved to be the most important. The state accommodation of ethnic interests not only led to a flawed policy, it also interferes with its successful implementation.

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Managing Migrant Workers in a Multi-Ethnic Society: The Case of Malaysia.[1]

Azizah Kassim

1.0 Introduction

British colonial administration in Malaysia (then Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak) which began in the late eighteenth century, introduced capitalistic economic enterprises which was accompanied by the importation of foreign labour mainly from China, the Indian sub-continent and Indonesia. This laid the foundation for the country's multi-ethnic population which according to its last Census in 2000, was around 23.274 million. Of these, about 5.6% were immigrants. Among the Malaysians population, 63% were Bumiputra (lit. "sons of the soil" i.e. indigenous groups); 26 % Chinese; 7.5% Indians, and the rest of the "others" category.

After independence in 1957, Malaysia once again becomes a popular destination for foreign workers. Socio-economic development, especially from 1970, created ample job opportunities particularly in agriculture, construction and the service sector. But Malaysians rejected these jobs thus creating labour shortage in some sectors of the economy. Employers resorted to the recruitment and employment of foreign workers, albeit clandestinely for over a decade. With the expansion of irregular migrant workers, then estimated at about a quarter million, and their attendant problems, the government was forced to formulate and implement a policy on foreign workers in the early eighties. Despite the policy, Malaysia is still inundated with irregular migrant workers. In 2007, Malaysia has around 2 million legally recruited foreign workers, forming 10% of the population and 16.8% of the workforce. In addition, there are a large number of irregular migrants estimated between 200,000 and one million. The sheer number alone can lead to complex problems that can make their management an extremely difficult task.

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[1] Draft paper for the 3rd Malaysia -Thailand International Conference of Southeast Asian Studies, Mahidol University, Bangkok, 29th November-1st December, 2007. Not to be quoted without the author's permission.

This paper examines how Malaysia manages in-migration and treats its foreign workers against the backdrop of cultural and ethnic diversity where ethnic division is officially sanctioned and political parties are ethnically based. It seeks to answer such question as: What are the factors which influence the formulation of Malaysia's foreign workers' policy? What are the objectives of the policy and how are its measures implemented? How do Malaysia's multi-ethnic population and multi-ethnic politics impact on migration policy and its implementation; and on migration in-flows and migrants' integration? These are some of the questions being addressed in this paper. The paper is guided by the following assumptions:

- That the multi-ethnic population with its ethnically based political parties (i) negatively influence policy decisions, giving way to a flawed policy on migrant workers, and, (ii) hinders the policy implementation causing a wide gap between policy objectives and its outcome.

2.0 The Colonial Legacy: In-migration, Development of a Multi-Ethnic Society and the Nation State.

2.1 Development and Migration

Inter-islands migration has been going on for centuries in the ASEAN region but it was the penetration of western colonialism which boosted its pace. In the case of Malaysia, massive in-migration took place under the British colonial rule, with the introduction of capitalistic economic enterprises which began in the early nineteenth century. With the small indigenous population engaged in subsistence economy, and their reluctance to work as "coolies" in the new enterprises, the colonial authorities sanctioned the importation of millions of foreign workers mainly from India (inclusive of Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and Pakistan), China and Indonesia. In the case of Peninsular Malaysia (then known as Malaya), the result of the influx was amply demonstrated by the result of the country's Census which began at the end of the nineteenth century (see Table 1). By 1891 Malaya already had a substantial number of foreigners among its population.

Table 1: Peninsular Malaysia: The Emergence and Expansion of a Multi-Ethnic Society

Colonial Period	Total	Malays & Other Ind Grps.	Immig. Chinese	Immig. Indians	Immig. "Others"	
1891	746,297	409,235	**269,902**	**58,069**	**9,091**	
	(100)	(54.8)	**(36.2)**	**(7.8)**	**(1.2)**	
1901	1,022,289	492,183	**419,355**	**9,7687**	**13,064**	
	(100)	(48.1)	**(40.4)**	**(9.6)**	**(1.3)**	
1911	2,342,248	1,372,290	**694,970**	**239,786**	**35,202**	
	(100)	(58.6)	**(29.7)**	**(10.2)**	**(1.5)**	
1921	2,910,214	1,569,279	**857,653**	**439,510**	**43,862**	
	(100)	(53.9)	**(15.1)**	**(1.5)**		
1931	3,788,530	1,864,135	**1,285,173**	**572,690**	**66,532**	
	(100)	(49.2)	**(33.9)**	**(15.1)**	**(1.8)**	
1947	4,908,086	2,427,834	**1,884,534**	**530,638**	**65,080**	
	(100)	(49.4)	**(38.5)**	**(0.8)**	**(1.3)**	
Post Independence		**Bumiputra**	**Mal. Chinese**	**Mal. Indians**	**Mal. "Others"**	**Non-Citizens**
1957	6,278,758	3,125,474	2,333,756	707,108	112,420	
	(100)	(49.8)	(37.2)	(11.2)	(1.8)	
1970	9,181,674	4,841,268	3,285,991	981,449	72,966	
	(100)	(52.7)	(35.8)	(10.7)	(	
1980	11,442,086	6,325,444	3,869,423	1,172,688	74,531	
	(100)	(55.3)	(33.8)	(10.2)	(0.7)	
1991	14,797,616	8,433,826*	4,250,969	1,380,048	410,544	**322,229**
	(100)	(57)	(28.7)	(9.3)	(2.8)	(2.2)
2000	18,523,632	11,135,694	4,883,079	1,680,132	133,665	**691,062**
	(100)	(60.1)	(26.4)	(9.1)	(0.7)	(3.7)

Source: Adapted from Tey, 2007.

Nonetheless, the local Malay community was still the majority. A decade later, due to further inflow of foreign workers, the local population lost its majority status. In 1911 and 1921 the number and percentage of the local population rose, only to decline again in the subsequent years. Sabah and Sarawak gained independence on joining Malaya to form the Federation of Malaysia in 1963. The two states too were under British administration and like Malaya, they were also subjected to the in-flow of immigrant labour. However, in the case of Sabah, foreign workers were brought in not only from China, India and Indonesia, but also from neighbouring Philippines.

On independence (1957 for Malaya and 1963 for Sabah and Sarawak), the foreign population were given the option to become citizens and many did; resulting in the multi-ethnic population in Malaysia. By the early seventies, most of the immigrants (the largest of which were Chinese and Indians) who came to Malaya, Sabah and Sarawak and their off springs were no longer "foreign nationals". They were Malaysians even though in subsequent Census Reports they are still categorised as "Chinese" or "Indians".

As from 1970, the Malaysian government re-arranged the ethnic categorisation in the country. The population were divided into two major groups: the Bumiputra (lit. "sons of the soil") and non-Bumiputra. In the Peninsula, the former comprise the Malays and aboriginal groups. In Sabah, they comprise at least five major groups such as the Kadazan-Dusun, Murut, Rungus and Bajaus; and in Sarawak, the Ibans, Melanau, Bidayuh etc. The non-Bumiputra comprised mainly Chinese and Indians, and the rest (such as Eurasians, Europeans, etc.) are simply referred to as "Others". These new categorisation can be seen in Table 2. In 1991, the population was around 18.55 million of which the Bumiputra formed the majority. In the last population census in Malaysia in 2000, their number increased accounting for over 63% of the population of about 23.26 million. Over 26% were Chinese , 7.4 % Indians and 3.2% "Others". Due to in-migration in the post independence era, the number of foreign nationals too has increased both in number and in percentage terms.

Table 2: Malaysian Population 1991-2000
('000)

	1991	2000	Average Ann. Growth 1991-1995	Average Ann. Growth 1196-2000
Total Population	18.55	23.26	(2.7)	(2.3)
Malaysian Citizens	17.75	21.95	(2.2)	(2.1)
• **Bumiputra**	10.75 (60.5)	13.61 (63.2)	(2.7)	(2.6)
• **Chinese**	5.02 (28.3)	5.6 (26.0)	(1.3)	(1.1)
• **Indians**	1.41 (7.9)	1.61 (7.48)	(1.5)	(1.4)
• **Others**	0.59 (3.3)	0.70 (3.3)	(2.0)	(1.8)
• **Non-Citizens**	0.80 (4.3)	1.31 (5.6)	(12.3)	(5.7)

Note: Figures in brackets are percentages.
Source: Adapted from the Seventh Malaysia Plan, 1996-2000,pp 105.

2.2 Salient Features of the Malaysian Multi-Ethnic Society

There are several features of the Malaysian multi-ethnic population which need highlighting as it has implications on trans-border in-migration in the post independence era. These are:

i. Ethnic Division is Officially Sanctioned.

Ethnic divisions are officially sanctioned. Birth certificates and identity cards indicate a citizens ethnic group - Malay, Iban or Bidayuh, etc. in the case of the Bumiputra category; or a Chinese, Indians, etc. for non-Bumiputra. Ethnic boundaries are marked by cultural differences as expressed in religious practices and language. Such being the case, the perpetuation of these ethnic indicators is important through education and the media. Thus, despite the establishment of national schools in the years after independence, the Chinese and Indians are allowed to have their own vernacular schools, should they not want to enter the national school system which uses Malay medium of education. They

are also permitted to have their own newspapers, radio and television channels. Ethnic religious festivals too are accorded public holidays. Malaysia is a show case for multi-culturalism.

ii. Religious Divide

Associated with the ethnic divide is that of religion. While the official religion of Malaysia is Islam, the population is given the freedom to practice other faiths. Major religions among the population are Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confusionism. While all Malays are Muslims, other Bumiputra's are free to choose their religion. A Rungus in Sabah can be a Christian, a Muslim or an animist. A Chinese may be a Christian, Muslim, Buddhist or Taoist and an Indian could be a Muslim, a Christian, a Hindus or a Sikh. Religious and ethnic divide do not always overlap each other.

iii. Political Parties are Ethnically Based.

Another feature of ethnic diversity in Malaysia is presence of ethnic based political parties, which is seen by many as the root cause of ethnic division and its continuity. In the Peninsula, Malays have their United Malay National Organisation (UMNO) and the Malaysian Islamic Party (known locally as PAS). The Chinese have their Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Indians, the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) and Peoples Progressive Party (PPP). There are attempts to bridge the political/ethnic divide by forming multi-ethnic parties such as the Gerakan (Malaysian Peoples Movement) and the DAP (Democratic Action Party), but these parties are usually dominated by one ethnic group - the Chinese. In Sabah and Sarawak too, the same political tendency prevails, with major ethnic groups forming their own political organization to further ethnic interest. Examples are the Party Bansa Dayak[2] in Sarawak; and UPKO (United Pasokmomogan Kadazan Organisation) and Parti Bersatu Sabah (PBS) in Sabah.

[2] In 2007, the party changed its name to Parti Rakyat Sarawak.

By forming a coalition, the Barisan Nasional (BN) some of these political have been able to gain power and rule the country for the last fifty years. The BN, formed in 1970 based on an earlier coalition of UMNO, MCA and MIC, has 13 member political parties from Sabah and Sarawak since 2003.

To remain in power, each ethnic party must retain its ethnic boundary, their "Malayness", "Chineseness", "Indianess" or "Kadazanness" must be maintained through preservation of their language, culture, religion, etc. Political leaders must pursue the socio-economic and political interests of their own ethnic communities and in doing so, they often come into conflict with their partners in the coalition and with others.

iv. Entrenched Kinship/Ethnic Networks Across National Boundaries.

As a large proportion of the Malaysian population are of recent immigrant descent, many still have relatives in their country of origin with whom they have close contacts. Among Malaysian Indian families, for example, it is not uncommon for parents to look for marriage partners for their children from their family members in India or among Indian diaspora elsewhere. Some Malays/Bumiputra of Indonesian descent are also in touch with their relatives from the land of their ancestors. The same tendency applies to other ethnic groups in the country. As a result many Malaysians have entrenched kinship and ethnic network systems cutting across national boundaries.

2.3 Challenged Borders

The establishment of colonial administration (the British, Dutch, Spanish, French, Portuguese and the Americans) in the ASEAN region laid the foundation of the nation state and with it the institution of state boundaries which was drawn to suit the economic and political interests of the colonial powers. These boundaries cut across cultural areas dividing families and ethnic groups into separate nationalities. In spite of the national divide, social and economic interactions between these separated peoples persisted. They cross these borders as if they were non existent, perhaps unaware of the official immigration control and its significance. These borders, at least on the Malaysian side, were highly porous, perhaps intentionally made so in view of the lack of manpower faced by the expanding capitalistic enterprises.

3.0 Migration in the Post Independent Era

For the Peninsula, in the post independent era, immigration control was imposed with the establishment of the 1959/1963 Immigration Act. However, along the borders, clandestine entry proceeded at a subdued rate. The early years of independence was marked by internal migration, especially the rural-rural and rural-urban flow. It was only in the seventies that trans-border in-migration began to accelerate with the implementation of the New Economic Policy (NEP-1970-1990). The NEP's emphasis on socio-economic and infra-structural development created ample employment opportunities at the lower rung of the job hierarchy. Unfortunately, these jobs were rejected by most of the locals who have by then benefited from the expansion of formal education in the years after independence. The overcome this labour shortfall employers had to recruit and employ foreign nationals clandestinely. The result was an influx of foreign workers mainly from Indonesia islands of Java, Sumatra and Bawean and nationals of Thailand, in the case of the Peninsula.

In Sabah, the state sanctioned in-migration of workers from Indonesian under the Malaysian Migration Fund Board (MMF) which brought in over 200,000 Indonesians from Kalimantan and Sulawesi (Labour Report, 1983/84). In addition, migrant workers also came from neighbouring islands of the Philippines especially the Mindanao area and from Sarawak. These foreign workers were needed to work in logging and the agricultural sector especially in the plantations. In Sarawak, migrant workers came mainly from across the border with Indonesian Kalimantan.

Other economic factors external to Malaysia also helped boosted migration into the country. Some of the neighbouring countries were and still are experiencing a high rate of unemployment and lower wage levels than in Malaysia. In addition the exchange rate of the Ringgit was high in favour of the Indonesian Rupiahs, the Baht or the Filipino Pesos. There was a strong economic motive to work in Malaysia and passage to the country was made easy with improved air, sea and land transportation.

Apart from the economic migrants, the early seventies saw Malaysia being inundated by refugees. The Peninsula was forced to accommodate thousands of Vietnamese and, to a smaller extent, Cambodians refugees. Sabah became the landing ground for a large number of Filipino refugees escaping political unrest under the Marcos regime in the Southern Philippines islands of Mindanao (Dorall, 1987; Bahrin & Rachagan 1984 and Wong, 2001). While the Vietnamese refugees were isolated and prohibited from integration until their repatriation in the mid nineties, attempts were made to integrate the Cambodians and the Filipino. The Filipinos were given a special pass, the IMM13, to stay and work in Sabah, where they remain as refugees until today (Azizah Kassim, 2004).

The lax immigration control for over a decade in the seventies allowed irregular migrant workers to proliferate and as their number grew and as they moved into a wider range of work sectors in the urban areas, they became more visible, thus attracting the attention of the public. The situation was exacerbated when the immigrant communities began to compete with the local poor for affordable housing in the squatter areas and for economic opportunities especially in petty businesses; and the involvement of a few in violent crimes. By the early eighties, their presence was beginning to be seen as problematic and soon the issue and problems of their employment became an agenda for mainstream political discourse. With political leaders from both the ruling and opposition parties voicing their concern about the negative impacts of foreign labour employment, especially to national security, the government was compelled to take steps to resolve the problems of the "illegal immigrants" who by then was believed to be at least around half a million.

Thus economic and political factors play a major role in influencing policy formulation. There was an acute need for foreign labour but their uncontrolled entry was detrimental to national security and to ensure political stability a policy on foreign workers must be formulated.

4.0 Policy on Unskilled and Semi-Skilled Foreign Workers

Malaysia's Employment Act 1955 already had provisions for the employment of foreign nationals, but it was for the expatriate category. What it lacked was one to deal with the unskilled and semi-skilled. The policy on the latter category came into effect in the early eighties. Its main objectives are to sanction legal recruitment of foreign workers to overcome labour shortages in some sectors of the economy. To facilitate legal recruitment it was incumbent on the government to resolve the problem of irregular migrant workers, known initially in the local vernacular as "*pendatang haram*" and later changed to "*pendatang tanpa izin*"[3] (illegal immigrants). Thus a parallel programme to reduce the number of illegal immigrants in the country was initiated.

The employment of foreign workers was seen as a temporary phase and accordingly, policy measures which were subsequently devised were designed to accommodate their temporary stay. While the policy objectives have remained constant, its measures have been changed several times in response to economic and political situation as well as public sentiments. Measures taken to control and monitor foreign workers are discussed subsequently

4.1 Policy Measures in 1980's

It was in the Peninsula where initial measures were taken to pave the way for legal recruitment of foreign workers. Among these was the signing of the Medan Agreement with Indonesia, aimed at legal recruitment in May 1984.. This was followed by the signing of memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with source countries such as Bangladesh and the Philippines to recruit workers. In 1989, the first regularization exercise was launched in the Peninsula aimed at registering and legalizing Indonesians in the agricultural sector. At the same time, legal mechanisms were established to facilitate legal recruitment which include the following:

[3] Apparently the term "*pendatang haram*" was strongly objected to by the Indonesians because the term *haram* in Islam also refers to pigs. The Malaysian authorities had to use a more palatable terminology i.e. "*pendatang tanpa izin*" which in essence means the same in Malay.

- The formation of a policy making committee (*Jawatankuasa Kabinet Pengambilan Pekerja Asing*) entrusted with the task of establishing procedures and mode of recruitment, to decide on the source countries and sectors eligible to engage foreign workers; the terms and conditions of foreign workers' employment, fees and levy, etc.
- The formation of an implementing agency (*Jawatankuasa Teknikal Pengambilan Pekerja Asing*) comprising representatives of related state agencies such as the Department of Immigration, Department of Labour, etc.

4.2 Policy Measures in 1990's Onwards

In the following years, the policy measures were further improved to include the following:

i. Regularization Exercise in 1990 to June 1992. This was an extension of regularization exercises carried out in 1989. It was aimed at irregular migrant workers in domestic services. The good response from employers in this sector encouraged the government to extend the exercise to the construction and later to the service sectors. The exercise was stopped in 1992.

ii. Formation of Ops Nyah 1, January 1992. This was to stop further illegal incursion into the country by foreign nationals by patrolling land and sea borders especially areas identified as illegal entry points. This is an on-going operation.

iii. Formation of Ops Nyah 2, July 1992. This is also an on-going exercise to root out illegals already in the country who refused to co-operate with the regularization programme. It involves making spot checks at worksites where foreigners are employed or in places where they live. The Ops Nyah 2 was disbanded in March 2005 and replaced with Ops Tegas.

iv. In the mid-nineties, the Malaysian government introduced compulsory medical examination for foreign workers. An agency, FOMEMA (Foreign Workers Medical Examination and Monitoring Agency) was entrusted with the responsibility of conducting medical examination on all foreign workers brought into the country to ensure that only healthy ones are employed.

v. Amendments to the Immigration Act 1959/63 were made in 1997 and 2002. The Immigration Act was found inadequate to deal with violations of immigration laws and new problems related to immigration. The new amendments, among others introduced higher fines, longer jail sentences and canning for violations of immigration laws. It also makes harbouring, trafficking and employment of irregular migrants an offence punishable by jail or fines, or both. In addition there are also provisions to charge those who falsify official documents or official endorsements.

vi. Amnesty Exercise. These were launched in the Peninsula in 1997 and in Sabah and Sarawak in 1998. In 2002 and 2004-2005, the exercise was done on a nationwide basis. Under this exercise, a specific period was allocated for irregular migrants in the country to leave without being charged under the Immigration Act 1959/63. If they wish to re-enter Malaysia and work, they can do so legally according to given procedures. Although over a million irregular migrants participated in these exercises, it is generally agreed that they represent only a fraction of the irregular migrant population in the country. This is evidenced by the number of arrests made in the Ops Nyah 2 Operations which follows the end of each amnesty exercises.

vii. Implementation of a Special Immigration Court to hear cases of irregular workers and migrants in December 2006. The court was set up to facilitate hearing of cases involving violations of immigration laws in the country. Prior to this, such cases were heard in the ordinary court and as the Malaysian courts have a backlog of thousand of cases, delays in hearing of immigration cases were common. This caused overcrowding in

immigration detention camps and slowed down operations to weed out irregular migrants under the Ops Nyah 2 exercises.

5.0 The Expansion of the Foreign Workers

With the migrant workers policy in place, two ministries were given the responsibility of managing the foreign workers i.e. the Ministry of Home Affairs through its Department of Immigration (*Jabatan Imigresen*) and the Ministry of Human Resources under it Department of Labour (*Jabatan Tenaga Kerja*). The former is responsible for issuing their visas and work permits and the latter for matters relating to their employment, except for those in domestic services. Through these departments especially the Immigration, records on foreign workers began to be kept. These records enable us to examine the expansion of the foreign work force in Malaysia.

5.1 The Expansion of the Unskilled and Semi-skilled Contract Workers

Foreign workers in Malaysia comprise two main groups: the expatriates; and the unskilled and semi-skilled. The former are the technical, managerial and professional category whose presence in Malaysia is much sought after by the state. They are administered separately from the unskilled and semi-skilled and subjected to different terms and condition of service. As they are highly paid and their number is small (around 50,000 in 2007), they are not seen as a problem. Thus much of the discourse on foreign workers excludes them.

The unskilled and semi-skilled contract workers are issued temporary work passes (*Pas Lawatan Kerja Sementara*). The issuance of these passes, which are renewable every year upon payment of a levy[4] and the worker passing a medical check-up by FOMEMA, provides a glimpse of the expansion of migrant contract workers in Malaysia (see Table 3). As shown in the Table the number of these legally recruited workers have

[4] The cost of levy varies according to sectors. The lowest is for agricultural/plantation workers and domestic maids (RM360) per annum and RM1,200 for others sectors, except in Sarawak and Sabah where it is much lower (RM950).

expanded in the last two decades. However, the yearly intake fluctuates in response to the economic situation in the country. The number increases when the economy is booming and declined in periods of economic downturn such as during the financial crisis in 1998. In the following years, as the economy recovered, it rose again to over 1.87 million in 2006. In 2007, their number increased further to around two million.

Table 3: Expansion of Foreign Workers Based on Issuance of Work Passes by the Malaysia Immigration Department

Year	Peninsular Malaysia	Sabah	Sarawak	Malaysia	Notes
1985-1991 (May)	66,758	N.A	N.A	N.A	Regularization of irregular migrant workers
1993				532,723	
	(77.78)	(18.77)	(3.45)	(100)	
1994				642,057	
	(80.36)	(15.57)	(4.06)	(100)	
1995				726,689	
	(79.32)	(16.61)	(4.06)	(100%)	
1996					Ban on Bangladeshi workers
	(78.74)	(16.26)	(5.00)	(100)	
1997					
	(80.89)	(15.40)	(3.71)	(100)	
1998				1,127,652	Asian Financial crisis-,recruitment stopped; voluntary repatriation .
	(70.03)	(25.18)	(4.79)	(100)	
1999				918,317	
	(74.14)	(17.67)	(8.19)	(100)	Ban on Bangladeshi Workers
2000				799,685	
	(79.12)	(9.41)	(11.47)	(100)	
2001				769,566	
	(74.85)	(13.67)	(11.49)	(100)	
2002				1,057,156	Econ. Recovery
	(76.87)	(14.06)	(9.06)	(100)	
2003				1,412,697	
	(79.69)	(12.06)	(8.25)	(100)	
2004				1,474,686	
	(78.38)	(13.53)	(8.09)	(100)	
2005				1,821,750	
	(79.86)	(12.96)	(7.18)	(100)	
2006				1,871,038	
	(80.84)	(11.84)	(7.32)	(100)	

Notes: Figures in brackets are percentages.
Source: Adapted from Azizah Kassim, 2007.

Table 4: Foreign Workers in Malaysia by Source Countries (1985-2007)

Source Countries	1985	1990	2001	2006
Bangladesh	1,126	361	105,744	62,669
	(32.3)	(1.5)	(13.74)	(3.6)
Cambodia				8,222
				(0.4)
China				2,482
				(0.1)
India				138,313
				(7.4)
Indonesia	998	14,125	566,983	1,174,013
	(28.7)	(58.5)	(73.67)	(62.8)
Myanmar				109,219
				(5.8)
Nepal				213,551
				(11.4)
Pakistan			2,218	11,551
			(0.28)	(0.6)
Philippine	374	5,340	17,287	24,088
	(10.7)	(22.1)	(2.25)	(1.3)
Thailand	986	4,326	2,440	13,811
	(28.3)	(17.9)	(0.32)	(0.7)
Vietnam				106,751
				(5.7)
Others:			74,894	4,537
• Sri Lanka			(9.72)	4,421
• Laos				58
• Other Countries				48
				(0.2)
Total	**3,484**	**24,152**	**769,566**	**1,869,209**
Percentages	**(100)**	**(100)**	**(100)**	**(100)**

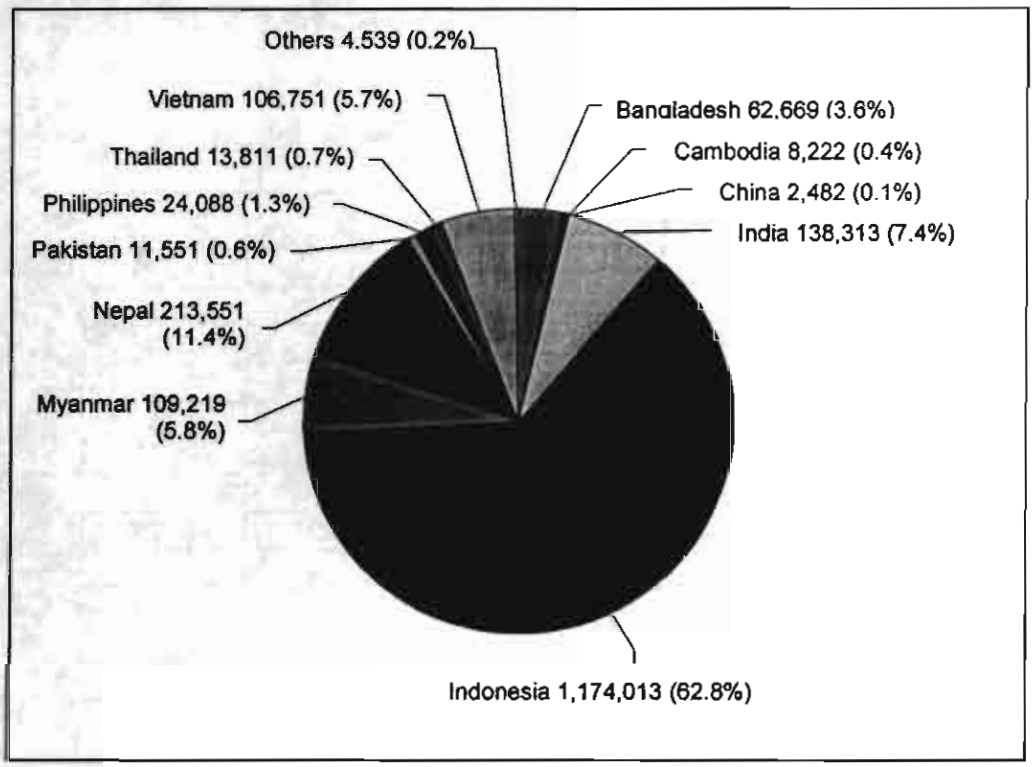
Notes:

- The "Other Countries" category includes nationals of Austria, Egypt, Fiji, Ethiopia, Morocco, Russia, Singapore, Syria, Uzbekistan, with workers ranging from 1-36.
- Numbers in brackets are percentages.

Source: Department of Immigration Malaysia, Putrajaya & Azizah Kassim, 2007.

In the seventies most of the workers in Malaysia were from Indonesia, Philippines and Thais. The number of source countries rose to four in 1990 and five in 2001. In 2002, following a riot by Indonesian workers in a factory in Nilai, Negeri Sembilan, steps were taken to open up employment to workers from other countries especially among ASEAN members. and Nepal. By 2006, Malaysia imports workers from thirteen source countries (see Table 4 & Chart 1). As shown in the Table, the majority are from the ASEAN region with the Indonesians retaining their position as the largest group. In 2006, Indonesians form over 62% of the foreign labour workforce), followed by those from Nepal (11.4%);India (7.4%); Myanmar (5.8%) and Vietnam (5.7%) and Bangladesh (3.6%).

Chart 1: Issuance of Work Passes (PLKS) by Country of Origin, Year 2006. (Total 1,869,209)



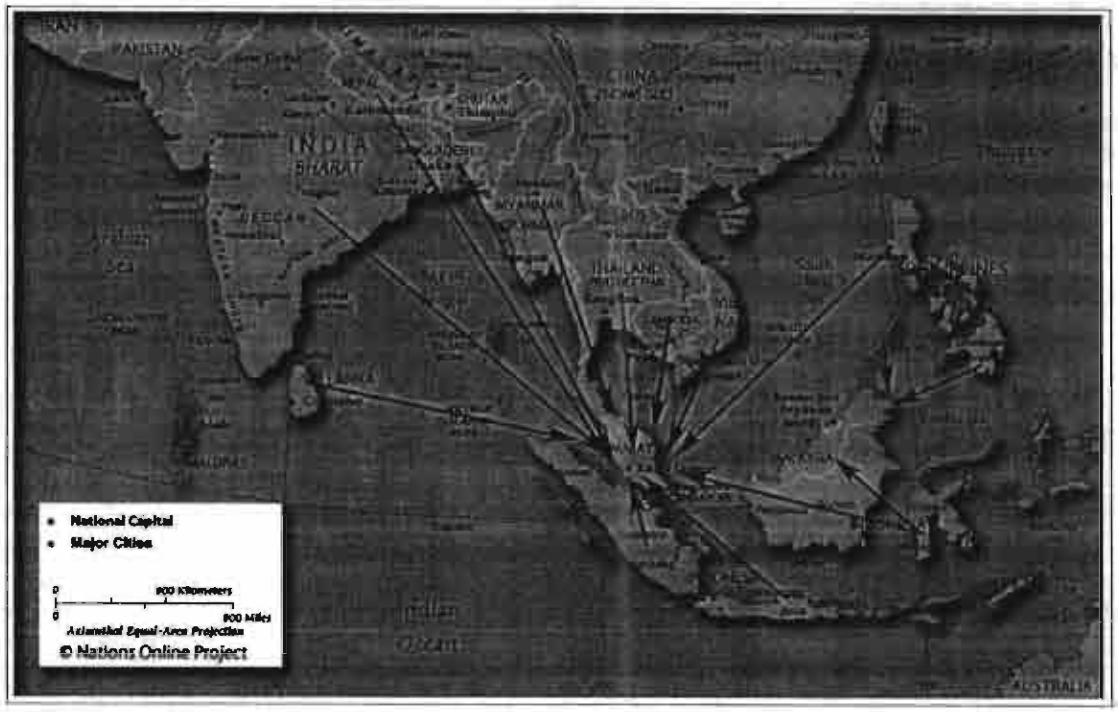


Table 5: Foreign Workers in Malaysia by Job Sectors.

Job Sectors	1985	1990	2001	2006
Agriculture				123,373
Construction		288	60,197	267,809
Domestic Maid	566	5,838	155,883	310,662
Plantation	2,918	18,026	214,595	354,124
Manufacturing			283,401	646,412
Services			55,309	166,829
Others			181	
Total	**3,484**	**24,152**	**769,566**	**1,869,209**

Source: Azizah Kassim, 2007.b. based on data provided by the Department of Immigration, Malaysia, Putrajaya.

Patterns of their labour utilization have also changed over the years. In 1985, they were engaged only in domestic services and plantations. By 1990 they were also found in the construction sector. By the 1990's two others sectors i.e. manufacturing and general services were allowed to use foreign labour. In the following decade they were given permission to work in many sub-sectors especially in services such as in laundry outlets, in restaurants, welfare homes, industrial spa, textile retail shops, and island resorts and as barbers, cleaners, security guard, as caddies at golf courses and cargo handlers. .

Table 6: Foreign Workers by Gender & Country of Origin (2003 & 2006)

	2003			2006		
	Peninsula	Sabah	Sarawak	Peninsula	Sabah	Sarawak
Indonesia	720,479	162,636	115,241	840,358	207,651	130,315
(F)	*(44.60)*	*(32.70)*	*(38.20)*	*(52.70)*	*(3.20)*	*(34.20)*
Nepal	107,896			210,074	1	11
(F)	*(0.01)*			*(0.20)*	0	
Bangladesh	93,846			54,472		3,254
(F)	*(0.40)*			*(0.30)*		0
Philippines	7,083	7,644	412	11,126	13,538	616
(F)	*(8.20)*	*(32.80)*	*(1.50)*	*(88.40)*	*(39.10)*	*(3.30)*
Thailand	10,003	10	28	13,538	69	385
(F)	*(17.80)*	*0*	*(17.90)*	*(27.00)*	*(47.80)*	*(1.30)*
India	63,743	134		139,423	220	98
(F)	*(0.30)*	*(2.20)*		*(0.30)*	*0*	0
Myanmar	47,952			108,395	18	3
(F)	*(0.06)*			*(5.50)*	0	0
Pakistan	2,242			11,406	4	101
(F)	*(0.30)*			*(0.10)*	*0*	*0*
Sri Lanka	1,067			4,241	1	6
(F)	*(57.80)*			*(23.20)*	0	0
Cambodia	2,914			8,200		1
(F)	*(58.10)*			*(83.50)*		0
Others	69,451		297	106,352	39	2,124
(F)	*(0.10)*		*(71.00)*	*(34.20)*	0	0
Total	**1,126,676**	**170,424**	**115,978**	**1,507,585**	**221,541**	**136,914**
(F)	*(29.60)*	*(32.30)*	*(38.20)*	*(31.00)*	*35.60%*	

Note: (F) = Females.
Figures in brackets are percentages.

Source: Computed from raw data provided by Bahagian Sistem Maklumat, Jabatan Imigresen, Malaysia, Putrajaya.

Another interesting feature in the expansion of foreign workers in Malaysia is the increasing number of women among them. As shown in Table 6, in 2003 and 2006, between 29% and 35% of migrant workers in Malaysia were females. They are found in almost all sectors, but their dominance is in the domestic service and as carers in welfare homes. They are also visible in manufacturing, working mainly as production operators, where they form about 30 % of the workforce

5.2 Irregular Migrant Workers

Besides the legal contract workers, Malaysia also has a large number of irregular workers comprising the undocumented, over-stayers, contract defaulters, pass abusers, stateless persons and refugees. (see Azizah Kassim, 2007.b). As indicated earlier, Malaysia is not a signatory to the Geneva Convention on Refugees, but it continued to provide temporary abode to asylum seekers and refugees who in the last two decades came from countries such as Myanmar and Indonesian Acheh. To date a UNHCR (United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees) source estimates that there are around 40,000 people of concerns in Malaysia (Fradot, 2007). The Malaysian government views refugees and asylum seekers as irregular migrants (New Straits Times, 3 March 2007). But unlike other irregular migrants, they are permitted to stay once they are verified as genuine asylum seekers and refugees by UNHCR. With their verification card they cannot be arrested, detained and deported for violations of immigration laws.

The Immigration Department estimates the irregular migrants at around 200,000, but other parties give higher figures. The MTUC (Malaysian Trade Union Congress) for example, put their number at around 500,000 and MEF (Malaysian Employers Federation) at three times the number of legal contract workers i.e. around six million. The actual number cannot be ascertained, however, what is certain is their persistently high number in spite of the various measures taken by the state to reduce their number as alluded to above. This is evidenced by the results of the regularization, amnesty, Ops Nyah 1 and Ops Nyah 2 exercises which apprehended over three million irregular migrants in the last two decades (see Azizah Kassim, 2007a). A majority of them are economically active, engaged in the same jobs as the legal contract workers. In fact, they are found in a wider

range of jobs as they feel that they are not subject to any employment rules and regulations. The consistently high number of irregular migrants put into question the efficacy of the present policy on foreign workers.

6.0 Factors Influencing Policy Decision and Implementation: Is Ethnic Diversity a Relevant Factor?

It can be said that the Malaysian foreign workers' policy has limited success. While it has been successful in encouraging legal recruitment and employment of alien workers, it has failed to reduce the number of irregular migrants. There is a gap between policy objectives and its outcome which needs explanation.

Studies on policy implementation has proposed that the gap between policy objectives and its outcome can be attributed to at least three factors – policy flaw; macro-structural factors; and domestic and international political constraints (Cornelius and Tsuda 2004:1-48). These three factors apply to the Malaysian case. The writer had elsewhere discussed the policy flaw, attributed to its faulty assumption .i.e that labour importation is temporary when in reality it is not as the use of migrant labour has been going on for more three decades (Azizah Kassim, 2007a.) Its implementation is also difficult due to "embedded" structural factors – viz. the expansion of formal education, the increasing number of women in the formal economy, the continued rejection by the locals of the 3D's jobs, and most importantly the ethnic diversity of the population with its entrenched cross-border networks. Ethnic political parties in Malaysia too put demands on policy decisions just as international and regional regimes.

As a member of the global community Malaysia is expected to acceded to or abide by such regimes as the ILO Conventions on Migrant Workers, the Conventions on the Rights of the Child (CRC), Conventions on the Eliminations of Discriminations Against Women (CEDAW), the Declaration of Human Rights 1947, UNHCR, etc.. Policy makers have to find a balance between national and supra-national interests. The difficulty faced by policy implementers in trying to balance between these two interests is

well expressed in a special report by the Department of Immigration which mentions the "interference" by UNHCR in some of its raids on irregular migrants. The misunderstanding lies in the fact that some economic migrants arrived in Malaysia disguised as refugees.

How ethnic diversity can affect the making and implementation of the policy on migrant workers will be discussed below.

6.1 Ethnic Diversity and Accommodating Attitude Towards Immigrants

As alluded to in section 2, the Malaysian society is born out of in-migration and multi-culturalism, multi-lingualism and multi-religiosity is a common aspect of Malaysian daily life especially in the urban areas. This gives way to a high degree of tolerance towards foreign nationals. It can be said that until the influx of foreign nationals showed its ugly impacts in the early eighties, Malaysians generally accepts migrants especially as they are performing an important economic function. They are a solution to their problem. Such a favourable attitude partly accounts for the delay in addressing the issue of irregular workers. This attitude may have changed among some sections of the public in the last decade, as more people are voicing their resentment against contract worker and irregular migrants in the media. They are increasingly being seen as a threat to national security. Never the less there is still a large section of the population who are willing to harbour and employ them legally or otherwise.

The multi-ethnic population makes identifying aliens in their midst is difficult. In a mono-ethnic society such as Japan, a non-citizen can easily be identified by his physical appearance and cultural bearings (language use, attire etc.). However, this is almost impossible in multi-ethnic and multi-cultural Malaysia where the population can trace descent to China, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, the Arab countries Indonesia and Europe.

Thus identifying irregular migrants is no easy task[5] and this negatively affects the implementation of the migrant workers' policy.

6.2 The Politics of Migration: Who Can Come and Who Can Stay?

In spite Malaysia's long history of hosting migrants, public administrators in post independent Malaysia has no experience in dealing with migrant workers except for expatriates. This partly accounts for the period of neglect of foreign workers in the seventies. When it was incumbent on them to formulate a policy on foreign workers, one major question confronting them was "who can be allowed to come"? Initially, in the Peninsula, it was the Indonesians who were most preferred, not only because a large number were already working in the country illegally, but also because of their historical link and cultural affinity with the local Malay population. Such a decision did not go well with some opposition Chinese political leaders who accused the Malay dominated government of allowing the Indonesians in to increase the number of Malays in the country. They believe Indonesians can easily assimilate with the Malay population, and should they be conferred permanent resident status, their children will become citizens, thus bolstering the Malay population which in turn will increase the voting and political strength in the Malays in the long term. It was to avoid prolonging such allegations that the door was opened to other nationalities except for Chinese, for fear on the part of the Bumiputras that they will bolster the Chinese population, and with it their political strength.[6] Until today such suspicion remains in the minds of non-Malay/Bumiputra political leaders as evidenced by the November 2007 parliamentary debate. A non-Bumiputra parliamentarian, from the opposition Democratic Action Party (DAP) is

[5] In an Ops Nyah exercise after the 2002 amnesty in Sabah, a young girl, a Sabahan of Filipino descent was wrongly deported to the Philippines. The case gained wide publicity, partly because of her claim that she was sexually harassed by officers at the detention camp where she was held prior to deportation. In another exercise after the 2004-2005 amnesty, a man from Peninsula Malaysia on a visit to Sabah was mistaken for an irregular migrant. He was arrested and detained at one of the detention camps. The error was later realised and the man released after media publicity. In June 2006, a Bajau girl of Filipino descent was arrested and detained in Kota Kinabalu. The writer assisted in getting her out of the immigration depot.

[6] In 2007, however, there was a move by some quarters to persuade the government to allow the importation of maids from China. The opposition, however, did not come from the non-Chinese Malaysians but from Chinese women themselves for non-political reasons. They view Chinese women from the mainland as "China dolls" who are capable of breaking their marriages (New Straits Times, 2007).

reported to have ..."alleged that the government practiced favouritism when awarding permanent resident status" (New Straits Times, 22 November, 2007). Although he did not mention which country being favoured, it is public knowledge that he is referring to Indonesia and that he is in fact voicing his concern that Indonesian migrants given PR will benefit the Malays politically.

The influence of ethnic diversity /politics on the management of migrants is also well demonstrated in Sabah, especially with regards to the Muslim Filipino refugees who now form a substantial portion of the state's workforce. Amidst political unrest in their country in the seventies, they escaped to Sabah and were allowed to stay by the former Chief Minister, Tun Mustapha (1968-76), himself a Suluk Muslims with paternal link to the Sulu Sultanate which is now a part of the Philippines Republic. His permission to accommodate the refugees was hailed as good move for the economy as Sabah was then facing acute labour shortage in its plantation and agricultural sectors. However, as he was head of a Muslim based political party, USNO, (United Sabah National Organisation)[7] his move was interpreted as politically motivated i.e. to increase the Muslim population and attain Muslim political dominance in the state. This is well articulate by Bahrin & Rachagan (1984), as follows,

" For Sabah, the existence of a large number of Filipinos, even while satisfying the current critical labour needs of the state , has immense social and political implications. The Filipinos now perhaps constitute the second largest community in Sabah and their numbers further inflate the percentage of Muslims in the state. The predominantly non-Muslim Kadazans who consider themselves the "definitive people" of Sabah already fear that the influx of Filipino Muslims would jeopardize their tenuous claim to numerical and therefore, cultural and political supremacy in Sabah. ..... The Kadazans are not alone in their fear. The Chinese community, amongst whom are the principal beneficiaries of the cheap labour of the Filipinos have also been responsive to the alarm raised by the politicians...." (P. 210).

[7] USNO was disbanded in the early nineties and its members absorbed into the Peninsula based United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), the major partner in the ruling coalition Barisan Nasioanl.

Referring to such fears at the Federal level, the two writers added, ..." *Given the communal nature of politics in Malaysia's plural society, ...such inconsistencies are readily converted into communal fears. Some non-Muslim Malaysians fear that the government recent decision to inhibit the entry of foreign wives, the tough stand against the Vietnamese displaced persons, the selection and resettlement in Malaysia of displaced Muslims from Kampuchea, the tolerance shown to the estimated quarter million illegal immigrants from Indonesia and the accommodation of 100,000 persons from the Southen Philippines are all part of a carefully co-ordinated population policy aimed at restructuring the communal balance in Malaysia"* (P.210).

The communal balance referred to is to increase the Muslim Malay/Bumiputra demographic majority and with it, its political supremacy.

Attempts made to accommodate and assimilate the refugees under Mustapha and his successor Haris Salleh, also a Muslim, were later abandoned by the state authorities. Subsequently, the leadership of the state passed to non-Muslim hands, and the Filipino refugees became a neglected group until their case was taken up by the Federal authority at the end of the eighties and put under the care of a special unit, the Federal Task Force for Sabah and Labuan. There are now repeated calls among non-Muslim political leaders to repatriate them. In June 2007, a statement by a Federal Minister announced that part of the long term plan of the Federal government to solve the refugee problems in Sabah is to confer the refugees Permanent Resident status was strongly opposed by many quarters. Objections came from UPKO's (United Pasokmomogun Kadazandusun Murut Organisation.) as expressed by its Youth Chief Peter Mojuntin (Daily Express 1 July, 2007), Parti Bersatu Sabah and Democratic Party (New Straits Times, 13 November 2007). The former is an ethnically based party and the latter two multi-ethnic parties which are dominated by Christian ethnic groups, who will lose out in terms of political strength and votes if the Filipino Muslims are assimilated and their descendents become citizens. On the contrary, responses from Muslim political leaders in Sabah are somewhat subdued and neutral. Such strong opposition makes the management of refugees in Sabah almost impossible.

6.3 Ethnic Cross-Border Networks as Informal Recruiting Agency.

Since the mid eighties the government has established recruiting procedure for foreign workers. They have to be recruited formally, either by formal recruiting agencies or by individuals using the "calling visa". However, such formal channels are costly and time consuming and to overcome these, ethnic network are often utilised by prospective job seekers to look for employment; or by prospective employers to recruit workers, viz. illegally. Prospective workers are usually asked to come legally using visit passes and on arrival in Malaysia, they are hired. This practice is common among small enterprises with few workers such as food vendors, hair dressing salons, laundry and restaurant operators, cleaning contractors and domestic services. The following cases serve as examples.

Case I. The Indian *Rojak* and *Cendol* Vendors in Petaling Jaya

The rojak and cendol vendors, who are usually of Indian origin, operate an ambulatory business, on the back of a van. He is assisted by another Indian, usually a younger man, in his daily business operations which begins at around 11 am until 9 pm every day of the week. Our enquiry on twenty such operators in Petaling Jaya revealed that the assistants are usually relatives from their home town in (Tamil Nadu) who they have brought in as trainees. Some claimed to have brought in these relatives legally on tourist visas and whether or not they subsequently register them as legal foreign workers, they refused to say.

Based on these lead, the writer also checked on Indian restaurants in Petaling Jaya and a cleaning contractor in an academic institution in Bangi, Selangor. Ethnic recruitment seems common as news of job vacancies are passed on by Malaysians to their relatives in the country of origin by electronic media. A Malaysian citizen of Indian origin who operates a business will recruit workers from their land of origin, first among close relatives before employing others. This kind of recruitment is also practised among Malaysians of Indonesians and Nepalese origin because it is fast and cheap. This mode of recruitment is beneficial to both employer and employee but it is contrary to national interest as it leads to the expansion of irregular workers.

6.4 Ethnic Networks as Harbourers Irregular Migrants

Ethnic groups of foreign descent are also known to harbour irregular migrants either out of a desire to help foreign relatives or forced to do so by circumstances. In our research on migrant workers in Kuala Lumpur in the late nineties, we came across many newly arrived Indonesians in a village inhabited by Malaysians of Indonesian origin. Many arrived clandestinely by taxi in the wee hours of the morning knocking on the doors of distant relatives in the village seeking accommodation and assistance to get jobs. The locals were forced to help them at the risk of being charged for abetting in violations of immigration laws. The villagers eventually sort out their problems by allowing the newly arrived irregular migrants to build their own accommodation in a land reserve next to a Muslim burial ground (Azizah Kassim, 2000).

Some local people feel save to harbour foreign relatives who overstay or who came in clandestinely in their homes as these are rarely the target of the Ops Nyah 2 operations. As long as irregular migrants stay indoors, or if they go out, they are not conspicuous (by dressing like Malaysians, not talking in their ethnic dialects, etc.) they can avoid detection.

6.5 Limiting Integration and Avoiding Assimilation.

Ethnic relations are tainted with suspicions. With regards to cross-border in-migration, the political leaders of each ethnic group is always keeping an eye on the others to ensure they do not abuse migration as a tool to bolster their numerical strength and political power. Hence, policy measures are tailored towards migrants' temporary stay to avoid full integration and assimilation. They can work to a maximum period of five years only after which they must go home. They can only return to Malaysia and resume work after a period of six months. This policy is to stop the foreign workers from applying for the permanent resident status, for which they are eligible if their stay is longer. Other the terms and conditions of employment aimed at their short stay include prohibitions to take along family members and to get married while in service. As these

terms and conditions deny the workers their basic rights to family life, they are not observed. For example, many foreign workers send for their family members once they are settled, asking them to come as tourists and then overstay. In due course, more children are born, their births unregistered for fear of detection by the authorities, adding to the number of irregular migrants in the country.

6.6 Cross-Religious Employments and Its Problems

Other problems relating to migrant workers in multi-cultural Malaysia are cross religious employments. Problems arise when employers are non-Muslims and the workers are Muslim. In the case of domestic maids, employers are known to make their Muslim maids handle and cook non-halal products such as pork which is abhorrent to Muslims. Religiously insensitive employers forbid their maids to observe basic Islamic rituals such as the five daily prayers and fasting in the month of Ramadan.

Case 2: *A Muslim Indonesian maid in the employ of a Chinese Christian Family.*

Yanti, the maid told the writer, she was told by the recruiting agent in Indonesia that she would be working for a Malay family. On arrival in Kuala Lumpur she was given to a Chinese family, but she could not voice her objection for fear of losing her job. Initially, her employer allowed her time for prayer, but this permission was later withdrawn as the employer was concerned that she takes time off five times a day to pray. " Why do you pray so many times in a day?" the employer once asked angrily, thinking that she was just finding excuses not to work. His prohibition to her fasting is born out of fear that she will be too weak to be able to work for a month.

There are also reported cases of employers in the food making businesses asking their Muslim workers to handle non-halal stuff. A much publicized case some years ago involved a pork sausage manufacturer who hired Muslim Indonesian women to mince pork using their bare hands. They were so traumatised by the job that one of them leaked it to the press leading to a raid by the state Muslim agency to the factory. Another involved Bangladeshi workers hired in a farm rearing pigs.

Other cross-religious faux pas involved Malay families employing Filipino nannies. It was reported that the nannies took their Muslim young charges to church on Sundays without the knowledge of their parents.

Incidences such as these require the state to institute special procedures in migrant management. There was a move to confine Muslim workers to Muslim employers only, but the ruling proved impossible to enforce. Very recently, the Malaysian Immigration Department makes it incumbent of non-Muslim employers wishing to engage Muslim maids to agree to certain conditions. They are made to sign a formal contract not to prohibit the workers from performing their religious duties and not to make them perform duties contrary to their beliefs. Although these forms are signed and stamped by the employers, the terms and conditions are not always observed as there are no checking mechanisms to ensure employers compliance. Thus the affected maids are often left in a state of despair as the employers' neighbours and friends who often know of such violations would not report such matters to the authorities.

7.0 Concluding Remarks

Malaysia's foreign workers' policy, instituted about two decades ago, seems to have had limited success. There is a gap between policy objectives and its outcome due to policy flaw and problems of its implementation caused by macro-structural factors and constraints from regional and international regimes. Of the many factors affecting policy decision and measures, ethnic divisions among its population and the presence of ethnically based political parties proved to be the most important. The state accommodation of ethnic interests not only led to a flawed policy, it also interferes with its successful implementation.

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Paper 3 Hidden "Inbetween-ness": An Exploration of Taiwanese Transnational Identity in Contemporary Japan

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Abstract

This article offers an analysis of the dynamic interplay of endogenous and exogenous forces that have created the complexity of migrant's identity. It examines cultural identity and related discourse of one particular transmigrant group, the "newcomer" Taiwanese, in contemporary Japan. This group of Taiwanese came to Japan after following the end of WWII. They have experienced complex transitions in recognition of legal status and of self-identification. Presented as a legacy of Japanese colonialism and Chinese nationalism, the newcomer Taiwanese constantly negotiate and redefine their "neither here, nor there" identities and thus constitute a distinct case within the population of overseas ethnic Chinese.

Japan, widely considered to be a society of racial and cultural homogeneity, faces an increasing influx of migrants, in particular those from East Asia in recent years. Migration thus leads to a broad range of concerns in the contemporary Japanese society. While previous literatures of the Chinese and Korean Diaspora are widely researched, there is a vacuum on Taiwanese Diaspora in the associated scholarship. This study investigates the Taiwanese migrants' cultural adaptation and socialization under the Japanese discourse through literature reviews and field study. This paper argues that the newcomer Taiwanese have constructed a transnational identity hidden in-between two cultures of Japanese and Chinese. In other words, this paper attempts to offer a perspective of Taiwanese under Japanese colonialism and Chinese nationalism that transcends the "identity struggle".

This group of Taiwanese migrants in postwar Japan struggle with surveillance, assimilation, resistance and identity confusions. To balance between a survival strategy overseas and a primordial attachment to the motherland, their identity of group boundaries may shift in various directions in accordance with the dynamic situations. Focusing on the patterns of migrants' settlement and network, this study suggests that the newcomer Taiwanese had developed a certain model that features cultural mixture captured in their intra- and inter-ethnic interactions.

Keywords: Diaspora, Cross-border Identity, Transnational migration, Taiwanese/Chinese Overseas, Postcolonial Japan-Taiwan Relations.

It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the type of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two un-reconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder. The history of the American Negro is the history of this strife—the longing to attain self-conscious manhood, to merge his double self into a better and truer self.

W.E.B.Du Bois, The Souls of Black Folk

I. Introduction

Ethnic identity has been defined as a person's subjective sense of belonging to a certain group or culture (Phinney, 1990). In a multiethnic society, ethnic identity has significant implications for the way in which people see themselves, and their perception of how a society responds to them. Immigrants often experience a sense of alienation, loss, and a feeling of "not belonging" because of their displacement (Alexander, 1996). migrants inevitably confront new forms of cultural modes and social participation that deconstruct or reconstruct their renewed self-awareness and sense of identity. Mahalingam (2006) suggested that idealized cultural identities have dual effects—either "self imaged" or "imposed" by the dominant culture. Negotiating the cultural positioning of these renewed identities within existing social hierarchies presents unique challenges. —Kim (1999) argues that Asian Americans are marginalized within the "fiddle of racial positions," where Asian Americans are simultaneously valorized as a model minority and denigrated as "outsiders" and "perpetual foreigners." Thus, Asian American are "racially triangulated" vis-à-vis Whites and Blacks in this field of racial positions (Kim, 1999).

Taiwanese migrants in Japan share parallel paths of resettlement pattern with Indo-Caribbean American in the US. Both transnational groups have twice experienced the migration process in their own or their ancestry's life history. The former migrant group in Japan is comprised of the ethnic Chinese descendents who migrated from Mainland China to Taiwan pre- and post-1949[1] ; the latter migrant of Indo-Caribbean in the US are people with roots in the Indian subcontinent who live in the Caribbean. However, the difference between Taiwanese and Caribbean case is that for some Taiwanese migrants, migrating to Japan can be also regarded as "return" to a nostalgic land of Japanese colonial rule.

Although compared to the US or some European countries, Japan is not considered to be a country of significant migration but a society of racial and cultural homogeneity. However, its history of international relations has contributed to the flow of migration between Japan and other areas. Japan had accepted a large number of immigrants from its previous colonies, such as Korea and Taiwan. In addition, since the economic boom and labor shortage in the 1980s, Japan faces an increasing

[1] Three major groups of Han Chinese migrated from Mainland China to Taiwan. The Hoklo (70%) and the Hakka (15%) constituted "Local Taiwanese"—who migrated to Taiwan prior to the mass exodus near the conclusion of the Chinese Civil War in 1949. "Mainlander" (15%) refers to those who migrated from mainland China near the end of the Chinese Civil War and their descendants.

influx of transmigrants, in particular those from East Asia. While previous literature related to Chinese and Korean Diaspora is widely researched, that on the Taiwanese Diaspora is few in number. Different from their Chinese and Korean counterparts residing in Japan, Taiwanese migrants appear to be an invisible group of culture identity. Unlike Chinese and Korean communities that have kept strong cultural identities that stress their countries of origin, Taiwanese migrants keep transnational ties to their homeland Taiwan while practice in a way of in between Japanese and Chinese cultures.

II. Focus Group and Research Methodology

This study focuses on the group of Taiwanese transmigrants, the first generation, who came to Japan from Taiwan during the years between 1949 and 1996. Members of the focus group are mainly those who reside in Tokyo Metropolitan Area (TMA), including Tokyo City, Saitaima, Kanagawa and Chiba Prefectures. They have a good command of languages in Mandarin Chinese, Japanese and HokloTaiwanese and/or the Hakka Taiwanese dialects.

This paper employs three approaches: history methodology, field study and theory examination to analyze the identity hidden in-between the two cultures of Chinese and Japanese. First, based on document analysis and literature reviews, this study looks into history of the social and political background with regards to Taiwanese migrants in Japan. It further explicates how social processes enter into the construction of cross-borderers' hybridized cultural identity through participant observations and interviews. Based on qualitative research methodology, this study conducts interview with semi-structured interview method[2] and adopts the purposive sampling[3], and snowball sampling[4]. Designed questionnaires have been distributed to the focus group since June 2007and followed up with face-to-face interviews. Last, it employs the theory of Cultural Psychology—Primordial Attachment Analysis—to perceive the focus group's networking practice as a core of cultural adaptation and socialization. Through the methodologies stated above, this paper examines the ways that the newcomer Taiwanese preserve, deconstruct and/or reconstruct their cultural identity through interfacing with people of varied backgrounds in Japan.

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[2] Semi-structured interviews are flexible, new questions can be brought up during the interview as a result of what the interviewee says, so the interview flows more like a conversation than a structured interview which has set questions. The interviewer may have a framework of themes that he wishes to explore.

[3] According to the Quantitative Method in Social Sciencee-Lessons of the Columbia University (http://ccnmtl.columbia.edu/projects/qmss/samp_type.html): , purposive sampling is a sampling method in which elements are chosen based on purpose of the study. Purposive sampling may involve studying the entire population of some limited group or a subset of a population. As with other non-probability sampling methods, purposive sampling does not produce a sample that is representative of a larger population, but it can be exactly what is needed in some cases - study of organization, community, or some other clearly defined and relatively limited group.

[4]: Snowball sampling is a technique for developing a research sample where existing study subjects recruit future subjects from among their acquaintances. Thus the sample group appears to grow like a rolling snowball. This sampling technique is often used in hidden populations which are difficult for researchers to access; example populations would be drug users or commercial sex workers.

III. Background of the Taiwanese Newcomer

a. Social Network

Taiwanese newcomers brought with them well-developed mechanisms of social and economic organization, which influenced both patterns of settlement and the maintenance of a distinct identity. None the less, provincial kinship or business associations continued to play an important role in their social life in Japan. Foreign labors and immigrants, including Chinese, Korean and Taiwanese, were disenfranchised, obliged to register, and were excluded from a wide range of social and welfare benefits as well as employment or promotion in the public sector before the 1980s. These and other exclusions reinforced traditional reliance on Chinese/Taiwanese ethnic associations in areas of employment and social life.

Early Chinese/Taiwanese migrants generally remained in China enclaves called "Chinatown" as self-employed shopkeepers or restaurants. Employees and business contacts continued to be drawn from among either relatives or acquaintances from the same province of origin, while Chinese/Taiwanese enterprise continued to raise capital using provincial ties. Those provincial associations maintained their traditional functions as social clubs and benevolent societies, providing hospitals, chambers of commerce and schools. When Chinese or Taiwanese found it difficult to obtain loans from Japanese banks before 1980s, the business associations sponsored the foundation of ethnic Chinese financial aid institutions and systems to provide similar service as a bank.

However, despite some apparent similarities, clear distinctions can be drawn between Taiwanese and mainland Chinese's patterns of settlement and employment. For example, in terms of schooling, in an effort to avoid being drawn into some political disputes between China (the PRC) and Taiwan (the ROC), many parents began to send their children to Japanese schools, through which facilitates both children and parents' segmented assimilation to Japanese-ness.

b. History of the Transitional Legal Status

As a result of war and the colonial experience, Taiwanese migrants in Japan present a unique aspect in the discussion of their ambiguous legal status, which is barely covered by the previous studies on their other counterparts flowing to the US or Southeast Asia. In the aftermath of WWII, the Taiwanese in Japan encountered ambiguity over their sense of belonging, both legally and ethnically. Their legal status was not clarified until the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Sino-Japan Treaty was concluded in 1952.

During the years between 1945 and 1952, those Taiwanese could not be categorized either as Chinese or as Japanese. Taiwanese were regarded as "non-Japanese" yet were still considered to be "Japanese citizens." There was a legal distinction between the Chinese and the Taiwanese. The former was from a country on the winner's side, whereas the latter was categorized as the people of the "third nation", which was neither a winner nor a loser of the war. The ambiguity was ended up by the ROC government which recovered migrants' Chinese citizenship in October 1946. Following this decision, the US government issued a memorandum which

admitted the change of the legal status of Taiwanese in 1947. There were about 15,000 Taiwanese who were accepted by this legal procedure to become citizens of the ROC (Tanaka 1983: 28-30).

According to the Alien Registration Law issued by the Japanese government in May 1947, the Taiwanese in Japan started to be categorized as "foreigners" instead of "non-Japanese," even though they were still considered to have Japanese citizenship.[5] The Taiwanese in Japan finally lost their Japanese citizenship and officially became citizens of the ROC on April 28, 1952, when the San Francisco Peace Treaty came into effect. Some scholars argue that not until August 5th 1952 of the Sino-Japan Treaty, when Taiwanese citizenship ambiguity was concluded (Tanaka 1983:39) because the San Francisco Peace Treaty mentioned to legalize citizenship for the people residing in Japanese colonies (Taiwan and Korea) rather than for those on Japan. However, contradictory treatment applied to the Taiwanese who were captured as war criminals—they were not allowed to desert their Japanese citizenship and hence were charged for their crimes.[6]

c. Colonial and Post-colonial Effects

Despite the ambiguities and vicissitudes of Taiwanese migrants' legal status that forged complex identities in-between being Japanese and Chinese, Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan has framed the identity struggles and redefinition. The colonial and post-colonial effects on Taiwanese identity reflect the irreducible colonial-national-local triangulation between Japan, China, and Taiwan in a larger historical canvas. Although the legal labeling and self definition of Taiwanese in Japan change over time, the distinction between them and the rest of the Chinese in Japan kept to a large extent in interpersonal relationships. Some Taiwanese, particularly the recipients of Japanese education during colonial rule, were proud of being "Japanese" and despised Chinese from the mainland by calling the latter "shinajin" (支那人), which has derogatory connotations. The political upheaval and ethnic conflict inside the Taiwan Island also forged the self-segregation of ethnic Chinese migrants. While some realized their wish to return to be Chinese, some of them keep question marks in their self-identification.

In the eyes of the Taiwanese who had gone through industrialization and other social development under Japanese colonial practices, ill conduct by the new Chinese ruler appeared not only morally inappropriate but primitive. Due to the KMT government, they rather held nostalgic sentiments towards the colonial period under Japan. There was a saying "dogs left, and pigs came." to describe the ruling authority in Taiwan. Dogs referred to Japanese, who exercised severe controls over Taiwan, whereas the KMT Chinese were as dirty and stupid as pigs. Therefore, during 1950s, a great number of Taiwanese students flowed into Japan and sought to continue their careers or to establish a life in Japan. Many of them were also involved in numbers of overseas Taiwan independent activity after then.

[5] See Tai (1993) Taiwanese in Japan: A Legacy of Japanese Rule in Taiwan. California: U.C. Berkeley Press. pp.58—64.

[6] See Morris-Suzuki, Tessa*Invisible Immigrants: Undocumented Migration and Border Controls in Postwar Japan*. The Journal of Japanese Studies – Vol. 32, Number 1, Winter 2006, pp. 119-153.

IV. Surveillance and Self Assimilation

a. Surveillance

The Taiwanese migrants residing in Japan, who have retained their original nationality, were regarded as foreign residents and are under the control of the Alien Registration Law. Their everyday lives were under surveillance of the local administrative office and local police. The Alien Registration Law was promulgated and came into force on April 28th; 1952. It has been criticized for the strict ways in which it controls foreign residents in Japan. The most controversial point was the requirement of a finger printing system, which was regarded as a device for controlling foreigners as if they were criminals. The moment of refusal to finger printing, especially among Korean migrants, took place starting in 1980 and brought about a decreasing frequency of finger printing, and finally a cancellation of this requirement in 1993 for permanent residents. Instead of finger printing, the permanent residents were required to provide signature and family data. However, other restricting laws have remained. The law required foreigners to carry their alien registration cards all the time, and to be ready to present it to the police. Failure to do so will result in legal punishment. Political activists argue that these requirements are only ways to set foreigners under strict governmental control.

Foreign residents are deprived of full participation in Japanese society. The so-called *kokuseki jookoo* (国籍条項, requirement of Japanese citizenship) limits the entitlement of foreign residents in Japan. In actual daily situations, the *koseki* (family register) is proof of possession of Japanese citizenship. The basic unit of the *koseki* (戸籍) system is the household, and the Japanese individual is registered as a member or the head of a household. Koseki are filed at respective local municipal offices. Birth, marriage, death and other kinds of change in family membership are recorded in this register. A copy of koseki is requested for the access to various kinds of privileges such as employment, occupational, certificates, public loans, scholarship, licenses and passport application. Foreign residents who do not have *koseki* are usually deprived of those rights, and are subject to other kind of discrimination. However, *kokuseki-jookoo* in certain areas has been removed as a result of anti-discrimination movements, which started in the 1970s. The participants of the movements are mainly Korean residents in Japan.

b. Self Assimilation

One possible way for foreign residents to get way from the legal restriction and to have their human rights guaranteed by law is to naturalize to Japanese citizenship. However, naturalization according to the Japanese legal system is far from an easy process, and discrimination in different forms persists even after the process of naturalization. There are two reasons driving self assimilation: political concerns and discrimination avoidance.

First, political concerns, the naturalization of Chinese/Taiwanese residents to Japanese citizenship started in 1950, and then gradually increased until around 1972. The number of cases of naturalization radically increased in 1972 because Japan resumed an official relation with the People's Republic of China (PRC). Considerable

numbers of Chinese/Taiwanese (Republic of China, Taiwan) decided to become naturalized citizens of Japan because they were afraid that the PRC might ban citizens of the ROC from becoming naturalized citizens of Japan (Chen 1990:58). Both the Japanese government and the ROC government were supportive in the naturalization of Chinese/Taiwanese nationals at the time. In order to facilitate the naturalization process of its nationals in Japan, the Taiwanese ROC government mitigated the restriction in age, and gave men exemption from military services (Kim 1990:24).

Second, for discrimination avoidance, assimilation is symbolized in the practical coercion of the use of Japanese names on naturalized people. The use of Japanese names is not formally required, but is highly recommended by the administrators. It is difficult for applicants to ignore a strong recommendation from administrators since they have to deal with them personally in the process of application, very different from those in the U.S. Administrators justify the recommendation by saying the foreign names induce discrimination. However, the requirement is a very difficult one for many foreign residents. As Isaac (1975a, 1975b) points out, the name plays an important role in the formation of ethnic identity. The change of name is a humiliation for many people who decided to naturalize but want to maintain their ethnic identity.

The general practice in Japan in regard to the Chinese name is to pronounce the Chinese characters of the name according to the sound system of the Japanese language. The practice seems to be accepted among Chinese people because they do the same among themselves when they speak different Chinese dialects. That is, their names are pronounced differently according to the dialects which are being spoken. However, in the naturalization process, a Chinese name pronounced in a Japanese way is not considered to be good enough. The Chinese name sounds foreign even when it is pronounced in a Japanese way, and the characters used for Chinese names are different from those used in Japanese names. A Chinese/Taiwanese applicant for naturalization is pressured to give up his or her original name and to acquire a commonly-used Japanese name.

However, most of the Chinese who became Japanese citizens managed to integrate elements of their original Chinese names into their new Japanese names. For example, an acquaintance of mine, Mr. *Hung* (洪) changed his name to *Kouno* (洪野), which kept one of the Chinese characters, added other one and pronounced in Japanese way. The ways in which people change their names vary. Some keep the pronunciation unchanged and replaced the characters used widely while some practice methods in the way similar to Mr. Hung. Though a change of the Family Registration Law in 1985 accepted the use of foreign names in international marriage, administrators still attempt to persuade applicants for naturalization by the same old strategy of referring to possible discrimination.

Arguably, the imposition of the use of Japanese names on naturalized citizens is reminiscent of the assimilation policy taken by Imperial Japan in the past. *Kaiseimei* (改姓名) in Taiwan and *Sooshi-Kaimei* (創氏改名)[7] in Korea forced the

[7] Sōshi-kaimei (Japanese: 創氏改名) was a policy created by Jiro Minami, Governor-General of Korea under the Empire of Japan, implemented upon Japanese subjects from Korea (referred to below as

use of Japanese names on those who were not ethnic Japanese. The assimilation policy of Imperial Japan in its colonies did not die out with the end of the WWII. It is found, in disguise, in the Nationality Law of postwar Japan. As Kim (1990) argues, assimilation in contemporary Japan does not mean a vigorous Japanization practiced as *Koominka* (皇民化 making people servants of the Emperor) by Japanese colonial rule. Rather, the ethnic consciousness of minorities in postwar Japan has been withered and sunk into oblivion by the overwhelming Japanese-ness of the society. Ubukata (1977) compared the assimilation practices of Imperial Japan and those of postwar administrative use of fictive Japanese citizenship, and such enforcement was based on military power. On the country, in postwar Japan, assimilation which is practically imposed on naturalized people is fundamentally a voluntary action. However, in actuality, naturalization is chosen in order to alleviate discrimination in employment, housing, education and corporate enterprise in Japanese homogenous society.

V. Primordial Attachment

The Taiwanese migrants in Japan come to manifest diversity in self-identification as they have taken different trajectories in their life experiences as the political situation of Taiwan, mainland China and Japan change over time. For many of them, the transitional change of politics or international relations serves as a redefinition process of revitalization of Taiwanese-ness or of reconstruction of Chinese-ness. Still for others, it was the timing for effacement of their past whereas going through a process of recreation or submergence into or Japanese-ness. The choice self-identification is highly related to the pattern of their socioeconomic status and interpersonal relationship.

Chinese/Taiwanese migrants make distinctions not only between themselves and Japanese people but also among themselves. Many of them have resorted to certain boundary markers although it is not arbitrary. One of the most important markers for them is political orientation. Taiwanese newcomers have chosen political affiliation as a boundary marker in the process of redefining themselves in postwar Japan, because their lives have been intricately interwoven into the political upheavals of the two Chinas and Japan. They have constructed a new sense of belonging in contemporary Japan by creating differences along the lines of political divisions. The lives of those people usually revolve around politically orientated networks. Their

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Koreans). As defined by Ordinance No. 19, issued in 1939, *sōshi*, literally creation of a surname (*shi*), was mandatory, while by Ordinance No. 20, issued in 1940, *kaimei*, literally "changing (your) given name", was voluntary and would be charged a fee. This was effectively a reversal of an earlier government order forbidding Koreans from taking Japanese names. There are various explanations as to the purpose of the ordinances. In 1939 and 1940, a new name-change policy came into effect by means of Ordinances No. 19 and 20. Originally, as in Taiwan, the new name-change policy was intended simply to allow change of surname (*sei/seong*) and given name, but because Korea had a long-established custom (recently abandoned) whereby people of the same *bon-gwan* (surname and clan) were not allowed to marry each other, in order that this custom could continue, it was decided that the policy would be implemented by leaving the clan name and *sei* the same in the family register, while permitting a new surname (*shi/ssi*) to be registered. On the other hand, in Taiwan, which was also under Japanese rule in the same period, but did not have an analogous custom, the policy was not described as "creation of a *shi*", but was simply "change of *sei* and given name"(改姓名).

central concern is the political meanings of "Taiwanese" and "Chinese" in relation to two Chinese governments and the movement of Taiwanese independence. The process of constructing self and creating a sense of belonging involves that of excluding others. For those whose identity is formed mainly by political ideology, the people they demarcate from themselves are other Taiwanese and Chinese. Interactions with Japanese seem to have less impact on their identity building for those people.

However, while political affiliation has been a critical boundary marker among many migrants, the avoidance of political talk is also characteristic of many other Taiwanese newcomers. For these kind of migrants, having gone through political upheavals of the two Chinas and Japan, they regard political talk to be nothing but a source of trouble. They are less willing to make any clear political identification. Instead, they may resort to cultural aspects of Chinese-ness or Taiwanese-ness in their identity. In such case, boundaries are drawn against Japanese people to some extent. They might attempt to construct Chinese-ness through the study of Chinese histories and philosophies, they study and use of Mandarin, or the appreciation of Chinese arts. Each individual consciously attempts to demonstrate ethnic identity in behavior (Le Page and Tabouret-Keller 1985). For example, one of my interviewees, LP Cheng refers to Chinese through the meaning of civilization and the extension of ethnic group, Chinese people. She prefers the word usage of "*Kan-minzoku*" (漢民族, Han ethnic group) over that of "*Chuugokujin*" (中国人, Chinese) to distinguish her reference group from the criteria in political orientation. She identifies with an abstract group called "'Kan-minzoku" without embedding much sense of belonging to contemporary Chinese from the People's Republic of China.

The ethnic identity of the latter kind of Taiwanese migrants might be described more as "a primordial attachment[8]" (Geertz 1973:259) than politically asserted or intentionally constructed. That is to say, the Taiwanese under Japanese rule were still unconsciously socialized into Taiwanese and Chinese cultures, and developed an attachment to their own cultures despite the assimilation policy take by the Japanese. Such a sentiment has been maintained by many migrants overseas, and has been central to their ethnic identity. Many of them have continued to practice Taiwanese or Chinese habits and customs, and have maintained the values and behavioral patterns that they learned in Taiwanese ways. They integrate into their daily meals Taiwanese dishes such as *Biifun* (米粉 rice-noodles), *Chimaki* (粽 sticky-rice ball), and *Tonsoku* (豚足, pig's feet). Some have kept performing Taiwanese/Chinese cultural ceremonies, such as *Wiroo* (圍爐 family union for hot-pot dinner in Chinese new year's Eve), which is usually held at the end of a year in the lunar calendar to

[8] According to Geertz (1963), Primordial attachment is one that stems from the "givens" of existence or more precisely, as culture is inevitably involved in such matters, the assumed givens of social existence; immediate contiguity and live connection mainly, but beyond them the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language, or even a dialect of a language, and following particular social practices. These continuities of blood, speech, custom and so on, are seen to have an ineffable and at times overpowering coerciveness in and of them. One is bound to one's kinsman, one's neighbor, one's fellow believer ipso facto as the result not merely of personal attraction, tactical necessity, and common interest or incurred moral obligation, but in least in great part by virtue of some unaccountable absolute import attributed to the very tie itself.

celebrate the coming of a new year with a family feast. Taiwanese migrants have preserved what are considered to be Taiwanese/Chinese values and traits.

If it is true that the migrants have a primordial attachment to their cultures and fellow people, then it could be said that they share a sense of belonging beyond their political divisions and beyond their self-ascribed labels. This seems to be the case at least to a limited degree; they distinguish themselves from Chinese of the PRC in mainland China. The fact that the latter speak Chinese variants other than the Taiwanese language perhaps plays a significant role in the division. There are also categorizations of Taiwanese/Chinese from Taiwan and Chinese from the mainland. The former are said to consist of intellectuals such as doctors and lawyers while the majority of the latter are believed to be restaurants owners and cooks, tailors and barbers. As described in the previous paragraph, many of the Taiwanese migrants' interpersonal networks resolve around certain fixed or specific Taiwanese ties.

VI. Conclusion

This article explores the discourses that elucidate Taiwanese migrant's complex identities hidden in-between Japanese and Chinese cultures. This paper argues the cultural identity of the newcomer Taiwanese embodies the legacy of Japanese colonialism and Chinese nationalism. To maintain one's Japanese-ness is not only a strategy for advantageous survival in Japanese society, but also serves as nostalgia for the colonial period. Meanwhile, Chinese traits are embedded in cultural identity, employment or in the daily life practices of the newcomer Taiwanese. It appears to be particularly significant among the first generation and those who attained less education in Japan.

The labels Chinese, Taiwanese and overseas Chinese which are used for self identification by the Taiwanese newcomers have multiple meanings. Just as their interpersonal networks are indefinite and extensive in membership, those labels are vague in meanings, and can be used to include not only other Chinese in Japan, but also Taiwanese and Chinese outside of Japan. In this flux of meanings, there is no one definite label used by the newcomer Taiwanese to bind themselves to one ethnic group.

Cross-border identity is often articulated along the lines of political orientations or of certain perceivable cultural features. However, at the level of daily life practice, the articulated self identification might not be unproblematic; boundaries of self ascribed identification might have fissures. Taiwanese migrants usually do not describe themselves in static terms such as Chinese or Japanese. However, such terms are subject to negotiation and renegotiation in practice on the one hand, and people's everyday behaviors might be contradictory to their articulated identities on the other. Their group boundaries may shift in various directions in accordance with situations.

To clearly comprehend the multifaceted transitions of Taiwanese newcomers' cultural identity, it is necessary to examine not only the background of international history as well as social setting, but also the migrants' behaviors unfolding in daily practice. This working paper, in the current stage, provides basic backgrounds and tentative finding of the migrants' identity. It is expected to increase quantity and

quality of the interviews to derive further discussions and findings.

Author Biography

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SESSION 8
Gender Issues

SEMINAR ROOM 1

Chairperson: Dr.Eugene Jones

1. Women's Leadership Styles in Promoting Community Development. - *Zaharah Hassan*

2. Linguistic Sexism and Gender Role Stereotyping in Malaysian English Language Textbooks. - *Bahiyah Dato Hj Abdul Hamid et al.*

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Paper 1 Women's Leadership Styles in Promoting Community Development

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Abstract

Traditionally, community affairs and administration has been the domain of men. This is evident from the gender imbalance of leaders and office bearers across community/local council/associations. Women, on the other hand, have not been active in local politics and are relatively inactive in public processes due to institutional, socio-economic and cultural constraints. However, times are changing. There is now a comprehension and (grudging acceptance) that women can and do play a vital role in community affairs, particularly in contributing to the achievement of security, development and progress. This paper documents the experiences of three female leaders in their quest to unite and lead their peers in the betterment of their communities. This qualitative research employs various methodologies such as in-depth interviews, observations and document analysis. Specifically, this paper explores the leadership styles and strategies employed by these women leaders to reach out to all segments of the community? Is a "masculine" or "feminine" style more dominant?

INTRODUCTION

Women have long been the mainstay of communities and heavily involved in community initiatives in various guises. Though often the unsung heroes of community action, women's role in community growth and development has become increasingly important. In some communities, they have established themselves as leaders in the community development and acquired the skills that have brought positive change to their communities. Women leaders play key roles in establishing and maintaining important relationships and networks in their communities. They are facing challenges of cultural, economics, and social barriers that exist in the community development field and in many cases, overcoming those barriers become their motivation. While their comprehensive approach has influenced the evolution of the community development, women's contributions have been neither widely acknowledge nor explicitly credited. The results of this study provide deeper insights into women's thinking about leadership and community development, the barriers they perceive to women's leadership, their leadership styles and the kinds and efforts that should be undertaken to facilitate and promote their status and roles in the field. Therefore the main objective of this case study is to document the behavior of women leader in community organizations, why and how they became leaders, challenges and barriers they have to face and how they contribute to the harmony of their community.

This paper begins with a brief review on gender and leadership styles and community development. It is followed by research methodology, findings and discussion and finally the recommendations and conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Leadership

Leadership is an inherently subjective notion (Moss and Jensrud, 1995) However, there are notions of leadership that are assumed either implicitly or explicitly in the literature on female leadership in general. Much of the discussion centers on what has been call concern for production and concern for people. Other ways of expressing this leadership dichotomy is through contrasting concern for tasks with concern for relationships (Hersey and Blanchard, 1988) and a focus on initiating structure as opus to the focus of consideration for people (Stogdill and Coons, 1957). Tannenbaum and Schmidt's (1973) situational theory that contrast autocratic and democratic leadership styles are a similar conception. Literature on leadership and gender often pivots on whether or not gender gives rise to predisposition to emphasize on one of the above dimensions of leadership at the expense of the other, and some of the research indicates that female leaders tend to be more relationship oriented and democratic and male leaders more task oriented and autocratic (Eagly and Johnson, 1990). In recent years, transformational and transactional leadership construct has become a popular theme in leadership literature in general management. Unlike task versus relationship oriented leadership, the transformational – transactional leadership notion is viewed as a continuum allowing for individuals to employ transformational and transactional qualities at one and the same time (Bass, 1985; Bryman, 1992). Nevertheless, transformational leadership is generally held to be a superior form of leadership, built on transactional leadership, but not vice-versa.

There is a line of argument in leadership literature contending that female leaders tend to be more transformational than male leaders (Rosener, 1990). This argument is based on the idea that transformational leadership emphasizes the nurturance of subordinates and that through the process of socialization; the nurturing qualities of women are particularly well developed in comparison to men. This leads to the enactment of transformational leadership by female leaders and by implication, a tendency for male leaders, not privy to this socialization process, to incline more to transactional leadership.

In leadership research, gender has been distinguished from sex, with the former viewed as a collection of qualities labeled male or female (Bem, 1974; Gray 1989, 1993) that are culturally construct, and the latter seen as comprising attribute that are the result of biological characteristics. Male gender qualities characterizes as aggressive, independent, objective, logical, rational, analytical, decisive, confident, assertive, ambitious, opportunistic and impersonal are distinguished from female gender qualities describe as emotional, sensitive, expressive, cooperative, intuitive, warm, tactful, receptive to ideas, talkative, gentle, tactful, empathetic and submissive (Park, 1996; Osland et al, 1998). The notion of male and female gender qualities facilitates the arguments that male gender qualities are oriented towards more impersonal, task oriented or transactional approach to leadership, while female gender qualities tends towards more nurturing, relationship oriented style of leadership that underlies the transformational leadership approach.

The idea that gender determines leadership style is by no means a unanimous view in leadership literature. Rosener (1990), for example in a survey of male and female executive with similar jobs and education and of similar age, found that women tend to be more transformational in their leadership style than men. Kouzes and Posner (1990), using their version of transformational leadership model, found that female leaders were more likely than male leaders to practice "modeling the way" and "encouraging the heart. In a cross cultural study involving Norway, Sweden, Australia and the USA, Gibson (1995) found that male leaders were more likely to emphasize goal setting than female leaders and female leaders more likely to focus on facilitation of interaction than male leaders.

Other scholars such as Butterfield and Powell (1981), Campbell et al. (1993) and Ronk (1993) all have concluded that leadership style is independent of gender. Powell, (1990) in his analysis of a number of research studies, found that male and female leaders exhibit similar amounts of task oriented and people oriented leadership behavior.. Kolb (1999) has asserted that two decade of research indicates few, if any, leadership differences in the leadership behavior of male and female.

Community Development

The word 'community' is an umbrella term that is defined and applied in a myriad of ways. For instance, it may be used to refer to geographic communities where members are base one region (Ife, 2002); or virtual communities, where members main form of contact is through electronic media (Ife, 2002). Communities of circumstance constitute another possible form of community. Such community might emerge, for example when floods occur across different regions and those most affected feel connected to one another (Marsh, 1999). Finally, there are communities of interest, where identity groups form to lobby government for some kind of policy change or sponsorship (Kenny, 1999).

A wide variety of definitions of community development is available in the literature. It varies from one community to another or from different geographical location yet there are identifiable characteristics which all community development has in common. This study uses definition forwarded by Ploch (1976). He defined community development as the active voluntary involvement of community residents in a process to improve some identifiable aspects of community life. Ploch further added that normally such action leads to strengthening of the community's pattern of human and institutional relationship.

Community development literature has generally excluded gender. They are more focus on the technical aspect of development or case study. Few studies in the past showed that women approach to community development is more "holistic" and "comprehensive. The studies also revealed that when women were in leadership position and comprised the majority of board members, development efforts were more comprehensive than male-led group (Gittel and Covington, 1994; Gross and Newman, 1994). This study is part of a continued effort to bring gender perspective in community development literature.

METHODOLOGY

This is a case study with qualitative approach. The researcher used three techniques for data gathering namely in - depth interview (major source of data), observations and document analysis. An interview protocol that consists of 11 semi-structured open ended questions was used. Interview protocol or interview guide will ensure that the researcher ask the same questions to all participants. The main purpose of using interview is to gain insight as explained by Patton (1990) "the researcher wants to find out what is in and on someone else's mind". All interviews took place at the participant home where they are most comfortable and secure and each one last between two to four hours.

The researcher also observed the participants behavior during meetings and other social functions. Observational data represent a firsthand encounter with the phenomena of interest. During this time, researcher observes aspects of interpersonal relation and behaviors with other member. Minutes of the meeting were also analyzed to seek information regarding activities, decision making process, problem solving techniques etc.

The participants

Since the study is focus on leadership, therefore the researcher uses purposive sampling. The participants of this research are two office bearers from MB Women's Club and one committee member from the Neighborhood Association.

The location

MB is a newly establish neighborhood in the greater are of BBB. It is surrounded by other residential areas since 1980. The first residence build his house about four years a go. Since then the number has grown rapidly and now there are 47 bungalows with the total population about 240 people. Most of them are businessman and senior professional. In 2005 the neighborhood association was establish and was known as PPMB. It is run by a committee system. There are main committee and various sub-committees. One of the sub-committee is responsible to look into matters pertaining to women needs and welfare in neighborhood. The sub-committee gets money and approval from the main committee of PPMB for their activities. The women have monthly meeting during which they discuss and plan activities. In early 2006 they decided to establish Women's Club known as KWMB. Now they raise their own resources and plan activities not just for women but for the whole neighborhood. Naturally, the most active member was elected as President until today. Other members were appointed through nomination. The President is a member of PPBB main committee.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Data from various sources were analyzed using constant comparative method. The findings are presented according to theme identified.

PROFILE OF KWMB (THE ORGANIZATION)

The KWMB is a grassroots membership organization founded in 2006 under the umbrella of PPMB. Its main aim is "community organizing centered on building relationship between neighbors and empowerment of women". The member run monthly meetings, write agendas, chair committee, organize events and activities for the whole community.
Some of the activities organized by KWMB:

1. Fund raising for building of the 'surau' (for MB residents) and orphanage
2. Collection of goods for orphanage and flood victims
3. "Gotong royong" or bringing together community members to work together for specific purpose such as tree planting in the neighborhood, cleaning up the vacant lots, preparation for wedding etc.
4. Organize talks on various topics such as health, grooming, cooking, and other motivational topics.
5. Weekly line dancing, tai chi and yoga sessions.
6. Weekly religious, folk art and ceramic classes.
7. Tuition class and holiday camp for neighborhood children.
8. Hospital volunteers
9. Organize family day and other neighborhood gathering such as Hari Raya, annual dinner and breaking fast in the month of Ramadan.
10. Organize trips locally and overseas for members of the community.

PROFILE OF THE PARTICIPANTS

Profile	Participant 1	Participant 2	Participant 3
age	Late 50	Late 40	Late 40
qualification	Ph. D in Chemistry	Bachelor in Electrical Engineering	Degree in Religious Studies
present status	Retired and full time home maker	Opted for retirement and full time home maker	Full time home maker
experience	Lecturer, Head of Marketing for Research in a Telecommunication company	Senior engineer at one of multinational oil company, Business partner.	-
Number of children	2	6	5
Position in family	4th. Child among 15 siblings	Eldest among 5 siblings	Second child among 4 siblings
Race	Malay	Malay	Malay

DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

These women do not agree with present leadership definition which usually used to describe the person who sits at the top of an organization, group or other body. Because, it implies a sense of control and a hierarchical power structure and carries with it a range of emotive notions such as responsibility, authority and power. Many of which they find it abhorrent. They tend to shy away from these ideas when considering themselves as leaders.

Leadership to them has more to do with commonsense and helping others to understand their own situation in the world. It is clearly based in generosity, humanity and compassion. It is often based in modesty and may even be apologetic, but it is invariably successful in generating enthusiasm and the support of other women. This definition is very important since this is the starting point in their journey when they embark on leadership roles.

Leadership style

Since these women have an experienced in leading other people, naturally they are quite comfortable and confidence in the present position. They know the decision making process and able to make a sound decision. Still they did not encourage others to divest their power of decision making in them. Consensus is very important. They will give much opportunity for people to speak or give their opinion before decisions were made. Most of the time, they presented themselves as resource person to the community not their decision maker. Rather than emphasizing any duties owed to them as individuals, they emphasized service to the community.

In leadership practices, these women are more egalitarian. They enhance the ability of the group without drawing too much attention to themselves making people believe that they have help the community come together.

These women also believe that they operated differently than most men and the difference is a natural one arising from women's "nurturing nature" and from motherhood. This can be seen from statements about women such as "more caring and "being more sensitive".

Further, they identify themselves as open and supportive and non – authoritarian to other people needs. This was reflected through their way of conducting meetings and organizing events. They insist on involving as many people as possible and giving every one a chance to learn different/new skills. They are more concern with consensus building and community participation. As one of the leader said "you have to compromised, adapt and adjust the way you work according to society need" (interview, 2007.

They also maintained close relationship and open communication with community members and activities are plan and design around community needs. They know everybody in the community and people address them using endearment term *kakak* or sister. These leaders are committed to facilitating community participation. Any member who shown any interest to do something good for the

community is encourages and supported. As leaders they allow everybody to develop themselves in decision making and other aspect of self development. An identification with and respectful relationship with the community members provides the foundation for community participation in the organization.

The leadership style that are discussed above has been call by a number of different names such as shared, participatory, collective, collaborative, cooperative, democratic, fluid etc. This style of leadership is often associated with women leaders. At the core of this style of leadership are practicing stewardship and service, supporting relationship, empowerment, and commitment to individual development.

Stewardship is the cornerstone of reciprocal or shared leadership because it turns hierarchical leadership up-side down. Stewardship focuses on ensuring that other people's needs are being served and not on exercising privilege, power and control. The leaders chooses partnership over hierarchy; empowerment over dependency and service to community over self interest. The ultimate test of collaborative leadership is based on whether people's needs are being serves. As people feel respected and valued as partners they can create a community of shared responsibility.

Another distinguish feature that reflect their leadership style is supporting relationship. In collaborative leadership, the relationship and interconnectedness of people become primary dynamic. Values such as respect, honesty, expecting the best from others and the ability to exercise personal choice lay the foundation for relationship to emerge. These relationships are based on trust and mutual responsibility. Collaborative leadership focuses attention on building the individual's and group's capacity to live these values and to benefit from their interdependence. These behaviors and values were clearly exhibited by the participants.

Reasons why they became leaders

All the women interviewed, are "passionate" about community development work. This sense of personal involvement and caring about community was often described as arising from sense of responsibility for the community. Different reasons were given by each participant but all of them mention some similarities as follows:

1. Desire to serve and to ensure the establishment of harmonious community by building a friendly, safe, sound environment and comfortable neighborhood where people are close with one other and have a very strong spirit of neighborhood. The end result is better quality of life because "This is going to be my home until I die." (interview, 2007)

2. Religious calling - Islam required that every Moslem to be good to their neighbors. Therefore these leaders feel that as a servant of God it is their duty to do this because they are given the opportunity. This reason is similar to a lot of women leaders in different countries and different religion. This believes strengthened their commitment to their cause because to them it is a religious duty.

3. Time to give back – The participants feel that because of their privilege experience (as mothers, career women, professional, organizational leader, wife, daughters etc) and financial stability, they should share this with others as clearly stated by one of the participant "I have so much to contribute and to share with other people because of my experience, and my *rezeki*. It's time to give back." (Interview, 2007). One of the leader, voluntarily teach other members to read the Quran. She also conducts classes of English and other science related subjects to neighborhood children and teenagers. The other leader sponsor weekly religious class at her home.

4. These women also believes that by becoming a leader they are helping to empower other women to do something that is important to them by providing a platform and opportunity to discuss and share their feeling and needs.

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

Women leaders in MB experience many challenges and barriers but the most cited are as follows:

1. Getting younger people to participate and to take over the leadership role. The younger sets of residents are not so keen to take over due to other priority such as work and child care. They are not comfortable with full commitment and prefer to participate in meetings or activities when they have the time.

2. Some of the other senior resident cited lack of confidence and skill to be a leader. Therefore they are more comfortable of being a follower and follow the majority.

3. Lack of fund to carry out more activities beyond MB to broadens the experience and exposure of the member. Main income is from membership fee and donation or sponsorship from people and organizations within and outside the community.

4. To sustain people participation in all activities and program conducted by KWMB. Recently, when KWMB organized picnic and fishing competition only a handful of people registered and in the end it has to be cancelled. The committee has to think harder to come up with activities that have a common ground so more people can participate.

5. Resistance from some member to participate - some member of the community are very negative. They are not agreeable and always find faults but never give ideas or suggestion to overcome the problem.

STRATEGIES

Three main strategies adopted by the leaders to face the challenges and draw community participation and commitment are as follows:

1. Using participatory leadership style
   These leaders ensure that KWMB as an organization practice high degrees of internal democracy or horizontally structured and thus better able to establish egalitarian relationships with community members. The rejection of barriers helps establish trust between them and the community. Their focus on human development and developing relationship further increases the level of trust and create a space for discussion of community and family issues.

2. Negotiating their leadership role in their community
   Issue of leadership relate directly to cultural ideas about women, allowing them to draw on a tradition of leaders or matriarchs in the community, but also forcing them to negotiate their role within the community. As eastern women, to be well-known is sometimes not very good. They have to down play their contribution and their effectiveness by not drawing attention to themselves. Even though sometimes they have to do more than men, they have to make it not look like that. One participant remark "you can't be loud in this society". (Interview 2007)

3. Approach to community development
   The participant approach community development in a holistic way. This broad view of community development integrates economic and social needs on the community level as well as on the individual level. This approach is clearly described by "The Community Development Iceberg" where men see and address what is above the line, the visible part of the iceberg. Women see the whole thing, above and below the surface.

RECOMMENDATION

To sustain the growth and development of women leaders in community development, the researcher suggest the following actions:

1. Create opportunities for these leaders to document their experience and development as community leaders. Studies and report that include women telling their stories will raise awareness of women achievements and contribution to the field.
2. Through documentation and dissemination of information, the women can share the "best practices" and learn from each other.
3. Cultivate new leaders through training or mentoring
4. Integrate study findings in leadership training program.
5. Organize a dialogue session among women led organizations for sharing knowledge and resources.

CONCLUSION

This study on leadership style of women leaders in MB seeks to fill the gap that existed in the literature on gender and leadership behaviors in community development because women contribution is getting bigger but mostly they are not documented.

Analysis of data showed that leadership style employed by these women is participatory or collaborative style and this is in line with some of the finding from other studies in women led organization.

It was also found out that the desire to serve the community, to have better quality of, life, religious calling and the need to give back are the main motives why they became leaders.

They also face challenges such as resistance from some members, lack of funding balancing role as women and leaders, dwindling interest in participation and because of these, they have to adopt several strategies such as using collaborative leadership style. Finally, few recommendations are put forward for immediate action.

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Paper 2 Linguistic Sexism and Gender Role Stereotyping in Malaysian English Language Textbooks

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Abstract

Sexist language and gender stereotyping do not only disparage, but can also lower the dignity of one group of people, usually women/girls. If left unchecked, these negative norms of behavior and attitude could be institutionalized and gradually become part of our social and cultural code. Recent research findings indicate a strong presence of gender bias and linguistic sexism in the language and content of educational materials such as textbooks and practice books. This paper addresses linguistic sexism and gender role stereotyping in Malaysian English language school textbooks. Specifically, it looks at: If sexism is inculcated very early in life, how is it inculcated and what is inculcated? Are our school textbooks indirectly and unconsciously functioning as a conduit for the indoctrination and enforcement of sexism and sex role conformity among young Malaysians? This paper presents the preliminary findings of an on-going research study that documents the extent of gender bias and linguistic sexism in selected Malaysian primary and secondary school English language textbooks.

Introduction

Malaysia in its 50 years of independence is now mid-way in its quest towards becoming a developed country by the year 2020. To achieve this goal, the National Mission, a policy and implementation framework is presented that outlines Malaysia's priorities for the next 15 year phase to 2020. Currently, the 9th. Malaysia Plan is in place that will chart the nation's development agenda for the first 5 years of the National Mission (2006-2010) that places great emphasis on the need to pursue programmes that will enhance the nation's capability to compete at the global level, to strengthen national unity, to bring about better distribution of income and wealth as well as a higher quality of life. Thus, citizens' well-being and their living in harmony are of the outmost importance.

The quality of the nation's human capital is the most critical element in achieving the National Mission, and so, human capital development is a key thrust in the 9th. Malaysia Plan. Capacity building initiatives of the government include development of knowleageable, skilled and innovative human capital as a basis of a knowledge-based economy.

Children and the young generation are Malaysia's strongest assets in its goal to becoming a progressive and developed nation. To invest in human capital development, the harnessing and the channeling of efforts to inculcate in children not only knowledge and skills for daily life and future workplace but also inculcating in

them progressive thinking, attitudes, strong moral and ethical values are important. Within this, not less important is to inculcate in children an awareness of a world in which both males and females live harmoniously together, i.e., to inculcate in them an equitable notion of the world that has equal place for both males and females in it.

Children acquire gender identity and an understanding of gender roles even before they step into school. They internalise what they see as appropriate qualities and attitudes associated with being masculine and feminine through socialisation within the family. However, educational processes and relations within the school system further contribute to the formation of these values and views of gender identity and the maintenance of socially accepted gender roles (Posner, 2003) usually at the cost of the educational experience that girls receive (Nambissan, 2004). Schools develop and reinforce social norms such as sex segregations, stereotypes, and even discriminations which exaggerate the negative aspects of sex roles in the outside world even when attempts at alleviating them are being made.

For many young children in Malaysia, the act of reading and the practice of reading are particularly sustained more so in schools than at home through early reading texts, particularly through school textbooks. Much about what young children understand about the world, how the world works, the social relationships within it, the norms and practices of the culture as well as what they understand about their everyday life come from these influential sources. Such importance are the school texts to the nation that the Ministry of Education takes great pains to monitor the development of these texts by appointing authoritative ministerial committees to oversee the development of these texts from their inception, their printing, their distribution and to their use. In Malaysia, the recommended texts are used for some years before they are displaced by new texts.

Textbooks in Malaysian Schools and Their Roles

In Malaysia, in the education system, specifically at the primary and secondary school levels, educational materials especially school textbooks are highly regarded for the following reasons. They:

a) are providers of information and knowledge about the world around us,
b) are a repository of truth and knowledge that are looked upon with great credibility and authority,
c) are one of the primary instruments for shaping thinking, attitudes and principles,
d) aid the government in development and nation building to produce a young generation of balanced individuals in knowledge and skills as well as loyal and respectful of family, religion, race and country, and
e) are conveyers of messages on how social relations are organized and offer a pattern of a preferred individual and behaviour model in our society.

Thus, students and to some extent teachers, are "less free to disregard or be critical of educational materials than they are of the media" (Smith 1988: 37). They are "frequently required to absorb and assimilate" the educational materials in great detail (ibid). Generally, according to Smith (ibid), when it comes to such educational and reference materials, people become much more receptive and susceptible to the messages that these materials relay swaying them to the influence of these materials.

The Occurrence of Sexism, Linguistic Sexism and Sex-role Stereotyping in School Textbooks

The 1960's and 1970's mark the starting point for active research in the portrayal of gender roles (as well as other issues including ethnicity, socio economic status and so on) in education. Researchers have found that not only in the explicit agenda of education but also in the " hidden curriculum" (Lee & Gropper 1974 in Wood 1994; Kimmel 2004) that there are reinforcements of sexist conceptions in the institutional organization, in the content including the curriculum, educational materials and textbooks as well as in teaching styles that "reflect gender stereotypes and have the effect of sustaining gender inequalities by privileging white males and marginalizing and devaluating female and minority students" (Wood 1994:207) . Researchers in the US have noted the prevalence of gender stereotypes in children's story books (Weitzman, et al. 1972) and soon many researches followed suit all over the world to investigate the phenomena. The categories of analysis have included: 1) the frequency of appearances or invisibility of characters; 2) the portrayal/representations of characters in social, occupational and political activities With regard to the 3 categories in textbook content analysis, the summary of the research findings are as follows:

1) the frequency of appearances or invisibility of characters: Very few studies affirm fair treatment of both genders in textbooks. Generally, the findings show: a) there are more males than females presented in illustrations (pictures, drawings, photos, etc.) and in the texts; b) when females are visible, they are usually insignificant or inconspicuous; c) no textbooks had more females than males; and d) there were books without females but none without males.

2) the portrayal/representations of characters in social, occupational and political activities: Generally, the findings show: a) characters are assigned traditional roles which are stereotyped emphasizing family and occupational roles, usually associated with one gender; b) female role assignment are more restricted and less varied while males are assigned a wide range of occupations, females appear in fewer/less diverse roles; c) females are mostly depicted around/outside the home doing non-enumerated tasks (e.g., domestic chores) while males are depicted to interact in the wider community, earning, possessing more and are involved in decision-making; and d) the spheres of activities are divided along masculine and feminine lines.

3) the depiction of personality characteristics: Generally, the findings show: a) differences in behavior and personality characteristics between both genders; b) traditional masculine and feminine traits are prevalent- females are more gentle and compassionate while males are more independent/risk takers; c) males are more positively portrayed, e.g., as problem solvers/independent leaders, females are negatively portrayed as dependent/subservient; d) males are given a wider range of traits, females are severely restricted to a narrow range of traits; e) males are depicted as active, involved in the outdoors while females are passive and are nearly always involved indoors; and f) males are portrayed as powerful and females powerless which do not reflect the changing social statues of females in the society today.

In Malaysia, local researchers such as Saedah & Siraj (1990), Sandra Kumari & Mardziah (2003) and Jariah Mohd. Jan (2002) have indicated occurrences of

sexism and sex-role stereotyping in Malay language reading texts and English language texts in Malaysian schools. Despite efforts to eliminate all forms of discrimination, there are occurrences of sexism, i.e., prejudice or discrimination based on gender (Bahiyah Abdul Hamid 2002, 2003) in school textbooks. Also, both genders are treated and represented unequally through language which can be termed "linguistic sexism" (Bahiyah Abdul Hamid 2002, 2003) and there are occurrences of sex-role stereotyping, i.e., standardized mental pictures commonly held by members of a group that represents an oversimplified opinion, affective attitude or critical judgement because that person is male or female (Bahiyah Abdul Hamid 2002, 2003) in school textbooks.

Much of the studies carried out have been fragmented and isolated with regard to their focus of research and the age group studied. Studies have been undertaken to focus on either females (see Bhog 2002 for instance) or males (see Evans & Davis 2000) representations in textbooks with very few researchers looking at both male and female representations together – for exceptions, see for e.g., Gok et al.(2001) for Turkish data; Saedah Siraj (1990) and Sanda Kumari & Mardziah Hayati (2003) for Malaysian data focusing mainly on either elementary or secondary school textbook analysis. For elementary level textbook analysis, see Saedah Siraj (1990), Gok et al. (2001) and Jariah Mohd. Jan (2002) while Sanda Kumari & Mardziah Hayati (2003) can be referred to for secondary textbook analysis. Within these analyses, many researchers further isolate the age group studied to be the focal point of their research study Sanda Kumari & Mardziah Hayati (2003) for secondary year 4 textbook analysis and Jariah Mohd. Jan for the first level primary school years 1-3. No local study so far has been comprehensive and large scale, undertaking to study both primary and secondary textbooks in its entirety for the occurrences of linguistic sexism and sex role stereotyping. The authors of this paper are not only attempting to carry out a comprehensive and large scale study done in Malaysian to fill in the knowledge gap with regard to the occurrences of linguistic sexism and sex role stereotyping in Malaysian English language school textbooks but also to complement it, where a measurement of the awareness, attitudes and opinions of not only teachers but also students will be carried out in the on-going research study of which this paper is based on.

The Effects of Sexism, Linguistic Sexism and Sex-role Stereotyping in School Textbooks

Henry, Hamilton & Thorne (in Gundykunst 1998:119) exerts that sexism is manifested mainly through language. If so, what are the negative effects of sexism, linguistic sexism and sex-role stereotyping in school textbooks on children and on nation building? How does sexism, linguistic sexism and sex-role-stereotyping upset harmony in the society? The following are answers to this question:

1) Sexism and gender stereotyping mold in the young a sexist mindset; legitimizing the ideology that sexism is the natural order of things (see amongst others Kimmel 2004; Steward et al. 2003; Smith 1988),
2) Sexism and gender stereotyping lower the self esteem of children and young adults creating a void that has detremental effects on the self images, aspirations and motivations of both genders(see amongst others Kimmel 2004, Steward et al. 2003; Smith 1988),

3) The unequal treatment of both genders may share a mutually contributory relationship with gender biased classroom practices where one gender is favoured over the other making the classroom context disharmonious,
4) Gender stereotypes limit both genders to certain modes of behaviour, course of study and career choices thus preventing them from realizing their full potential (see amongst others Kimmel 2004, Steward et al. 2003; Jariah Mohd. Jan 2002; Smith 1988),
5) Social ills, e.g., violence, sexual violence, domestic violence and sexual harassment at the workplace have largely come about because of sexism and gender stereotypes.

As negative messages such as sexism, gender bias and sex-role stereotypes go unchallenged in school texts, they are read and re-read by generations of students as well as teachers. Textbooks indirectly and unconsciously function as conduits for the indoctrination and enforcement of sexism and sex role conformity among young Malaysians.

The Objectives of the Paper

In view of the negative effects to children specifically as discussed above and to human capital development and capacity building, this paper presents the preliminary findings of an on-going research study that documents the extent of gender bias and linguistic sexism in two selected Malaysian primary school texts using the combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of analysis. The reported preliminary findings in this paper are the outcome of an on-going research study conducted in several phases as discussed in Yuen et al. (2007). This paper specifically reports on only one phase of the research, mainly with regard to the content analysis of data, the outcome of the pilot research conducted from March to May 2007. It will only discuss the preliminary findings of two selected primary school textbooks from the sample texts of the pilot study.

It is hoped that this paper will raise awareness and develop critical thinking not only about the issue of linguistic sexism and gender role stereotypes in Malaysian school textbooks but also to create awareness for a new, more acceptable, harmonious and equitable notion of the world for the equal place of both males and females in it.

The Research Question

This paper does not represent the findings of the complete set of research questions for the on-going research study. The findings reported in this paper are only related to the primary level texts analysed following the research question below:
Are there occurrences of linguistic sexism and gender role stereotyping in KBSM and KBSR English language textbooks?

Methodology

The main corpus of the on-going research study are English language primary school textbooks (yrs. 1-6) & English language secondary school textbooks (yrs.1-5), in total there are 21 textbooks. The pilot study took into consideration a randomly selected number of primary and secondary school textbooks. This paper discusses the

findings of the pilot study with regards to only 2 textbooks from the primary level, namely, year 3 and year 6. It is extremely important to find out if there are occurrences of linguistic sexism and gender role stereotyping in the texts selected as they are used by children at their formative age and what they are receptive to within the texts play an important part in formulating their cultural and social values specifically where gender relations is concerned. The following are particulars about the texts.

The primary year 3 text:
Authors: Audrey Lee Bee Yoke, Manjindarjit Kaur & Shanti David (3 females)
Year of Publication: 2004
Illustrator: Salmah Rahim (A female)
Graphic Designer: A. Kamagarajan (A male)
Editor: Tam Lye Suan (A female)
Publisher: Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Abadi Ilmu Sdn. Bhd.
No. of Units: 10
No. of Pages: 122
No. of Words:1863 (largely filled with illustrations-pictures, drawings, etc.)
The primary year 6 text:
Authors: Abdul Majid Mohd. Din (A male) & Dena How Peng Teng (A female)
Year of Publication: 2004
Illustrators: Hafiz Ghanim Ahmad Yusof (A male) & Rosli Hamid (A male)
Editors: Hanizan Hussin (A female) & Nadzmi Nadzim (A male)
Publisher: Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka and DTP Enterprise Sdn. Bhd.
No. of Units: 10
No. of Pages: 140
No. of Words: 3233 (more words and less illustrations as compared to the primary year 3 text)

Research Design

The on-going research study involves several phases outlined in Yuen et al. (2007), Subakir Mohd. Yassin et al. (2007) and Azhar Jaludin and Bahiyah Abdul Hamid (2007). The phases leading to the pilot study are briefly discussed below:

Phase 1: Creation of the main corpus database

The data used to develop the corpus are taken from English language textbooks adopted by the Ministry of Education Malaysia- KBSR (yrs. 1-6) and KBSM (yrs. 1-5); 21 textbooks in total.

The process involved:

1. **Digitization process.** The textbooks are first transform to digital form by scanning procedure.

2. **Format conversion process.** The scanning process produces a JPEG format of the textbook. This format is then converted to word document file and then converted to text files. The word document files contain both pictures and text data while the text files contain only text data. The conversion process from JPEG to word document is not 100% accurate, which means that manual

editing need to be done to ensure accuracy. The conversion from word document to text document is also a laborious process, since the process will extract out all the pictures and tables, the text files need to be manually adjusted to ensure accuracy and consistency.

3. **Merging process**. During the scanning process each page of a textbook is split to a different file, for example if a textbook is 110 pages long, it will be split to 110 files. These different files need to be catalogued and merged and now the data is ready for phase 2.

Phase 2: Content analysis

1. Content analysis is conducted with the aid of the database created in phase 1, to examine the contents and language used for occurrence of linguistic sexism and sex role stereotyping in Malaysian KBSR (yrs. 1-6) and KBSM (yrs.1-5) English language textbooks adopted by the Ministry of Education Malaysia.
2. The database will be analysed for:
    a. representations of male and female human characters, adults and children as well as masculine and female animal and inanimate objects,
    b. terms of address and referencing devices used,
    c. social roles depicted for male and female characters,
    d. activities associated with male and female characters depicted including those in professions, sports, games, hobbies and leisure activities, and
    e. types of linguistic structures and language used for males and females

3. The data was then processed using WORDSMITH Tools to generate a word list of frequency of words and then tabulated into figures and percentages. The identified items were then classified into categories and frequency. Finally, the frequencies were converted into percentages and compared across gender.

(Azhar Jaludin & Bahiyah Dato' Hj. Abdul Hamid. 2007 & Subakir Mohd. Yassin et al. 2007)

This paper will discuss the findings of the pilot study on the occurrence of linguistic sexism and gender role stereotyping in the two selected textbooks specifically in terms of the following categories:

a. The number of male and female characters,
b. The terms of address used,
c. The use of male and female pronouns,
d. The use of male and female nouns with regard to the family, and
e. Occupations/activities associated with male/female characters.

Data Analysis – Wordsmith 4 and Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

To aid analysis of data, the use of a computer software helped us to understand the corpus of data (primary and secondary school textbooks) and then Fairclough's (1989) 3 stage Critical Discourse Analysis was applied to the written discourse of the corpus of data. Wordsmith Tools 4, a computer software, was used: a) to generate a frequency list of words and b) to assist in finding the collocation of words from the data. Through Wordsmith Tools 4, observation of how words are used and what

words were frequently utilized in the corpus of school textbooks were achieved. The Wordsmith Tools 4 software helped us generate word lists in alphabetical and frequency order. This enabled us to compare the schooltexts lexically. Then, the Concord Tool in the software helped us to create concordances (lists of words in context and show the environment in which the words occur), find collocates of the word, identify common phrases, and display a graphical map showing where the word occurs in the corpus. This assisted us in classifying words in terms of their importance and significance to the author/s of the school textbooks. The above together with the Keyword Tool, which identifies key words whose frequency is unusually high in a particular type of discourse, assisted us to characterise words/phrases/texts according to genres. Thus, the use of the software complemented the Critical Discourse Analysis carried out on the written discourse of the school textbooks studied.

The corpus of the school textbooks, i.e., the written discourse as well as the illustrations (pictures, drawings, photos that accompany the written discourse or in which written discourse were embedded) was then subjected to Fairclough's (1989) 3 stage Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA, hereafter) which views language use as a social practice, shaped by and shaping social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and beliefs of individuals. In the first stage, an analysis of formal textual features was done to facilitate formal text description. The interpretation of the relationship between text and social interaction was carried out in stage two. This enabled us to analyse the norms, mental standards of socially accepted behaviour in specific roles/relationships used to produce, receive, and interpret the text. The last stage helped us explain the relationship between social context and cultural context, i.e., within Malaysian settings where the depictions of gender roles and relationships in the school texts are matched and interpreted in their particular Malaysian context and culture.

CDA is defined by Fairclough (1989, 1992, 1995) as discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore often obscure relationships between discursive practices, texts, and events and wider social and cultural structures, relations, and processes. By focusing on how social relations, identity, knowledge, and power are constructed through written and spoken texts in communities, schools, the media, and the political arena (McGregor 2003), CDA strives to explore how these non-transparent relationships are a factor in securing power and hegemony and it draws attention to power imbalances and social inequities in the hope of creating linguistic and social awareness in people.

CDA works around three central tenets - that discourse is shaped and constrained by (a) social structure (class, status, age, ethnic identity and gender) and by (b) culture and that (c) discourse helps shape and constrain our identities, relationships, and systems of knowledge and beliefs. CDA aims at making transparent the connections between discourse practices, social practices, and social structures, connections that might be opaque to the layperson via a three-level analysis: (a) the description of text (analysis of formal textual features) (b) the interpretation of the relationship between text and social interaction (that is the norms, and mental standards of socially acceptable behavior in specific roles/relationships used to produce, receive, and interpret a text) and (c) the explanation of the relationship between social context (that is the settings where discourse occurs, each with a set of conventions that determine what each is allowed and expected to do in a particular social context) (Fairclough 1989).

Findings

The Malaysian English language primary textbooks analysed perpetuate gender stereotypes in the following ways. First, there is a precedence of males over females where males are represented as standard. Second, there is bias towards the experiences of males over females in the portrayal/representations of characters in social, occupational and political activities. Third, there is bias in the depiction of personality characteristics that run along traditional masculine and feminine traits.

A. The Precedence of Males over Females

When males are the focus in the majority of the pages in the textbooks, students are led to believe that males are the norm, the standard in the society. In both the textbooks analysed, the male and female characters are recognized through proper nouns used. This is consistent to the findings of the studies by Saedah (1990), Chandra and Mardziah (2003) and Subakir Mohd. Yassin et al. (2007). Also interesting is to note that despite being females, the writers of the English language Year 3 textbook, showed that they were gender bias in that they foregrounded males 114 times compared to the 64 times they foregrounded females in the textbook they co-authored (see Table 1). The writers of the English language Year 6 textbook also showed gender bias even though the textbook was written by a male and female writer. In this text, males were foregrounded 375 times compared to the 201 times females were foregrounded (see Table 2).

i.) The Number of Male and Female Characters

Table 1

Primary Year 3 -Number and percentage of male and female characters

Male	(114) 1.14%
Female	(64) 0.64%

Table 2

Primary Year 6 -Number and percentage of male and female characters

Male	(375) 1.85%
Female	(201) 0.94%

ii.) Terms of Address Used

The findings are interesting for this category as it can be seen from Table 4, i.e., from the Year 6 textbook analysed that the use of female terms of address is more than those of male terms of address – 0.14% compared to 0.04%. However, the Year 3 textbook showed a biasness for male terms of address even though the margin is slight. What is important is to note that the use of terms of address show role stereotyping and in the two texts studied, they may give cues to ethnicity. In Malaysian society, terms of address cue us to the relational ties between individuals in terms of respect for the age as well as status of the interlocutors in the interaction (Subakir Mohd Yassin et al. 2007) and they may cue us to the ethnicity of the interlocutors involved. The address forms "Encik", "Cik", "Puan" are used exclusively for Malay interlocutors/characters while the terms "Miss", "Mrs.", "Lady", "Mr." and "Master" are used in conjunction with non-Malay characters. The use of "Master" and "Lady" in the Year 3 text refer to characters of English origin as they appear in a story.

Table 3
Primary Year 3 -Terms of Address

Male	
Encik	(3) 0.03%
Mr	(4) 0.04%
Master	(1) 0.01%
Female	
Puan	(2) 0.02%
Miss	(2) 0.02%
Mrs	(1) 0.01%
Lady	(1) 0.01%
TOTAL	
Male	(7) 0.08%
Female	(6) 0.06 %

Table 4
Primary Year 6 -Terms of Address

Male Sir Mr	 (5) 0.02% (4) 0.02%
Female Mrs Puan Cik Miss	 (11) 0.04% (11) 0.04% (10) 0.04% (3) 0.01%
TOTAL **Male** **Female**	 (9) 0.04% (35) 0.13%

iii.) The Use of Male and Female Pronouns

"He" is used as the unmarked third-person singular pronoun just as in other texts where "man" and "mankind" are used as terms to describe the human race. This is more salient in the Year 6 textbook as can be seen in Table 5 below with a significantly higher percentage of occurrence 0.31% than the third person female subject pronoun 'she" at 0.18%. The Year 3 textbook also confirms the higher percentage use of the third person male subject pronoun "he" at 0.19% as compared to the use of "she" at 0.09%. What is interesting to note that the use of the third person female object pronoun "her" is significantly higher in both the texts studied with its use of 0.12% and 0.14 % in Year 3 and 6 respectively. While the statistics look positive, in grammatical terms, in the English language, object pronouns are backgrounded as subject pronouns are foregrounded for example in the sentence: He/she (subject pronoun- foregrounded) saw (verb) her/him (object pronoun – backgrounded). In the sentence above, subject pronouns are given more prominence than object pronouns as they also are the actors of the verb form and have more volition than the object pronouns.

The use of the reflexive pronouns "himself" (singular third person masculine) and "herself" (singular third person feminine) in the Year 6 text also show biasness towards the masculine. However, there is no usage of both the masculine and feminine reflexive pronouns in Year 3 they are rather difficult to grasp for young children as "reflexive pronouns are used to replace nouns or pronouns that refer to the same person (s) or thing (s) in the same clause acting as the subject of the sentence" (Bahiyah Abdul Hamid & Wijasuriya 1998: 20). Thus, introducing reflexive pronouns is deferred to a later stage in the teaching of English in primary schools. Besides this, reflexive pronouns do not exist in Bahasa Melayu and the reflexive action is indicated

by the "ber" verb form (ibid). In Bahasa Melayu, according to Bahiyah Abdul Hamid & Wijasuriya (1998: 20), "Dirinya" can be used for "himself", "herself" or "itself".

Table 5
Primary Year 3 and Year 6 – The Number of Male and Female Pronouns

Pronoun	Year 3		Year 6	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
He/She	(19) 0.19%	(9) 0.09%	(78) 0.31%	(47) 0.18%
Him/Her	(5) 0.05%	(12) 0.12%	(20) 0.08%	(37) 0.14%
Himself/Herself	(0) 0%	(0) 0%	(5) 0.02%	(2) 0.01%
TOTAL	(24) 0.24%	(21) 0.21%	(103) 0.41%	(86) 0.33%

B) Bias towards the experiences of males over females in the portrayal/representations of characters in social, occupational and political activities.

Generally, the findings show:

i) characters are assigned traditional roles which are stereotyped emphasizing family and occupational roles, usually associated with one gender

As the table below shows (see Table 6), both textbooks analysed show a bias in the number of males nouns used with regard to the family. The table shows that for the two books analysed, the number of male nouns used exceed those used for females, i.e., 114 male nouns as opposed to 45 for female nouns or 0.56% as opposed to 0.25%. Overwhelmingly, males are foregrounded more in their traditional roles as father. While society acknowledges the role of the mother as nurturer and caregivers, fathers are the ones given more acknowledgement lexically. Where the family is concerned, the three most used nouns for males in the textbooks are "Father", "uncle" and "brother" while those used for females that are statistically significant are "mother" and "sister".

Table 6

Primary Year 3 and 6 – the Use of Male and Female Nouns with Regard to the Family

Nouns	Male	Female
Primary 3	Father (19, 0.09%), grandfather (3, 0.03%), brother (1, 0.01%), grandfather's (1, 0.01%), grandpa (1, 0.01%) & son (1, 0.01%)	Mother (6, 0.06%), daughter (1, 0.01%), ma (1, 0.01%) & sister (1, 0.01%)
Frequency and %	**16 (0.16%)**	**9 (0.09%)**
Primary 6	Father (38, 0.15%), uncle (24, 0.09%), brother (13, 0.05%), son (5, 0.02%), uncle's (5, 0.02%), father's (4, 0.02%), brothers (3, 0.01%), grandfather (3, 0.01%), dad (2, 0.01%), nephews (2, 0.01%) sons (2, 0.01%) & uncles (1, 0.01%)	Mother (17, 0.07%), sister (11, 0.04%), daughter (2, 0.01%), mother's (2, 0.01%), niece (2, 0.01%), aunt's (1, 0.01%), & mum (1, 0.01%)
Frequency and %	**102 (0.40%)**	**36 (0.16%)**
TOTAL	**118 (0.56%)**	**45(0.25%)**

Further, the textbook analysis found the following:

ii) female role assignment are more restricted and less varied while males are assigned a wide range of occupations, females appear in fewer/less diverse roles;

iii) females are mostly depicted around/outside the home doing non-enumerated tasks (e.g., domestic chores) while males are depicted to interact in the wider community, earning, possessing more and are involved in decision-making

iv) the spheres of activities are divided along masculine and feminine lines.

Table 7
Primary Year 3 and 6 – The occupations of Male and Female Characters

Occupations	Male	Female
Primary 3	Fishmonger,hunter, baker,chairman,farmer, grocer,tailor,actor, butcher,fisherman/men, king,waiter,magician, manager,painter, plumber,policeman/men, potter,programmer, referee,scientist,soldier/s, surgeon, thieves, veterinarian	Florist/s nurse,teacher, Actress,cashier, astronaut
Frequency and %	**29(0.29%)**	**12 (0.12%)**
Primary 6	Teacher/s,doctor/s,engineer/s, Explorer/s,scientist/s, . Manager,programmer,wholesaler, Farmer,headmaster,police,sailor/s, Supervisor,trapper,army,captain, Monitor,shopkeeper,waiter, businessman,chairman,cook, footballers,goalkeeper,headman, hunter/s,lawyer,painter,pilot, policeman,referee,soldier/s, tailor,watchmen,workers	Nurse,operator,singer/s, Hostess,housewife,secretary, zoologist
Frequency and %	**113 (0.56%)**	**22 (0.12%)**
TOTAL	**142 (0.86%)**	**34(0.24%)**

portrayal/representations of characters in social, occupational and political activities. Despite the 2004 statistics showing that "Malaysia has 7.4 million women of working age, of whom 3.45 million are working." (Wong Sulong (2004) in Bahiyah Dato' Hj. Abdul Hamid (2006), the textbook writers all of whom are women, still depict women stereotypically. In the primary Year 3 textbook, they chose to depict the women they wrote about only from those who are not working, i.e., from " the 3.45 million not working, 2.86 million are housewives." (ibid)

In the Appendices discussed, it can be seen that male are the true pillars of society, the nation builders and what males do are considered integral to the development of the country. What is usually depicted in the two textbooks analysed seem to concur with Bahiyah Dato' Hj. Abdul Hamid (2006) in that women are largely under-represented in almost all sectors and all levels of decision-making including those in the government. Currently in Malaysia, there are three women ministers for the Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development; the Ministry of International Trade and Industry and the Ministry of Youth and Sports. In the Malaysian Parliament, out of 197 members of the House of representatives, only 22 are women and in the House of Senate, out of 57 members, 19 are women. Women are also less visible in commissions, tribunals, local government bodies, statutory bodies and so on for men predominate in these domains. From the table above, only a total of 230 women out of 2,002 local councilors are women.

When activities are illustrated, it is quite clear that males dominate participating actively in activities. Pictorial representations of females participating in activities do not figure well in both texts.

C) Biasness in the depiction of personality characteristics that run along traditional masculine and feminine traits

Generally, the findings show the following:

i) males are more positively portrayed, e.g., as problem solvers/independent leaders, females are negatively portrayed as dependent/subservient

ii) males are portrayed as powerful and females powerless which do not reflect the changing social statues of females in the society today.

The above (findings i) and ii)) are evident in Appendix F (Primary 3) and Appendix J (Primary 6). In Appendix F, p. 20, the illustration by way of a picture (without the utterances of characters) depicts 2 male and 2 female school students interacting with one another in what is assumed the computer lab. The male students are seen actively manning equipment, i.e., each is seen using the computer and the printer while the two female students act to assist the male students with one girl showing the boy at the computer her notes and the other girl passively standing by the boy at the computer. This illustration depicts male students as competent users of ICT hardware as well as ICT literate and female students as dependent upon male students in managing ICT and not ICT literate as compared to the male students. This also serves to depict males as powerful and females as powerless especially in the ICT domain.

In Appendix J, p. 60, the dependent/subservient personality characteristics of female students are blatantly highlighted via CDA especially through the verbal output/utterances of the characters present guided by the illustration/picture supplied. In the illustration on p. 60 of the primary 6 text, the picture depicts 3 male students and 2 female students (Jing-Li and Hariko) discussing what they should do for their science project. This picture illustrates a small group decision-making exercise with regards to the topic of a science project where a male student is seen taking the lead in the discussion steering on the discussion from start to finish; he plays the role of the chair. The other two male students are seen contributing significantly to the discussion by way of coming up with the main ideas of the science project of which the male leader seem to agree to on behalf of the group. After taking on the suggestion of a male student that the science project be a talk about insects in the Malaysian forest, a female student then offers to ask the science teacher for help on behalf of the group and the other female student steps in to offer to collect pictures on insects in the Malaysian rain forest. The male student leader then thanks them by uttering the following: "Thanks for offering to help, Jing-Li and Hariko". It is blatant in this appendix that males are represented as problem solvers/independent leaders and females are negatively portrayed as dependent/subservient; they are not competent to come up with solutions and can only be marginal players in decision-making. The power distinction between male students and female students in decision-making is also made transparent in this appendix.

Besides the above, the texts analysed also yield the findings that :
iii) males are depicted as active, involved in the outdoors while females are passive and are nearly always involved in indoor activities

Appendices D, H and K discussed earlier have already depicted females as involved in indoor activities, responsible for domestic chores and overwhelmingly in both the textbooks analysed, the place in which they are most favorably depicted is in the kitchen. Thus, females can be seen in the illustrations to be confined indoors. When compared to males, especially in Appendix A, p.63 (Primary 3) as well as Appendix I (Primary 6),p. 8 we see that males are depicted in a variety of activities more than those depicted for females and the activities that males participate in are not confined to indoor activities only, males are involved in many outdoor activities far more than females. Invariably, males are depicted as active especially when they are involved in fun, outdoor activities such as kite flying, skateboarding and gymnastics (Appendix A, p.63 (Primary 3)) and top spinning, cycling, archery, bowling. What is disconcerting here is that many of these outdoor activities can also be participated in by females for these activities are generally not segregated along gender lines. Thus, is unfair to knowingly and blatantly segregate activities along gender lines as can be seen from the Appendices above.

In the Year 3 text, males can be seen interacting actively in football and scouts. Activities for females are not mentioned at all in this text even though all the writers of the text are women. In the Year 6 text, males are seen to be active in scouts, badminton, hockey, squash, softball, archery, kite flying and sepak takraw (see Appendix A and Appendix I) as opposed to females being active in only one activity, i.e., netball. In this text, gender neutral activities include chess and congkak. The findings of this study with regard to this aspect do not augur well for females as they are seen to live up to the stereotype of passivity, lacking energy and shunning physical

activities. This may be why females in general may have been left behind in making names for themselves in sporting events. The stereotype perception of women in sports is that they are not up to par with their male counterparts.

Conclusion

Wood (1997: 161) maintains that language is not neutral; it reflects cultural values and is a powerful influence on our perceptions. With regard to sexism, Fromkin and Rodman (1993: 306) assert that "language reflects sexism in the society. Language itself is not sexist, just as it is not obscene; but it can connote sexist attitudes as well as attitudes about social taboos and racism". The two primary school texts analysed have illustrated that there are linguistic features used in the texts that convey sexism. Specifically, there is a masculine bias where the language used often reinforces males as the standard and foregrounds males. It is evident that, as portrayed in the two school texts analysed, textbook writers and illustrators do not deviate much from the traditional patriarchal notion of placing importance to males and masculinity. Males are projected as successful and powerful in the social domain and occupy higher positions in society.

Females are still portrayed as playing the supporting role to males. In the family sphere, females are linked to family roles of nurturer, in support of males as the bread winner. They are mostly depicted as mothers and wife in the personal sphere of the family. In the public sphere, females are depicted in the service of males as in being nurses. In these depictions, the view of the second-place status of females is still deeply rooted in Malaysian society.

Due to these types of exposure in school textbooks, the judgments made of females will still hinge on biological terms rather than on their credibility, abilities and qualifications despite women all over the world being empowered economically, politically, as well as educationally. Today, all across the world, women have become the driving force of economic growth, they are increasingly filling important ministerial, managerial and entrepreneurial positions and contributing to society by taking bigger roles in the public spheres for the benefit of not just women but for a better world for all. Sadly, what is crucial of the changing roles of females and their realistic contributions to the society are not well represented in the school texts analysed.

Nilsen (1994: 365) states that "sexism will not disappear from our language until it is erased from our minds." In view of this, the move to eliminate linguistic sexism and sex - role stereotyping must not just involve a linguistic reform so that equality of gender is reflected in the language that we speak and read but most importantly, there should be small yet significant steps towards change through awareness activities against masculine bias in all spheres and activities in our society. In short concurring with Nilsen (ibid), sexism being a problem that " begins in people's assumptions and expectations, it's a problem that will be solved only when a great many people have given it a great deal of thought".

Appendices

Appendix A- Lee Bee Yoke, A., Manjindarjit Kaur & Shanti David. 2004. *English Language Primary 3.* Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Abadi Ilmu Sdn. Bhd.
p.63.

Appendix B- Lee Bee Yoke, A., Manjindarjit Kaur & Shanti David. 2004. *English Language Primary 3.* Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Abadi Ilmu Sdn. Bhd.
p. 75.

Appendix C- Lee Bee Yoke, A., Manjindarjit Kaur & Shanti David. 2004. *English Language Primary 3.* Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Abadi Ilmu Sdn. Bhd.
p.78.

Appendix D- Lee Bee Yoke, A., Manjindarjit Kaur & Shanti David. 2004. *English Language Primary 3.* Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Abadi Ilmu Sdn. Bhd.
p. 9.

Appendix E- Lee Bee Yoke, A., Manjindarjit Kaur & Shanti David. 2004. *English Language Primary 3.* Kuala Lumpur: Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Abadi Ilmu Sdn. Bhd.
p. 83.

Appendix F- Abdul Majid Mohd. Din & How Peng Ten, D. 2004. *English Language Primary 6.* Kuala Lumpur:Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka and DTP Enterprise Sdn. Bhd.
p. 20.

Appendix G- Abdul Majid Mohd. Din & How Peng Ten, D. 2004. *English Language Primary 6.* Kuala Lumpur:Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka and DTP Enterprise Sdn. Bhd.
p. 6.

Appendix H- Abdul Majid Mohd. Din & How Peng Ten, D. 2004. *English Language Primary 6.* Kuala Lumpur:Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka and DTP Enterprise Sdn. Bhd.
p. 38.

Appendix I- Abdul Majid Mohd. Din & How Peng Ten, D. 2004. *English Language Primary 6.* Kuala Lumpur:Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka and DTP Enterprise Sdn. Bhd.
p. 8.

Appendix J - Abdul Majid Mohd. Din & How Peng Ten, D. 2004. *English Language Primary 6.* Kuala Lumpur:Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka and DTP Enterprise Sdn. Bhd.
p. 60.

Appendix K - Abdul Majid Mohd. Din & How Peng Ten, D. 2004. *English Language Primary 6.* Kuala Lumpur:Ministry of Education Malaysia, Dewan Bahasa & Pustaka and DTP Enterprise Sdn. Bhd.
p. 104.

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Paper 3 Women and Political Development in Malaysia: New Millennium, New Politics

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Abstract

As we entered the new millennium, the Southeast Asia region experienced many events that have contributed to the political development of the region as a whole. During this time, the region also suffered from the economic financial crises which had impacted on the political arena. It is within this political milieu that women political empowerment continues to evolve and women leaders grab the international political limelight. In the ASEAN countries, while there seems to be a strong move toward democratization, the political development of women in electoral politics have much to be desired. The situation is similar in Malaysia. In the 2004 elections, women representatives in parliament reached 10.5%. It is within this context that certain trends and strategies will be examined in this paper. This paper aims to highlight the continued evolution of women's political participation since the early 1950s to 2005. This evolution is to be understood in terms of Malaysian women's empowerment, further achievements, and how they have faced up to new challenges and optimise opportunities presented to them in a Malaysian socio-political environment now touched by globalisation and shaped by developmentalism. What are the political changes that have taken place in the 1990s especially when compared with the 1950s? Based on inductive analysis, participation by women in politics requires constant negotiation for political space such as in electoral system, policy making avenue as well as media representation. How have the changes impacted on women's political participation (less or more harmony) in terms of gender relations?

INTRODUCTION

In Malaysia, women continue to chart upward achievements in the fields of education, government, economy and various professional areas that had been exclusively led by males.[i] In politics, their progress could be seen in terms of greater presence in participatory democracy, more significant representation in electoral politics, and greater number of women at leadership or decision-making levels. In the 2004 elections, women representatives in parliament reached 10.5% compared to 5.19% in 1986 and 7.8% in 1995 (Table 1). However, as observed by Maria Chin Abdullah (2004:73-74), first, this is a small percentage of women representation compared to the 30% targeted by the Beijing Platform of Action which Malaysia signed in 1995; second, numbers are not the only effective indicators. In fact, women's participation in all sectors has to go beyond numbers and move towards a meaningful qualitative transformation of women's participation at all levels of decision-making processes. A more comprehensive report by *Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita dan Keluarga* (KPWK) or the Ministry For Women And Family Development[ii] (2003:108-110) concluded in the same vain that women remain under-represented in many areas, particularly in the decision-making and

power-sharing corridor of political, public and corporate entities. However, it also pointed out that "the policies of the Government are not overtly discriminatory" and that there were other reasons for this state of affairs "despite the Government's supportive policies for the advancement of Malaysia women in all areas".

Thus, this paper aims to explore the above claims and contentions and generally come to a clearer understanding of women and political development in Malaysia in this new millennium. It attempts to highlight milestones reached in the evolution of Malaysian women's political participation that actually started during the anti-colonial movements of the early 1930s through the Japanese Occupation (1941-45), the nationalist fervour of the late 1940s to Independence on 31st August 1957, the post independence period of the late 1950s to the 1970s and on through the era of economic development of the 1970s-1980s, the gender conscientization of the 1990s and the contemporary trends of more explicit feminist political positions by women activists as well as political assertiveness among women civil society groups. The increasing sensitization of gender perspectives of recent decades has been seen by some researchers as characteristics of Malaysian *new politics* (Loh 2002, Mohd. Yusof & Azlan 2002: 15-22). Its characteristics include significant women participation, centring of women issues and increasing civil society political activism.

The synergy of domestic and international dynamics relating to women and gender issues have influenced the creation of new challenges, while at the same providing opportunities and new possibilities for Malaysian women to participate more meaningfully in the public sphere. Certainly, in recent decades, the Malaysian women have been perceived as able to rise up to contemporary challenges and to optimise opportunities presented to them within a Malaysian socio-political environment that had been shaped by developmentalism and touched by globalisation.

PRE-INDEPENDENCE AND BEYOND

According to Khoo (1994), the first women in early Malaysia to be involved in organisational politics were members of the *Parti Komunis Malaya* (PKM) that was already active before the Japanese Occupation.[iii] However, with PKM going underground, hounded and banned at the beginning of the Emergency (1948-1960) by the British Military Administration (BMA) and finally uprooted from the Malaysian soil, there was not much that could be studied about them. In recent years, a book of oral history on Malaysian, Singaporean and Thai women in the Malayan anti-colonial struggle, or the Emergency period, as researched by Agnes Khoo however, has uncovered at least nineteen of them (Crisp 2004).[iv] On the other hand, there is hardly any focused about the early participation of Indian women in early Malaysian politics. The main reason for this is the fact that during this period most of the Indian community were in estates and quite uninvolved with mainstream politics while a minority were urban dwellers whose families generally upheld conservative values about a woman's place being in the home. Khoo (1994:1) also observed that in Malaysian society, Chinese women were *liberated* earlier than Indian or Malay women were. Among the latter two groups, those who were engaged in social and political activities, were generally English-educated and urban based or wives of

professionals and civil servants. It was during the Japanese occupation years that more ordinary women became mobilised in various ideological and nationalistic movements. Nonetheless, mainstream political leadership continued to be provided by men.

Between the end of the Japanese Occupation and Independence in 1957, a number of women public personalities had been traced and identified. Some, such as Mrs Loke Yew, who headed large business organisations, became prominent in the volunteer associations. There were others who were politically involved. For example, Saleha bt Mohd Ali was the only woman in the organising committee of the Independence of Malaya Party (IMP) during its formative years. Mrs F.R. Bhupalan and Mrs Athi Nahappan joined the Rani of Jhansi Regiment that was part of the Indian Independence Army formed by Subhas Chandra Bose, leader of the Indian Independence Movement (Khoo 1994: 3-5). The more prominent trend of Malay women's political involvement was set during these years. For example, Shamsiah Fakeh, who led the women's nationalist group known as *Angkatan Wanita Sedar* (AWAS), was outstanding because she was prepared to take up arms against the British colonial power alongside the men of *Parti Kebangsaan Melayu Malaya* (PKMM) and *Angkatan Pemuda Insaf* (API). On the social front, Malay women had already begun to organise for better education opportunities in the 1920s. The most well known among them was Hajjah Ibu Zain Sulaiman, an advocate for female education, who formed the *Persekutuan Guru-guru Perempuan Melayu* in 1930. She was its chief for the next nineteen years (Mahfudzah 2000: 203). Therefore, researches and writings on Malaysian women and politics during the pre-independence period, such as those by Manderson (1980), Dancz (1987), Aishah Ghani (1992), Jamilah Ariffin (1992, 1994), Ramlah Adam (1993), Khatijah Sidek (1995), Rashila & Saliha (1998) and others, tend to concentrate on Malay women's political awakening and participation in a young democratic system.

Most of the mainstream women activists during this era later joined the *Kaum Ibu* UMNO, the women's wing of UMNO formed in 1949. The *Kaum Ibu*, later changed its name to *Pergerakan Wanita* UMNO in 1971 to reflect a more age-neutral and less matronly image. The *Muslimat*, the women's wing of the *Parti Islam se Malaya* (later *Parti Islam se Malaysia*, PAS) formed in 1953 offered an alternative vehicle for Malay women political activism. However, to-date it has yet to surpass UMNO's *Kaum Ibu* (later *Wanita UMNO*) in terms of its organisational capacity, grassroots influence and national leadership. The national women's wings of the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) were formed much later in 1975. A prominent *Wanita MIC* since before independence is Tan Sri Devaki Krishnan. She was an educationist turned politician. She was the only woman candidate in the country's first legislative election in 1954 and won her seat in Brickfields constituency, Kuala Lumpur (Khoo 1994, Saliha 1994, Shanti Devi 1995, Rosni 1997). Therefore, UMNO women had an earlier start than her sister organisations in the *Parti Perikatan*, or the Alliance coalition party of UMNO-MCA-MIC, and has continued to maintain its organisational lead. Until today, the *Wanita UMNO* remained the best-organised women political organisation with broad grassroots base that transformed into formidable vote-getting machinery during elections.

Some of *Wanita UMNO*'s prominent personalities would include the first *Kaum Ibu* UMNO chief, Puan Sri Datin Hajah Puteh Mariah Ibrahim Rashid, who was appointed first as an UMNO representative in the Constitutional Working Committee and later as a member of the Federal Legislative Assembly where she was a member of its Permanent Committee on Finance from 1948 to 1955. However, after serving as Assemblywoman in *Dewan Undangan Negeri Perak* (1948-1949) she left UMNO for *Parti Negara* that was led by Dato' Onn b Jaafar. In 1949, another *Kaum Ibu* UMNO leader, Tunku Puan Sri Azizah Tunku Petra, was appointed Member of the Negeri Sembilan State Assembly where she served until 1951. In the country's British sponsored first election of 1955, *Kaum Ibu* UMNO was represented by Puan Halimatun who won her seat and joined MIC Devaki Krishnan in the Federal Legislative Assembly.

Later in the first and second elections after independence, 1959 and 1964 respectively, 104 parliamentary seats were contested and the ratio for the women was 34:1. This was an improvement from the 1955 election when the contested seats were only 53 and the ratio between men and women candidates was 51:1 (Table 1). In the 1959 general election, the then PAS *Muslimat* chief, Khatijah Sidek, who had been the *Kaum Ibu* UMNO chief (1954-56), became the first and so far only *Muslimat* to be elected as Member of Parliament. In the same general election, a Johor *Kaum Ibu* UMNO stalwart, Dato' Hajah Fatimah Bt Haji Abdul Majid, was elected Johor assemblywoman. She was re-elected in consecutive general elections of 1964, 1974 and 1978, and served as member of parliament for Johor Bahru, Batu Pahat and Semerah. In 1969, the year that witnessed the infamous 13th May racial riotings, two more milestones were reached when Hajah Dasimah Dasir, was appointed senator to the august *Dewan* Negara where she served until 1980 and Tan Sri (Dr) Hajah Fatimah Haji Hashim, became the first woman minister. She was *Menteri Kebajikan Am Malaysia* until 1974.

By the 1974, 1978 and 1982 general elections, the ratio of men and women parliamentary candidates steadily improved to 30:1, 21:1 and 18:1 respectively, while the percentage of women elected representatives in the *Dewan Rakyat* rose from 2.9% in1959 to 5.19% in 1982 (Table 1). One of the benchmark appointments after these elections was the appointment of Datin Paduka Zaleha Ismail as Political Secretary to the *Kementerian Kebajikan Am Malaysia* in 1974. She became the first woman appointed to such a post. She continued on to serve as the parliamentary secretary *to Kementerian Kemajuan Tanah Dan Wilayah* (1986), Deputy Minister of Transport and finally as the Minister of National Unity and Social Development. Also in 1974, Datin Paduka Rosemarie Chong, the President of National Wanita MCA, won the Selayang parliamentary seat and was appointed parliamentary secretary to the *Kementerian Kesihatan*. Further, the 1970s saw the appointment of a prominent woman civil servant, P.G. Lim, as the Malaysian Ambassador and Permanent Representative to the United Nations (1971-73) and Yugoslavia and Austria (1973-77). In 1977, she was appointed the Malaysian ambassador to Belgium and the countries of European Economic Council (EEC). She was also made Malaysian representative to the UN Industrial Development Organisation and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Datuk Seri Rafidah Abdul Aziz, the current *Pergerakan Wanita UMNO* chief and the long serving Minister of International Trade

and Industry (MITI), however, leads the pack. She was appointed first as a senator in 1974, then parliamentary secretary to Ministry of Public Enterprise in 1976. She went on to clinch her grassroots base by winning the Kuala Kangsar parliamentary constituency in 1978. Since then she has not looked back and she has remained an icon for mainstream Malaysian women in politics.

Generally, the activities and programmes of the women's wings of Malaysian political parties have always been aimed and coordinated towards giving loyal support to their respective parties' main agenda. In the elections, they play a traditionally accepted role as vote canvassers and voters. Their political goals were defined largely by their respective parties, be it independence, democracy, economic developments or Islamic politics. Their own sub-agenda within the parties were associated with socio-welfare programmes for improving women's social and economic lot rather than political conscientisation or activism *per se*. Although during this early stage of nation building, they clearly grasped the notions of political participation, nationalism and self-government, their participation was determined by what their men folk had perceived and defined for them. This pattern continued until the late 1960s when the nation was jolted into a new political momentum by the 1969 racial riots. Following it, a number of important policy changes that affected the political development of women in Malaysia occurred. Some of them were unintended by the policy makers. For example, there was the 1970s *muhibbah* concept, or the concept of inter-racial harmony, that was being popularised to characterise almost every facet of Malaysian life in order to promote racial integration and unity systematically. The ultimate aim is a notion of a politically united *Bangsa* Malaysia sharing the Malaysian dreams of multi-racial harmony in a land of plenty. In this context, the women's contribution to politics and implementation of policies at grassroots level was regarded essential and their participation received greater recognition than before. This led to more concerted efforts on the part of the political parties, especially those of the government coalition party, the *Barisan Nasional*, to galvanize more effectively the women's political potentials.

The 1970 to the 1990 years were the period of New Economic Policy (NEP) with its famous two-pronged aims of eradicating poverty across the board and ethnic identification of economic activities. The 1990s were also buoyant economic years for Malaysia and we were part of the Asian miracle. Towards the end of 1990s, by implementing radical stringent monetary policy, Malaysia managed to keep afloat during the global monetary and economic crises. Nonetheless, the strains caused by the global crises provoked much public discussion that over-spilled into non-economic areas as well. These include issues such as uneven development, existence of pockets of rural and urban poverty, environmental damage, women in development, gender disparity, cultural minority rights, health services, and other general public services. Mainstream global concerns on women's rights, gender discrimination, gender parity and women in decision-making came to the fore championed particularly by the increasing number of economically, politically and socially empowered women. Such trend of greater and more visible involvements of both class and gender based political actors, especially in the advocacy sector and in the general elections, made up the new development dubbed the Malaysian *new* politics (Loh 2002, Loh & Saravanamuttu 2003, Mohd Yusof & Azlan 2002).

In the 1980s and 1990s, the focus of the *Barisan Nasional* led government was economic development. Its take off point was the *Dasar Ekonomi Baru* (1970-1990) introduced during the premiership of Tun Abdul Razak Hussein. The general direction of the policy was continued under the *Dasar Pembangunan Negara* (1991-2000) and *Dasar Wawasan Nasional* (2001-2010). Through the implementation of these policies and under the very able leadership of Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr. Mahathir Mohamad (1981-2003), Malaysia experienced fast-paced urbanisation, industrialisation and modernisation. By the late 1980s, there was discernable greater political empowerment of the women. It was reflected in their visible participation in the nation's elections and governing bodies. These also served as indicators of their standing within their own political parties and constituencies.

In the 1990s, Malaysia achieved unprecedented economic growth, boasting of zero-unemployment and better education standard. Malaysia joined the league of newly developed nations dubbed the Asian miracle. The proportion of the female population in rural areas with no schooling declined from 55% in 1970 to 27% in 1991 and by 2000 the female enrolment at the tertiary level stood at 51.3% of the total enrolment in local universities (KPWK Report 2003: 40-42). By 1990 literacy rate among women was 80%. By 1993, 47% of working age women were employed compared to 27% in 1957 (Rashila & Saliha 1998: 97, Nagaraj 1995: 3, 50).[v] The eighth Malaysia Plan noted that an important factor, which contributed towards the social and economic advancement of women, was the huge investment in educational facilities and equal access to educational opportunities. The almost inevitable result of this fortunate combination was greater sense of political efficacy among the women as well as a greater general awareness of women's concerns, gender awareness and other issues related to women in development. The process gave birth to a new breed of women leaders and political activists who were more assertive and more alert to those aspects of national development that affected women's interests and advancements.

Thus, paralleling the developments in the political scene is the structural and policy progress made within the public sector. The National Advisory Council on the Integration of Women in Development (NACIWID) was created in 1976. Among other things, the Council was tasked with helping the Malaysian government translate the United Nation's World Plan regarding women in development into tangible policies addressing women's interests in all of the development sectors. Since 1987, it has direct access to policy implementation through its advisory role to the *Bahagian Hal Ehwal Wanita* (HAWA). HAWA started as a unit serving the needs of women workers in the Ministry of Labour and Human Resources. It was moved to the Prime Minister's Department in 1978 and then to the Ministry of National Unity and Social Development in 1990 with steadily functions (Nagaraj 1995: 6). HAWA has also received specific budget allocations in the various Five Year Plans that had been implemented since its inception. In collaboration with government agencies and organisations, such as the National Council of Women Organisations (NCWO), it has acted as resource centre, promoted research on women issues and concerns, and identified priorities for Malaysian women's welfare in the context of contemporary needs. Some of the prominent names associated with HAWA, NCWO[vi] and NACIWID are Ramani Gurusamy, Janaky Athi Nahapan, Hajah Puteh Mariah bt Ibrahim Rashid, Rahmah Othman, Dr. Nik Safiah bt Haji Abdul Karim, Helen Tan, and Zaleha Ismail (PERTIWI 1983). Many of the women activists in NCWO have

remained in the civil society sector where they believe they can be most effective and find highest personal fulfilment, without moving into mainstream political activism.

Another milestone reached by Malaysian women was the formulation of the National Policy for Women (NPW) adopted by the Malaysian government at the end of 1989. Its policy thrust is to ensure that all women will be able to participate in, and benefit from, national development. Briefly, its primary objectives are

i. to ensure equal access to resources, information, participation and incentives to both men and women so that women could make meaningful contributions to the country's development and realised their full potentials; and
ii. To integrate women in all sectors of development in accordance with their ability and qualification.

In order to achieve these objectives, it puts forward specific strategies that focused on strengthening HAWA as the machinery for national development, implementing and monitoring programmes for the integration of women in national development, providing education and training for sensitising government administrators on women's issues, involving non-governmental organisations in programmes concerning women in development, eliminating gender discrimination, promoting and coordinating research on women's issues and ensuring that government agencies concerned adjust their allocations to meet the needs of programmes for women in development (Nagaraj 1995: 14-16). The structural process for the whole national women project climaxed with the formation of the *Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita dan Keluarga* (KPWK), that was later renamed and enlarged to be *Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga Dan Masyarakat* (KPWKM). Its first minister, Datuk Seri Shahrizat Abdul Jalil, who was also the Deputy Chief of *Gerakan Wanita UMNO*, was appointed in January 2001.[vii]

The impacts of these policies, in terms of both structural and socio-economic dynamics, spilled over into the political arena. For a start, better-educated and more financially independent women begin to enter politics. The 1995, 1999 and 2004 profiles of women election candidates would bear out this claim. Issues of gender parity, 30 percent representation of women at decision-making levels as the acceptable notion of critical mass and demands for more seats for women to contest in the elections became part of the Malaysian political buzzwords. The most active and vocal voices have been the *Wanita* UMNO. They lead the rest of the women in other political parties both within and outside the *Barisan Nasional* coalition. However, much of this development occurs at the leadership level. While there has been a wider reach of awareness about meaningful participatory politics, it is noted that women at the grassroots level continued in traditional supporting role, namely as vote canvassers, voters and pillars of family strength.

Veteran woman politician, Tan Sri Aishah Ghani (1992: 110), identified five reasons for this state of affairs, including her observation that women seemed to be prepared to lead women only. The others are that traditional roles that women continue to play do not give them wide exposure and prevent them from being seriously involved in politics, that most women become members of political parties

in order to strengthen the parties and not to acquire personal gains, that there is a still strong sentiment in rural communities against women's political candidacy, and that women are ineffective at political management at the branch and division levels. Rashila's findings (1997) complemented Aishah's observations that at the end of the last millennium, societal view on women's role in the public domain remained conservative and patriarchal. For example, a woman's natural place is perceived very much to be at home thus women who choose to venture into politics not only need unconditional support from her family, especially her husband, but must also be seen to be able to keep a balanced home and family life. Rashila also found firstly, that there is the persistent religious argument among some quarters, especially with regard to Muslim women, that it is not the place for women to be in leadership positions outside the home; secondly, that there remained the structural constraints within political parties which allow a very narrow passage for women to reach the top. There is a discernable apprehensiveness if not explicit closed attitude towards women's participation as election candidates among political parties in general; thirdly, that the pre-election jockeying for election constituencies within the different parties pretty much sidelines even qualified women as candidates; and fourthly, that in comparison to men, women politicians tended to have scarce financial backing in order to fuel a political career.

Given such persistent trend of conservative view on women in politics, it is important and significant to look at how women at grassroots level see themselves in the national political paradigm. It is important to understand their own sense of political efficacy and what they themselves identify as challenges to their more significant participation. Their empowerment towards more meaningful participatory democratic practices and their contribution towards building a mature democratic political culture must form the necessary foundation for the greater advancement of Malaysian women in national and international politics. Women's political significance from grassroots to the national level is a significant reality and Malaysia has more to gain than to lose by maintaining and strengthening this presence. During the Mahathir years, women's formal political participation, both at the electoral and governmental levels, has risen in numbers. Similar trend can be seen in the professional and private sectors. However, the critical point is women at decision-making levels. It can be argued that a gender bias handicaps women across all ethnic communities at almost all decision-making levels. It would be fair to suggest that not only do political parties, government, and the general public have to seriously evaluate and take positive steps about improving existing perceptions on women's political and electoral participation. There must be conscientious effort in fostering greater involvement of qualified women at decision-making levels.

GERAKAN WANITA AND *PUTERI* UMNO

Malaysian women's visible participation in politics began in the nationalist movements during the Japanese occupation period. In particular, they made their major impact in modern politics during the 1946 nation-wide anti Malayan Union movement. This movement later solidified into UMNO. The history of the activism and contribution of the UMNO women to party and nation is well documented both within this book and elsewhere. This tradition has been further strengthened by the formation of *Puteri UMNO* in 2000. Datuk Seri (now Tun) Dr Mahathir Mohamad,

who was then the President of UMNO and *Barisan Nasional*, officially gave his blessing and support. It has attracted educated young Malay women who are eager to contribute to national development, enthusiastic about volunteerism and community work, and sensitive to the idea of being future leaders, to join *Puteri*. Their fresh approach to political activism, "less politicking more social service", found resonance among many contemporary young Malay women. From 2002 to 2004, under the dynamic leadership of Azalina Othman (now YB Datuk Seri and currently the Minister of Youth and Sports), *Puteri UMNO* took the Malaysian political scene by storm. It cut its teeth during the by-elections leading up to the 2004 general election. By 2004 general election, it was a political force to be reckoned with in the ruling party's election machinery. Puteri UMNO also made a credible first outing by winning seats allocated to it, chief of which was the parliamentary seat won uncontested by its pioneer leader Azalina in Pengerang, Johor. [viii] It was perceived as a just reward for Azalina's ambitious and successful drive for *Puteri* membership and her forceful dynamic leadership that caught the imagination of thousands of young Malay women in the first year of its existence. Since then, it has proven itself a worthy source of UMNO's political strength: firstly, through its community oriented programmes and youthful idealism; and secondly, through its vigorous participation in a series of by-elections throughout the Abdullah Badawi administration.

NEW MILLENNIUM NEW POLITICS

There exists a perception that prior to the Asian financial and economic crisis that took place towards the end of the last millennium, Malaysia was on the juggernaut path *vis a vis* globalization, that there was no alternative but to jump on globalisation bandwagon. Nonetheless, with the onset of the crisis, the government then led by Prime Minister, Dr. Mahathir Mohammad, reviewed the realities of the country's national interests within the context of the surging new global political and economic milieu. In order to protect its sovereignty and other national interests, it preferred to participate in global transformations in a pro-active mode, to take and modify what is good for the country and even to be an agent of change itself wherever possible (Abdul Rahman Embong, 2000). This perspective influences the country's policy orientations on contemporary issues such as good governance, democratisation, human rights, gender, environment and economic development.

One reflection of this orientation is Malaysia's accession to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) in 1995. In May 2006, Malaysia's progress in terms of its implementation was submitted to CEDAW's panel of international experts.[ix] All countries that have acceded to CEDAW go through this process every two years. For Malaysia, this was its first time since it acceded to the Convention. Paralleling the government's report, six representatives of NGOs in Malaysia presented their own shadow report to the same panel.[x] Ivy Josiah of the Women's Aid Organisation (WAO) said this was the first time that the NGOs were able to state their positions on various issues together as a group to an international body. Zaitun Kasim of Sisters in Islam said that NGOs were not here to find faults but to get to "the kernel of the issues" (Fernandez 2006: 30). Apart from the important fact that developments within our country become subjected to greater international scrutiny, highlighted was the contemporary reality of the need for cooperation between civil society actors, especially the non-governmental

organisations, and government agencies in realising the aims of such international instruments for empowering and bettering women's lives. Driven home was also the global mainstream notion of participatory democracy that eschewed gender bias and gender discrimination. Instead, it upholds gender parity and aims for gender equality. These form new challenges in today's social, economic and political environments.

For the Malaysian women, education has been the major factor that have empowered and promoted women in the professional, public and private sectors. However, despite the hype about globalisation and democratisation in terms of heightening women political participation, especially at leadership and decision-making levels, it is fair to say that in Malaysia it has moved at a pretty slow pace. For example, in the year 1982, which saw the first general election during the Mahathir era, there were only 5.2 percent women representatives in the *Dewan Rakyat*. In 1995, the ratio of men to women candidates was at 12:1 and women parliamentarians only made up 7.8 percent of the nation's parliamentarians. The general impression was that it could not have been due to not enough qualified women around. It was only in 1999, which was the last general election under Prime Minister Dr Mahathir Mohamad that the figure stood at 10.36 percent with a male-female candidate ratio of 9:1. In the 2004 election under Mahathir's successor, Prime Minister Abdullah Badawi, the ratio and the percentage remained constant. In fact, with the increase in the number of parliamentary constituencies from 193 in 1999 to 219 in 2004 (Table 1) due to re-delineation exercise prior to the election, the ratio and percentage did not mean much gain for the women[xi]. For a start it was below the then Asian countries' average of 14.1% with Vietnam (26%) reportedly having the highest percentage of women MPs in an Asian country. It also certainly did not reflect the total of about 52 percent women voters in the country. However, we are moving in a welcomed direction.

Table 1: Percentages of women in the Malaysian Parliament, the *Dewan Rakyat*

ELECTION YEAR	TOTAL SEATS	RATIO MEN: WOMEN	%
1955	53	51 : 1	2.00
1959	104	34 : 1	2.90
1964	104	34 : 1	2.90
1969	144	71 : 1	1.38
1974	154	30 : 1	3.25
1978	154	21 : 1	4.54
1982	154	18 : 1	5.19
1986	177	24 : 1	3.95
1990	180	15 : 1	6.11
1995	192	12 : 1	7.80
1999	193	9 : 1	10.4
2004	219	9 : 1	10.5

Sources: Rashila (2005: 217), Khoo B.T. (2005: 44)

The Malaysian *new* politics popular during the 1999 general election saw certain non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and their activists crossing the non-partisan divide that traditionally separates civil society and politics. Moved by the 1997-98 Anwar Ibrahim episode, a number of them opted to participate in party and electoral politics in the hope that they could make inroads into policy-making bodies. Specific to women politics, before the 1990 general election, a booklet referred to by its authors as the Women Manifesto, entitled *As Malaysian and As Women: Questions for Our Politicians and a Manifesto for the 90s* was published. It covered the questions of why was there no critical mass of women in the public sphere, lack of legal protection for women not only at work place but even more so in their domestic life, and women's low economic standing in the implementation of development policies. In 1995, Malaysia endorsed the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW).[xii] In 1996, Malaysia was represented by both the public and the civil society sectors at the UN Beijing Conference for women. This official chain of events can be said to have culminated in Malaysia's amendment of Article 8 (2) of the Federal Constitution by adding the word "gender" for it to read, "Except as expressly authorized by this Constitution, there shall be no discrimination against citizens on the ground of religion, race, descent, place of birth and *gender* ...", thus constitutionally ensuring the elimination of discrimination against women. Thus, the current concern seems to be more focused on the question of opportunities for women's substantive contribution and participation at decision-making level rather than the issue of "how many women are at the top".

The late 1990s interplay of the dynamics of the Malaysian *new* politics also caused a trend towards the merging of women's political and civil society activism in the country In May 1999, the Women's Agenda for Change (WAC) was launched. It has a section on "Women and Participatory Democracy" with the central theme of democratic conscientization and empowerment.[xiii] Endorsed by seventy-six other NGOs, WAC targeted three groups: the government and its official agencies, the politicians and the general public. The idea was to influence and ensure policy measures that advance women's rights and interests, heighten advocacy of women's issues and raise awareness of issues affecting women (Lai 2003: 70). Working around the concept of critical mass that was endorsed by the 1995 Beijing Global Platform for Action, WAC called upon all political parties to reserve at least thirty percent of all nominations for women representation in all elections at party, state assembly and parliamentary levels, and the government to set a target of similar percentage for women to be appointed to all decision-making positions in government and statutory bodies. Then in September of the same year, the Women's Candidacy Initiative (WCI) was launched. It specifically aimed to promote women candidates in the November 1999 general election. However, this did not involve women who were already in political parties since WCI aimed at fielding women candidates standing on independent platforms advocating gender and environmental issues. It fielded Zaitun Kasim but she lost in the Selayang parliamentary constituency. She stood on a platform of women and non-partisan public interest issues, thus breaking out of the ethnic and party paradigms that have been the hallmark of conventional Malaysian party politics (Saliha 2005: 91-124). Taking WAC and WCI together, Martinez (2003:96) observed that their development and trajectories towards the end of the last millennium did give cause to hope that Malaysian women were renegotiating their conceptions of power and polity within the Malaysian mosaic.

In that Malaysian mosaic, there is yet another thread in the politics of women's political participation in Malaysia. Its genesis can be traced perhaps as far back as the New Economic Policy period of the 1970s and 1980s. This period overlapped with the era of what was known popularly as the era of Islamic resurgence when Malaysia experienced one of the most intense periods of modern Islamic revivalist or resurgent movements. The *Angkatan Belia Islam Malaysia* (ABIM) was one of the key players at this time. Different from some other more conservative Islamic groups, ABIM's progressive approach to Islam as a way of life in the modern world, added to the empowerment of women in Malaysia by fostering a civil society that was more open to female participation. It was committed to a "modernist, progressive, and development oriented" Islam. Through its women affairs unit, the *Unit Hal Ehwal Wanita* (HELWA), it contributed to the empowerment of Malay Muslim women by reinforcing them in their identity and their understanding of the ways in which they can participate in a modernising and developing country, which of course included politics if they so chose to. As such, by the 1990s, this plus other societal and economic dynamics shifted the focus of politicised younger generation of Malaysian Muslim women. It moved dramatically towards questions of finding a balance between contemporary demands and traditional, cultural and religious gender construction, formulating new strategies for more meaningful democratic participation in fast developing Malaysia, and increasing the percentage of women at decision-making levels.

Although they might not have necessarily joined forces in the beginning, there seemed to be simultaneous similar development among Malaysian women of various ethnic groups who are active in civil society and politics. This marked the 1990s Malaysian political scene with the emergence of a new breed of political women players as well as new form of alliances. Younger women professionals, with more contemporary approach to organisations and greater commitment to public service than conventional ideological agenda, became election candidates. They managed under their own steam, confident in their rights and place within a democratic system, display leadership and organisational abilities, and form tactical alliances with other groups for mutual benefits. An example of this was the 'tactical and strategic alliance" experimented by Zaitun Kasim, who stood as an independent candidate during the 1999 general election. Zaitun called it an election "rainbow alliance" (Zaitun 2004:3). Maznah (2001: 125-127) offered an insightful analysis of the women's predicament during this election by capturing the nuances of the 'gender card' as perceived and used by politicians, political parties, candidates, women activists and other interested parties. She saw a marked politicisation and cooptation of women's issues in the run-up to the 1999 election although her conclusion was that the 'gender card' was probably more effective among non-Muslim voters because in her words "women's rights as opposed to women's welfare per se were associated with secular politics, thus acting as a safeguard against both Islamic encroachment and gender discrimination."

The younger breed of women politicians are also comfortable with the idea of using "different political channels aided by technology" that is based on ICT that are synonymous with globalisation and contemporary life style. However, in this country, the combination of internet technology and democracy is still new despite the almost

borderless spaces for freedom of expression and channels for organisation that are offered by it.[xiv] As such, these important contemporary channels for networking and reaching out to grassroots have yet to be used significantly by both men and women in politics. It is also interesting to note that even in the urban constituencies women politicians have not been overly enthusiastic about the significant impact of ICT as communication alternative to reach out to grassroots. The reason for this is the low ICT awareness and access among women not only in the rural but in the urban areas as well. Therefore, apart from heavy usage of the cell phones and the short messaging system for limited networking and organising, the favoured and dominant channels remain face-to-face encounters and the print media.

Currently, there are many outstanding women political role models for the younger activists. Some of the contemporary personalities include the globalisation savvy, intelligent and internationally confident model personified by Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz the Wanita UMNO chief and her deputy, Datuk Shahrizat Jalil, the well-educated younger modern urban professional such as Datuk Seri Azalina Othman, the progressive and feminist persona that is often associated with women politicians whose roots are in civil society activism such as Zaitun Kasim, and others with Islamic politics background such as Dr. Lo'lo' bt Datuk Ghazali and Dr. Mariah bt Mahmud from PAS. The current profile of women in Malaysian politics has certainly undergone a radical change from pre-1990s unobtrusive traditional quiet force standing loyally behind the[ir] men. This development has taken place across the ethnic divide, so that there are now prominent women politicians from the non-Malay parties such as the Deputy Finance Minister and the *Wanita* MCA chief, Datuk Dr. Ng Yen Yen,

The late 1990s also saw the formation of the first national party headed by a woman, the Parti KeADILan Malaysia. Following the Anwar Ibrahim episode, his wife YB Datin Seri Wan Azizah bt Wan Ismail, became its first party president. She led KeADILan into an alliance with PAS, Parti Rakyat Malaysia (PRM) and the Democratic Action Party (DAP) to form the *Barisan Alternatif*. Riding on grassroots' support for her husband, she won the Permatang Pauh parliamentary seat in the 1999 fiercely contested election. She retained the seat in the 2004 general election although her party's candidates lost in all other parliamentary constituencies that they stood in. Meanwhile more women made it into their party candidate lists and won seats both at the state and parliamentary levels. Those from *Barisan Nasional* were appointed to a handful of government positions of Ministers, Deputy Ministers, Parliamentary Secretaries and Senators.[xv] The first woman minister was appointed in 1964 and currently the percentage of women ministers still stands at less than 30%. The percentage for women Deputy Ministers was highest at about 16% in 1982 but now it is at less than 5%. The percentage for women Parliamentary Secretaries was highest at about 22% in 1986 but now is below 19%. Appointments of women senators have almost paralleled the percentage of elected women Members of Parliament and currently stand at about 10%.[xvi] These figures have significant bearing on the conclusion drawn by a KPWK report (2003: 112) that the most important changes in Malaysian women's status and leadership role since independence have come from their increased participation in political parties, elected and appointed offices, women's organisations and legislation. It pointed out that first, there is correlation

between trend toward higher aspirations in politics among women with trend in visible women's participation in the economy, education and health industries. Second, that engendering policies and procedures to enable greater participation by women in decision-making processes require the transformation of existing concepts and institutional framework where gender bias pervades all levels.

CONCLUSION

This paper has tried to address a broad spectrum of issues, mission, challenges, obstacles and vision relating to women and political development in Malaysia. Much of it hinge upon the core political question of instituting democratic values and practices that would include and accept women equally in the public sphere. In this process, four elements are apparent. These are the need to be sensitive to the closing of any political space and to be alert to any opening of such space, to monitor the trends of political actors, to be open to new ideas or even experiments in electoral systems, and to optimise the use of possible new political channels aided by the ICT revolution.

In reflection, perhaps one of the biggest obstacles to women's political development in this country is the Malaysian men's own resistance in allowing the women more space for political growth. They have continued to perpetuate the stereotypical notion that women are happiest in the private sphere – the classic female myth of home and family first and "anyway, it's a man's world out there" attitude. Ironically, this also happens with a little help from some women who themselves have been socialised within the patriarchal values and system (Rashila 2003: 129-140; Maria Chin 2001: 66-83). Therefore, the onus of making more significant attempt at serious representation of women's interests and participation at all decision-making levels, which would be a significant measure of political development for them, actually lies also with the men. For a start, they could be more committed to halting common practice of trivializing or marginalising these issues at all decision-making levels.[xvii] Nonetheless, the second hurdle in increasing women's meaningful political participation, especially in electoral politics - the first being the desire and commitment on the part of qualified women themselves to be involved in politics - is the willingness of political party leadership to give them the space. For example, it is the party leadership that decide to field which candidate and where. This usually depends on internal bargaining between power brokers and rival factions as well as between parties and their electoral allies. In this process, due to influences in their personal socialisation and public conventions, women are often sidelined and final decisions invariably favour the men.

Following a listing of its insightful "gender barriers and issues" , the KPWK 2003 (108-112) report made ten recommendation guidelines: initiate and enforce affirmative action to eliminate discriminatory practices and to conduct "gender-sensitizing" training, ensure a balanced men-women representation in crucial decision-making bodies, increase opportunities to allow women access to policy-making, incorporate gender issues into political agenda, provide gender-friendly environment for equal opportunities, provide a gender-sensitive social and educational environment, take positive actions to build a critical mass of women at key decision-

making levels in the public and private sector, ensure fair practice and create appropriate mechanism to monitor access by women, review all existing concepts or institutional framework, and take steps to ensure that affirmative action in favor of women be implemented in all sectors at all levels. Another published research on the same subject in one by Maria Chin Abdullah (2004: 78-9). It cites factors that affect women's political participation as limited access to financial resources, lack of familiarity with their legal rights and mass media that tends to portray stereotype roles and negative images of women that further reinforce cultural attitudes that inhibit women's political participation, thus failing to focus on women's needs, achievements and concerns.

At this point, if we were to consider all of the existing initiatives, both governmental and non-governmental, there is no lack of ideas and compiled data to assist in the formulation of new policies or review of old ones in the interest of women's political progress in Malaysia. Furthermore there has also been a perceptible attitude change among Malaysian public in general and among the men in particular so that it is now common to hear politically progressive pronouncements that "doing a good job" is more important than whether an official or an elected representative is a male or female. In both urban and rural constituencies, an increasingly liberal public is aware of cultural gender construction and open to accepting the realities of having women political leaders at all levels. Political parties have picked up the trend and have recognized women's political mileage with voters although big steps still need to be taken to affect liberal reforms of party structure to allow wider opportunities for women's advancements in party leadership.

The government, on the other hand, seems to be more pro-active in creating more spaces for women's advancement within its official structure. It has tried to follow up on its commitments by undertaking a series of measures to end discrimination against women in all forms. They include incorporating the principle of equality of men and women in its legal system, actively working towards abolishing all discriminatory laws and adopting appropriate ones that prohibit discrimination against women, planning for the establishment of tribunals and other public institutions to ensure the effective protection of women against discrimination, making moves towards ensuring the elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by persons, organizations or enterprises, and undertaking the obligation to submit national reports, at least once in every four years to UN CEDAW monitoring agency on measures it has taken to comply with its treaty obligations. Some of these are seen from its appointments and promotions of women to the higher echelon in decision-making levels in both the public and corporate sectors. Very welcomed would be a sufficient dose of political will to promote more gender sensitive and women friendly policies, which would in turn generate a more empowering environment for women keen to serve society and nation *via* the electoral process. In short, given some of these overall positive indications, women whose concerns and interests fall within national political development would do well to take advantage of niches and opportunities that are being created by shifting paradigms and innovative means that characterise our contemporary millennium.

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[i] Maria Chin Abdullah (2004: 73-74) quoted 47.1% of female labour force participation, and women exceed men by a ratio of 80:20 in the tertiary sector. Her research areas covered women in public services and politics, women's leadership of organisation, women's participation in electoral politics and discriminated groups of women.

[ii] It was later renamed and enlarged to be *Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita, Keluarga Dan Masyarakat* (KPWKM). A report on the progress of Malaysian women since independence by *Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita dan Keluarga* (2003: 112) credited the creation of the Ministry for Women and Family Development and the establishment of *Puteri UMNO* as

major steps that will boost efforts to increase women's participation in decision-making and power sharing.

[iii] Khoo (1994:1) cited Penang-born Chan Pek Khuan, who was born in 1888 and educated at the Penang Convent, as the first Malaysian woman to participate modern politics although she was really involved with China politics. She was an adherent to Dr. Sun Yat-sen's revolutionary movement.

[iv] Relating their poignant life stories, Agnes Khoo focuses attention on the role of the Malayan Communist party in providing the liberation of these women from oppressive attitudes and circumstances that circumscribed their lives in the family and society (preface by Prof Sheila Rowbotham in Crisp 2004). The book is dedicated to these women "who have helped shaped our history".

[v] Percentage Distribution of Female Employment By Sector in peninsular Malaysia (1975-2005)

Year	1975	1980	1985	2000	2005
Agriculture	50.3	40.2	28.9	11.9	9.0
Mining	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.2	0.1
Manufacturing	17.0	20.7	21.9	33.5	31.7
Construction	0.9	1.0	1.3	1.5	1.4
Electricity	0.1	0.2	0.0	0.2	0.3
Transportation	0.7	1.0	1.4	1.8	2.4
Services	30.6	36.4	46.2	50.9	55.1

Source: Jamilah Ariffin , 1992 (data 1975-1985) & Malaysian Govt. 2006 (data 2000, 2005)

The above table shows the tremendous shift in employment possibilities for women and female labour force participation. While women's involvement in the agriculture sector has shrunk, women increasingly play a major role in the manufacturing and service sectors.

[vi] The National Council of Women's Organisations (NCWO) was formed in 1960. It is an umbrella organisation of women's organisations in the country whose members include welfare-oriented, political and professional groups as well as women's sections of national bodies. It was formed in the belief that 'women of Malaya can play a vital part in the life of the country if they will unite themselves' (Nagaraj 1995: 10-11).

[vii] Meanwhile the *Gerakan Wanita UMNO* Chief, YB Datuk Seri Rafidah Aziz continues to serve ably as the Minister of International Trade and Industry since her appointment in 1987.

[viii] Pengerang was an UMNO safe seat in Johor and Johor UMNO leader, Menteri Besar YAB Datuk Abd Ghani Othman, was said by a significant Johor UMNO insider to have served that privilege on a silver platter to Azalina.

[ix] *Malaysia. Report to the United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women* (First and Second Report). Prepared by Ministry of Women, Family and Community Development, 2004.

[x] Malaysian Non Governmental Organizations Shadow Report. Reviewing the Government's Implementation of the Convention on the elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW). Coordinated by The National Council for Women's Organization (NCWO) in collaboration with several Non Governmental Organizations. Prepared by NGO Shadow Report Group, 2005.

[xi] It was circulated that many good men had to be dropped from the candidate lists, especially in the main political parties such as those in *Barisan Nasional* coalition, the *Parti Islam Se Malaysia*, the Democratic Action Party and the *Parti keADILan Nasional*, in order to give

way to the ladies. The women generally acknowledged the political sacrifices and it is significant that the percentage of women representation doubled during Dr. Mahathir's tenure as Prime Minister. This has been interpreted as reflecting the leadership's concern regarding women's continuous political participation especially within the ruling party.

[xii] CEDAW stipulates that states take appropriate measures to eliminate discrimination against women in the political and public life of a country, to ensure that women are on equal terms with men in the right to vote in all elections and public referenda, that women are eligible for election to all public decision-making bodies, and that women participate in the formulation as well implementation of government policies.

[xiii] Its other areas of concern are development, culture and religion, law, land, work, health, environment, domestic violence, sexuality and HIV/AIDS.

[xiv] Preliminary studies, such as an attempt by Shamsul Badli (2001), have proposed that democracy and democratic space in Malaysia need to be re-assessed in the light of Internet role that could actually by pass such constraints such as the Publication and Printing Act. New terminologies such as *tele*-democracy, electronic democracy, digital democracy and cyber democracy need to be examined in the context of the Malaysian setting.

[xv] In 2004, it has been documented that the occupation of legislators, senior officials and managers in Malaysia was held by 10.1 % men while women only hold 5.8% (Labour Force Survey report 2004).

[xvi] Percentages based on Figure 5.1, "Percentage of women in elected offices/appointed offices, Malaysia, 1959-2001". Source: Secretariat for the Parliament, Malaysia. Quoted in Kementerian Pembangunan Wanita dan Keluarga (2003), *The Progress of Malaysian Women Since Independence, 1957-2000*, p.98

[xvii] Such attitudes were displayed during the painful passage of Domestic Violence Act through parliament. In fact, to this day insensitive and disrespectful jokes and remarks continue to be made in the august house and given popular media coverage.

Paper 4 Harmonizing Personal and Social Perspectives: An Understanding of Women Entrepreneurship in Malaysia

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Abstract

This paper attempts to present an alternative theoretical perspective, i.e., the personal-social dynamic perspective to understand women's entrepreneurship, especially in unconventional business sectors in Malaysia. Women's entrepreneurship is, traditionally, understood from the perspective of business start-up, sustenance and growth. This alternative approach serves to complement existing conventional understanding that normally explains women's entrepreneurship from the psychological dimension of personal traits and concentrates on individual level analysis. According to this school of thought, the development of women's entrepreneurial traits occurs in an isolated and particularized manner independently of the wider social domain within which the entrepreneurs are situated in. In simple terms, the role of social actors for example, in birth and development of entrepreneurial traits at the individual level is negligible, if not invisible. The traits are argued as in-born. On the contrary, the alternative model we are suggesting integrates the dynamic component of personal characteristics with the wider social environment, embracing both economic and institutional social processes. This alternative perspective is an outcome of a research conducted on women entrepreneurs in unconventional business sectors in Malaysia. The research findings demonstrate that some women entrepreneurial traits have indeed been developed within the social-institutional context. It was also found that the women's personal characteristics to a certain extent influenced their social context, e.g., social relations. As such, it appears women entrepreneurship is in part formed by a process of harmonizing personal and social domains.

1. Introduction

In general, when we talk about entrepreneurship or entrepreneurial traits, in Malaysia or otherwise, the issues that come to our mind are basically about operating a business, being self-employed, taking risks, venturing into an enterprise, and so on. Such similar issues concern women entrepreneurship as well. In fact, the question of how one starts a business, manages and sustains it is usually the concern of entrepreneurship, whether they concern women entrepreneurs or otherwise. A key question that has yet to be resolved is what are the factors or attributes that shape entrepreneurship, particularly women's entrepreneurship?

This paper is a conceptual attempt to understand and explain women entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial traits in Malaysia, namely in unconventional business sectors. A previous study on women entrepreneurship in Malaysia that we conducted have allowed us to develop this framework, for the sake of a better and

nuanced elucidation of women entrepreneurship, especially in unconventional business sectors in Malaysia (s ee Chan et al. 2006, Noor Rahamah et al. 2007, Bahiyah et. al. 2007). A literature review and critique of existing arguments of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial traits assist in fine tuning our arguments (see amongst others, Aldrich 1990; Chell et al. 1991; Entrialgo et al 2000; Hampson 1984 in Chell et al. 1991; Hofstede 1980; Hisrich 1986; Lynn 1991; McClelland 1961; Razin 2002; Thornton 1999). Thus far, much is not known about and/or understood of women entrepreneurs, especially with regards to their entrepreneurial traits and entrepreneurship in unconventional business sectors in Malaysia, for lack of social scientific research at the conceptual and empirical levels. Therefore, not much is known about the ways and means for women to better empower themselves to venture into unconventional business sectors, to improve their existing businesses or merely to survive in the much male dominated business sectors in Malaysia.

The focus of this paper on entrepreneurship is specifically with regard to how women entrepreneurs build and sustain the unconventional businesses that they have built, owned and managed. In order to do that, an investigation into the presence and development of the nature of their entrepreneurial traits is embarked upon. What are the traits and how are they established or created are the main questions that we address in our conceptual framework. Briefly, our conceptual stand is harmonizing personal and social domains of entrepreneurs to demonstrate a dynamic form of entrepreneurial traits, quite unlike those that argue, on the one hand that these are purely psychological or innate in nature, or on the other hand that they are purely socially, structurally or externally determined. We name this framework the personal-social dynamic perspective. The following sections will elaborate on our stand after we present our critique of the literature.

According to Dabson (2005) in his paper presented in the Entrepreneurship Summit-Expanding Economic Cooperation in Austin, Texas on 29 March 2005, entrepreneurship is the process through which entrepreneurs create and grow enterprise(http://www.ruraleship.org/content/State_Pages/TX/DabsonTXSummit.pdf. 14Oct 2007) For the purpose of this paper, we define a woman entrepreneur as a business innovator who establishes a business entity to offer new or existing product/goods or service into a new or existing market for profitable motivations (see also Chan et al. 2006, Noor Rahamah 2007, Bahiyah et. al. 2007). A woman entrepreneur, like any other entrepreneur, can undertake a business that is independently owned and operated. Hence, these women are also known as women business owner-operators or owner-managers. The venture of these women entrepreneurs can be based on a totally new idea, a new way of doing something, a new location, or attempting something no one else has done before (http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com/Enterpreneur). The size and scale of their activity is open, however it is anticipated that women entrepreneurs in small businesses will be the focus in view of their engagement in unconventional business sectors. As for the notion of unconventional business sector, we understandd it as the engagement of women entrepreneurs in historically underrepresented or non-dominant female business sectors, often referring to their positioning in male-dominated business sectors. In Malaysia, examples of the sectors are construction, printing, canopy business, IT, insurance and others.

2. Common Understanding of Entrepreneurial Traits

A common understanding found in some literature and past studies on entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial traits is that to be an entrepreneur or to be engaged in entrepreneurship, one needs to have certain personal characteristics or traits or the will/spirit to start and sustain in business. This common understanding is usually psychologically based. The innate ability in the like of willpower, motivations and intent of being in control, independent and risk taking are some of the personal or psychological attributes that past studies have attributed to entrepreneurial ventures. There is a rich and thriving literature to support this hypothesis; one of the earliest proponents is McClelland (1961). However, in general, the psychological and personal trait explanation seems somewhat asocial (anti social); devoid of the economic function and the wider social context in which the individual is situated in. Thus, there are attempts to seek an alternative understanding utilizing environmental conditions or rates approach, coupled with sociological or market/economic function as well as adaptive cognitive model (Aldrich 1990, Chell et. al. 1991, Thornton 1999, Delmar,1996). The alternative arguments appear to correct/remedy or complement/reconcile the lopsided view of the personal traits hypothesis. However, this correction appears separatist or dualistic in nature without sufficient attention given to the dynamic interaction between personal traits and social context. A gap between the literature on the "personal" and literature on the "social" is thus evident. Therefore, in light of this limitation, to understand and explain women entrepreneurial traits in the Malaysian context, we conceptualize on how the personal *part* constantly interacts or harmonizes with the social *whole*. Here an attempt is made to reconcile and harmonize the personal and social domains or perspectives, i.e. attempting to highlight a nuanced interaction and dialectics of stability and change of personal traits and social context that eventually leads to an integration of personal and social mechanisms. In doing this, we are also operationalizing the notion of harmony which is a key emphasis in the conference theme.

In our conceptual framework, we take a non-dualistic but holistic perspective integrating personal traits and social context in an interactive, dynamic and relational way. Besides that, by utilizing phenomenological data obtained through qualitative narratives in our previous work (Chan et. al 2006; Noor Rahamah et. al 2007, Bahiyah et al. 2007), we try to get an inductive sense of women entrepreneurship in Malaysia. A recursive deductive and inductive method is our approach to understanding women entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial traits holistically and perhaps realistically. We postulate our model to situate the personal traits ideas in a socially constructed constantly shifting micro-social context, amidst pragmatic strategies, as well as taking into account the role of social and institutional factors in sustaining entrepreneurship. This framework, we hope, has the potential of guiding future research in understanding entrepreneurship amongst women, for the betterment of their efforts in embarking and sustaining their unconventional business sectors in Malaysia.

3. Concepts of "Personal" and "Social" in Common Understandings

Before we deliberate on our framework, there are a few qualifiers in terms of common concepts that are used interchangeably to explain or understand entrepreneurship, namely personal traits/characteristics and social context. The literature is flooded with varying terminologies and concepts associated with these two realms. Even though there are some variations between the concepts utilized in the respective realms, we have attempted a reasonable classification based on our understanding of the literature and authors' reflection.

Firstly, the literature on personal traits refers to a whole series of studies that come under the traits theory, traits approach, as well as those that focus on personal characteristics and psychological characteristics, etc. There are known to be two main arguments concerning traits development. One argument postulates that traits are in-born and natural, irrespective of the individual's social surroundings or external environmental (i.e., social) influences. Another argument suggests that traits are socially constructed, i.e., developed within the social situational context within which the individual is situated in. Following this latter argument, traits are meaningful categories for social behavior that are socially significant (Hampson, 1984: 38 in Chell et al 1991: 33). Hence traits are co-occurring behavioral and situational attributes. This socially constructed view suggests that personal traits are based on manifested actions primarily with social meanings embedded. For example, somebody is hard working suggests that not only the person concerned holds certain meanings, motives and values (at the individual level), but that the person manifests that action that is reflective of his or her social or situational surroundings. In other words, social context is said to be primarily determining the nature of individual characteristics, women entrepreneurs included. Briefly, social context is deterministic as far as nature of individual traits is concerned.

Secondly the literature on social construction of traits refers to a further reclassification of the "social" at two levels, namely the micro-social context and the macro-social context. The micro-social context refers to immediate social relations that entail family, friends, work sphere, customers, suppliers, employees, moneylenders, and organizational ties along the notions of social network and social capital. Meanwhile the macro-social context refers to the wider social environment that includes the locality structures, ecological structures (organization, population and community), environmental conditions (social, economic, political), institutions (government policies, political structures, cultural norms) as well as encompassing country-wide social, economic and cultural structures. In other words, aspects of the environment are broadly social, political, economic and ecological ones. Specifically, they include social institutions and their structural features such as organizational, cultural, governmental, population and community. This reclassification we believe provides a somewhat more encompassing and holistic understanding of entrepreneurship and entrepreneurial traits compared to the earlier argument of the "social" in some literature. The following sections further elaborate on existing ideas in relation to the above notions of both the "personal" and the "social". Our critique of these notions will eventually enable us to produce a conceptual framework and this ensues in the final section of this paper.

4. The Critique of Common Understandings of the "Personal" and the "Social" Approaches

Specifically, the bases of our argument in developing our conceptual framework emerge from the following critiques:-

i. Critique of the personality traits approach as myopic and lop-sided as there are ruptures in its methodology and pragmatic aspects
ii. Critique of the ecological perspective as macro-social and its inherent methodological weakness
iii. Integration efforts are without harmony between the "personal" and the "social"; this appear dichotomous and ignore dynamic features

Based on the above critique the next section will elaborate on a personal-social dynamic perspective that would be able to capture the essence of relational, interactional and dynamic features of entrepreneurship that other approaches are unable to do.

4.1 Myopia and Rupture in Personal Traits Approach

One of the reasons for the prevalence of personal/psychological traits thesis in entrepreneurship can be associated with the popularization of entrepreneurial literature in the United States, where the deeper roots of American individualism is located (Leavitt 1989: 41). This ideological stance has prompted a strong belief in the free will of the individual and it sought to examine the mental process. McClelland's (1961) path breaking personal concept of "need for achievement" provided the boost for utilizing the individual as unit of analysis, applying psychological/personal traits to understand the motivation of entrepreneurs. The flourishing of the personal/psychological traits school saw advancement by other people thereafter in terms of identifying the detail personal and psychological characteristics (see Hisrich 1986 for example). Examples of traits are sociable, energetic, friendly, risk-taking, industrious, etc. The psychological concept of traits proposed by Hisrich (1986) argues that the decision to be an entrepreneur is both shaped by desirability and feasibility of intention which depends on the assessment of personal feelings on control, independence and risk. The psychological motivation from inside suggest a personal ability to control seemingly sustains enough drive and energy to create and manage new enterprise (Hisrich 1986: 5). Similar motivations from a psychological stance are offered for entrepreneurs seeking independence and risk.

One consequence of this runaway literature has been the lop-sided narrow focus, as well as the essentializing and foundational notion of personal determinism. This stance has been criticized for ignoring social context both at the micro-level (Noor Rahamah et. al. 2007; Bahiyah et. al. 2007) and wider macro-level (Aldrich 1990). Also the prevalence of this separatist and dualist notion of personal-social/environment explanation for entrepreneurship has led to a somewhat dubious notion ignoring the co-occurrence and interaction and dynamics that entail between them. This we argue is due to the ideological individualism along the libertarian value that has proliferated in the market place as well as in neoclassical literature. In fact, the Western epistemology has been shaped by Anglo-libertarians like John Locke and

John Stuart Mills. Early classics on the entrepreneurial force like the Weberian individual work ethics has attempted to legitimize religious precepts, while the Schumpeterian notion of competitiveness and innovation are all premised on the individual free will.

A somewhat different from the conventional view of psychological literature is offered by Lynn (1991) who attempts to elevate certain selected individual traits to the level of cultural whole or structure at the country-wide level. Lynn examines the role of psychological factors in a wider cultural sense on economic growth by looking at attitudinal constructs like Weber's work ethics, Schumpeter's competitiveness, McClelland's achievement motivation and Wiener's status of landowners. The above proponents found competitive attitude as an important contributor to economic performance; thus by extension one can postulate its significance to entrepreneurship. However, the consequence of this stance has landed this personal traits approach in a positivist empiricist outlook , it ignores as well, the interactive micro-social realm. Besides that the personal traits approach also has also paid a disservice to the practical sphere, where social learning takes places.

4.2 Ecological derailment

As mentioned earlier, some literature criticize personal traits theory as ignoring the role of the social context within which the entrepreneurs are situated in, in determining entrepreneurial traits. They contend that entrepreneurial traits are developed at the social level. In other words, traits appear as social constructs. They generally reclassify the "social" at two levels: micro-social context and macro-social context.

The ecological school is one of the key critiques of the personality traits theory. This school has appeared under the rubric of rates approach or "environmental conditions" approach (Aldrich 1990) as opposed to mainstream traits approach discussed earlier. The "social" for this school of thought is the environment, i.e., at the macro-social level. However, of late there emerges a cultural approach that can be situated under the ecological framework (Hofstede 1980). Thus, the "social" refers to the cultural context that is closely linked to the ecological context.

Basically the mainstream ecological school focuses on "environment conditions" that generate variations in the entrepreneurial start ups or firm formation. Thus, these entrepreneurial start ups are called "rates" approach. The idea has its roots in the notion of population ecology in a Darwinian sense. Here, the idea is used to refer to the organizational population where a grouping of organizations based on industry or organizational form is examined. Basically, the ecological notion is based on distribution of environmental resources, where it postulates efficient enterprises or organizations that are able to secure environmental resources that are *selected* while those that are not efficient are not *selected;* herein *selected* refers to organizational survival or sustainability in the environment.

The "environmental conditions" approach postulates the environmental social context as a determining force in entrepreneurial activity, and thus, highlights the salience of a population of organizations as the key component of an environment or

of several enterprises. A new entrepreneurial activity of an enterprise is highly dependent upon the experiences of already existing organizations surrounding that enterprise, both in a particular population and in the larger community of populations of organizations within which the enterprise is located. As such, Aldrich (1990) attributes "environmental conditions" of an enterprise to three environmental processes, namely intra-population, inter-population and institutional process. Intra-population processes refers to processes prior to founding, dissolutions, density, and factors associated with density that shapes the environment into which new firms are formed (Aldrich 1990: 7). Meanwhile inter-population processes concern the nature of relations between populations of organizations, whether competing or cooperating, and actions by dominant organizations that influence the distribution of resources in the environment and the terms on which they are available to entrepreneurs (Aldrich 1990: 7). Lastly, institutional factors encompass government policies, political events, cultural norms, and others that characterize the macro-context within which other processes take place (Aldrich 1990: 7).

The difference of this ecological approach with the traits approach is that the former approach takes an organizational, long term view and a macro-social perspective as opposed to the entrepreneurial stance, short-term(ish) view and micro and anti-social perspective of the personal traits approach. This clearly distinguishes a somewhat dichotomous and separatist approach. Despite its contribution to entrepreneurship understanding, the ecological view of the "environment conditions" approach has been criticized on two fronts, i.e., i) at the scale and interactional sense, and ii) at the methodological level. Often, the ecological school has sought the macro-social environment and ignored the micro-social context. Though efforts are made to correct this duality, like the social networks theory, however it operates with a separatist framework ignoring the individual or personal characteristics. As such, the integration or harmonizing feature of the "personal" and the "social" has yet to emerge. Secondly, methodological limitations are seen by aggregate association of the entrepreneurial founding rates with the population or community characteristics (Baum & Haveman 1997 in Thornton 1999). This focus on the universal concepts utilizing positivist methods rather than on the particularized context has been a major drawback of this school, as asserted by Amburgey & Rao (1996 in Thornton 1999).

To reiterate, another group of literature that has developed under the cultural platform, but can be considered as reflective of the ecological school is the cultural approach identified by Hofstede (1980) as contributing to entrepreneurship. Similar to the arguments put forward in the "environmental conditions" ecological school concerning macro-social determinants of new entrepreneurial activity, the cultural approach provides the cultural ecological imprint for new entrepreneurial activity. Hofstede (1980: 172) identifies four critical cultural variables at macro-level (often referring to country wide), namely power distance, uncertainty avoidance, masculinity and individualism. Later Hofstede (1991) introduces two additional cultural variables, namely competitiveness and bureaucracy at country level as attributes that can also shape entrepreneurship. Similar to the rates approach in the ecological perspective, the cultural approach suffers from methodological flaws, emanating from its empiricism logics, based on positivistic macro-level aggregation of entrepreneurial values as determinant of entrepreneurship. This view does not account for the cultural-whole value that shapes individual beliefs and intentions leading to entrepreneurial action. By looking at individual aggregation, it fails to explore the

cultural precepts and the interaction and dynamics at micro-social level that influences entrepreneurship at the individual level.

4.3 Integration without Much Harmony

The dichotomous nature of the previous dualistic explanation of both the personal and the social ecological perspectives of entrepreneurship have witnessed some attempts to reconcile and integrate these somewhat opposing stances. In the literature, we have identified three strands/streams of integration efforts between the "personal" and the "social" (both at the micro-social and macro-social levels), i.e. , a) the embedding of the personal in the social, b) The relationship between culture and traits (cultural-traits relations) and, c) the sociological approach. However, in our view, these strands still cannot highlight the dynamic non-dualistic interaction between the personal and social perspectives. Nonetheless, some of the ideas presented peviously have helped to articulate our own arguments in the conceptual framework that we have created. However, we need to state at the outset that our critique of this literature is based on a situated eastern world view, holistic stance, permanence and changes in traits and social conditioning, and conscious sense-reflection from our inductive work.

a) Embedding the "Personal" in the "Social"

For some analysts, the micro-social level is understood as the micro-organizational level. Entrialgo and his colleagues (2000) are such analysts. At the micro-organizational level, Entrialgo et al. postulate the direct role of the strategic process of an organization, and the indirect role of psychological characteristics of the entrepreneur in influencing company performance. In fact, the indirect role of the entrepreneur is envisaged through strategic process and that this process has a direct influence on the company's success. In a way, this argument supports our evolving hypothesis on the direct role of micro-social context and the indirect role of the personal character in influencing entrepreneurship.

On another front, Razin (2002) identifies social embeddedness of entrepreneurial action amongst migrant entrepreneurs. To elaborate, individual action of entrepreneurs is embedded in structures of social relations, incorporating both the roles of co-ethnic networks and linkages between immigrants and the broader society. Hence, Razin argues for the role of the micro-social level of social relations in determining entrepreneurship. By extending Razin's idea into the realm of women entrepreneurs, one could envisage variation in entrepreneurial action by incorporating the role of women networks and linkages between women and their wider social relations. This is evident in our previous study where we found women entrepreneurs rely on informal ties with ex-colleagues and friends to enhance their business operations (see Chan et. al. 2006, Noor Rahamah et. al. 2007, Bahiyah et al. 2007). By examining this micro-social context, one can capture the essences that would have structured personal traits or enact certain personal traits amongst the women entrepreneurs that have long been submerged/hidden.

In our previous paper (Noor Rahamah et a.l 2007), like Entrialgo et al. and Razin, we have also attempted to highlight the lop-sidedness of the personal traits

literature, where some past studies have tended to favour. Besides that, our findings have indicated some hint of some personal traits being embedded in social context. That inductive study of ours has indicated that some personal traits can be situated in the social context. The findings have enabled to us to come up with this conceptual framework. However, in comparison with Entrialgo et al. but in tandem with Razin, the notion of the "social" in our work refers to the micro-social level, i.e., social relations in the form of social networks. Moreover, our work does not demonstrate the "social" domain as predominantly determining all traits of the women entrepreneurs. Unlike Entrialgo et al., we discovered that personal characteristics do play a key active role in shaping the women in the social context, namely their patterns of social networks. The personal perspective is constantly interacting with the social context, in particular times and place.

b) Culture and Traits Relations

The idea of personal traits embedded in a wider macro-social context is undertaken by some researchers using a country wide notion of culture. Entrepreneurial traits have been extensively studied in the United States and other western countries, but have yet to resolve the core values of entrepreneurship. Moreover, cross-cultural differences (Mueller & Thomas 2001) and variation with women entrepreneurs have been few. Studies to reconcile cultural structures with the personal traits have been undertaken by researchers such as Hofstede (1980; 1994) and Mueller and Thomas, 2001)

Drawing on Hofstede's (1980; 1994) culture study which articulates differences between countries in terms of values, beliefs and work roles, several hypotheses about the relationship between Hofstede's (1980;1994) culture dimensions and psychological traits associated with entrepreneurial potential are offered by Lee-Ross (2007). These are premised on the following variables: (1) an internal locus of control orientation is more prevalent in individualistic than in collectivistic cultures; (2) an innovative orientation is more prevalent in low than in high certainty avoidance cultures; and (3) individuals with both belief in internal locus of control and innovative orientation appear more frequently in highly individualistic and low uncertainty cultures (see earlier ideas about locus of control and personal beliefs by Rotter (1966), Levenson (1973) and Brockhaus (1982)).

The relevance of this macro cultural context provides a key argument for embedding personal traits in wider cultural constructs as there exists a potential variation across different cultures and gender. In our study of personality traits of women entrepreneurs, the traits are subjected to variations in the cultural contexts of a developing country,i.e., Malaysia as well as the potential variation by gender construct. We posit that an even further examination across different ethnic groups might provide potential differences in personal traits and its respective cultural-whole value influences. However, in line with the critique by Chell et al. (1991), we feel that cultural-traits integration is not quite helpful to some extend in understanding the nature of entrepreneurship as it is limited in its scope and methodology. Belief in the locus of control is deemed the only key distinguishing characteristic of entrepreneurs. Methodologically, the locus of control is the key variable in measuring entrepreneurial traits while other mediating effects of other variables including

adverse experiences are neglected in the analysis (Chell et al. 1991: 40). Moreover, it does not tell us the real story with regards to the constant interaction between entrepreneurial traits and social relations.

c) Sociological Integration

Thornton (1999) attempts to offer an integrative framework by combining the supply-side perspective (herein referred to as the personal perspective) and the demand side perspective (herein referred to as the social perspective). She argues that sociological frameworks using an embeddedness perspective combined with institutional and ecological theory, and multilevel models can be used to integrate the two perspectives. In a wider sense, she discusses the sources of heterogeneity in entrepreneurship according to four different levels of analysis: individual, organizational, market, and environmental. Based on DiPrete & Forristal's (1994) research, Thornton (1999) suggests that multilevel models be used to examine the influence of both these contrasting forces/perspectives. Though her model is attractive, she focuses only on the formal spheres of micro-social *firm/organizational* context and the macro-social *market* context that interact with the entrepreneur's personal traits. For example, she highlights the role or influence of previous employer in starting new ventures, rather than starting out on their own. Similarly, she highlights how venture capital firms in the market affects founding rates of entrepreneurs. She has ignored the role of other informal institutions like family, friends, ex-colleagues and new acquaintances as potential micro-social context influences on entrepreneurship(see Chan et. al. 2006, Noor Rahamah et. al. 2007, Bahiyah et al. 2007).

There is an extensive literature in social network (Kilduff & Tsai 200; Aldrich, 1989) which can substantiate this informal social networks argument. Thus, Thornton's (1999) study is limited in the sense that it assumes a mature market and industry landscape, of which the study attributes by examining the firm and market as engines of growth in generating entrepreneurial activities. In the Malaysian context, it is obviously not a mature market, and as such, the focus on those two spheres of the demand side or social context is somewhat limiting and doubtful. Thus, we can say that the women entrepreneur's social relations with both formal firm/organizations and informal entities like family, friends, ex-colleagues, etc. are important factors to consider in a micro-social context whereby the personal traits/values are enacted and played out interactively, whilst the market component is of lesser significance in a macro-social context. Thus, in our evolving model, the entrepreneur's social relations fall under the direct influence of the micro-social contexts, and the indirect and mediated role of market and other wider institutional considerations can come under the macro-social context. The next section discusses our conceptual framework in detail after presenting our critique of the literature on the importance of either the "personal" or the "social" perspective or even integrative efforts of both perspectives in understanding entrepreneurial traits, including those of women.

5. Understanding Women Entrepreneurship in Malaysia: Evolving a Dynamic Framework Harmonizing Personal and Social Perspectives

As argued earlier, the social embeddedness of the entrepreneurial action suggests that personal action is not possible without the facilitating role of the social context which Thornton (1999) calls infrastructure. Timmon's (1985: 153 in Chell et al. 1991: 46-47) *fit concept* between individual traits and social context can be utilized to illustrate how entrepreneurial action, say in finding an opportunity to do business, is situational and contextual, and depending on a mix and match of key players and on how promising the opportunity is, given the entrepreneurs' personal strengths, advantages and weaknesses. This illustrates the situated nature of the personal characteristics (i.e., entrepreneurial traits) to flourish and capitalize on a business opportunity. The situated is meant by coincidental as well as purposeful social relations. Although we have some reservations with Thornton's (1999) model and we have criticized its limitations (i.e., limiting scope), we agree with her idea of integration of supply-side (i.e., personal) and demand-side (i.e., social) to an extent this is able to provide a guide to our current evolving theoretical and conceptual model of women entrepreneurship in Malaysia. In some ways, her argument of social embeddedness of entrepreneurial action is relevant to the context of our previous study and the current conceptual framework that we are proposing in this paper.

With some modifications to Thornton's and Timmon's ideas, we attempt to integrate the personal and social domains of the women entrepreneurs in our previous study in order to demonstrate an interactive and dynamic entrepreneurship process of the women concerned, i.e., a situated nature of entrepreneurial traits. This is done by taking into account our own inductive reflection from our previous study. The integration reflects our effort to harmonize both domains, in effect to demonstrate a dynamic and situated form of entrepreneurial traits which are quite unlike those that are commonly argued, on the one hand as purely psychological or innate in nature, or on the other hand as purely socially, structurally or externally determined. Specifically, the personal *part* (personal domain) harmonizes with the social *whole* (social domain) in the conceptual framework to understand and explain entrepreneurship. Here, an attempt is made to reconcile the personal and social domains, with a nuanced interaction and dialectics of permanence and change between personal characteristics and social context that eventually leads to integration of the two domains. Sociologically, the relationship between the *personal* and the *social* is intimate, without one dominating another or the *personal* and the *social* sitting on opposing ends with no linkage or interplay between themselves at all. Moreover, by modifying Thornton's embeddedness idea, embeddedness of the *social* in our framework is to an extent whereby the *personal* is not entirely subsumed and subordinated by the *social*, but instead plays an active interactive role determining some aspects of the *social*.

As mentioned earlier, we have named this framework the personal-social dynamic perspective. In this perspective, the *personal* is constituted by personal or individual characteristics; hence reference to the term personal domain. Whereas by the *social*, we mean micro-social domain or context, namely in the form of social networks the women entrepreneurs establish with their business partners, suppliers, customers, family members and friends who are former business colleagues. Cultural, institutional and organizational contexts are also other aspects of the micro-social

context. If we follow Timmon's argument, the social context for us then would include coincidental as well as purposeful social relations or social networks. The women entrepreneurs' personal domain refers to individual or personal characteristics of the women entrepreneurs, with identifiable mechanisms for entrepreneurial agency. The following are some examples of the characteristics uncovered from our previous study. They are:-

1) ability to discipline oneself
2) patience
3) honesty
4) law-abiding attitude
5) passion for work
6) reliability
7) ability to pay on time (good paymaster)
8) good adherence to deadlines
9) good adherence to requirements of customers and suppliers
10) ability to change vocation for career advancement
11) interest in working in groups (teamwork)
12) possession of marketing and sales skills
13) professionalism
14) sense of independence
15) sociable
16) communication skills
17) knowledge ability
18) adaptability and risk taking
19) perseverance
20) hardworking
21) ability to control, manage and direct workers/employees
22) ability to form and maintain contacts/network with former work colleagues, existing clients and suppliers, friends
23) reciprocity with workers, customers and suppliers
24) ability to handle and do work usually associated with men (e.g., going to construction sites doing inspection work, climb construction poles, putting up canopy tents, etc.)

(see Chan et. al. 2006, Noor Rahamah et. al. 2007, Bahiyah et al. 2007)

The above characteristics are regarded as entrepreneurial traits as they play a positive contributive role in the women's entrepreneurship. Some of these characteristics are shaped by the women's social context. However, we push our argument further by saying that although personal characteristics (at least some of them) are assumed being of innate substance or are in-born, they may only surface, be enacted (take form or manifest) or be opportune in a conscious way by the micro-social context which directly mediate entrepreneurial action, namely economically viable ones. In other words, the characteristics may be regarded as in-born or innate, but may surface or be enhanced by the women's social context (e.g., social norms, cultural context and/or social networks with family members, former colleagues, clients or suppliers) in necessary times as the women begin their businesses and venture further.

Some of these characteristics may be in-born but eventually they are fully harnessed within the women's social context in the process of their involvement in business activities. In fact, the social context may enable some of those already existing personal characteristics to contribute positively to the development and sustenance of the women's entrepreneurial business activities. For instance, social networks with family members and former work colleagues may provide a medium for moral social support in full development of passion for work and entrepreneurship. The social support may enhance or act as a catalyst for development of their passion and may eventually drive their pursuit of business success. For practical reasons, this paper shall quote some examples of such situation from our previous study. For example, informant Ms.N who is a contractor with an academic background, has had support from friends, former colleagues, and family members to develop/shape her passion for business in the construction sector (see Chan et. al. 2006, Bahiyah et. al 2007). As for the case of another informant, Ms A, multiple traits (a lawyer by qualification with crafts skill as a passion) with social conditioning (friends who are ex-colleagues) can harness her already existing skills in handicraft making and her passion for work in the handicraft business to venture into a successful canopy business (ibid.). Besides that, all the informants in our previous study via face-to-face interviews admit to being reasonable, being a good paymaster, having good self-discipline, possessing a sense of professionalism, having good adherence to deadlines, being reliable, baing honest, and having the ability to communicate well with their colleagues, customers and suppliers. Their traits are developed fully with the context of their relationships (business or otherwise) with those people concerned. In fact, information from all informants indicate that good relationships and networking with former work colleagues, workers, customers, suppliers and family members are important factors in the development of the informants' entrepreneurial traits.

To quote some more examples from our previous study, a common stereotypical male and unfeminine-like trait in general Malaysian societal context, i.e., the ability to do hands-on inspection in construction sites, climb construction poles or build canopy tents, is manifested by the informants in their work scenario context. This comes as a surprise to some of their workers as this trait is not noticeable to them at other times. If not in-born, traits can also be something new to the women themselves at the inception of their businesses whereby the traits are created, developed and shaped by the women's social context as entrepreneurship progresses. In the case of Ms. A, she admits that her initially "bad accounting skills" prior to her involvement in her canopy business eventually improving as she progressed into her business with much moral support from family members and company auditor (ibid.). Apart from that, the informants of the study also suggest patience to be cultivated for the betterment of business deals, for securing relationships and for networking. For instance, according to informant Mdm F, in cases of non-payment of customers, one can develop patience in order to acquire payment. Similarly, for traits named earlier such as sociable, knowledgeable, ability to control, manage and direct workers/employees, ability to reciprocate actions with workers, customers and suppliers and ability to entertain in karaoke joints that can be developed within the context of social and business relationships, for example in times of dealing with difficult customers, workers and suppliers, if one does not possess such traits prior to entrepreneurship.

In general, we can see the role of micro-social context in providing the space for the enactment of submerged personal characteristics, whenever necessary and consciously. What we are saying here is that personal/psychological traits do not stand alone or are stable characteristics driving entrepreneurship, but are co-emergent/triggered by micro-social or situational factors which are dynamic. And by implication, we are postulating and predicting that in some instances, these personal characteristics can stay dormant or emergent depending on the circumstance or social conditions which the women entrepreneur choose to respond. Dynamic interaction between micro-social and personal contexts is revealed in this manner. In our previous inductive study, the findings indicate that the informants are sometimes able to consciously enact certain personal traits that cohere with social norms, cultural values or industry/organizational values, such as in instances in dealing or maintaining networks with male actors, be they colleagues, customers or suppliers. In this way, the social context may be seen as determining or constraining to a certain extent the projection of certain personal traits. For instance, social norms or cultural-religious values will sometimes require Ms. E and Ms. N to act in a socially perceived decent feminine-like way with the men (ibid.). They do this for the sake of striking business deals and/or maintaining networks with their colleagues, workers, customers or suppliers. Ms N and Mdm F, for example, will participate in entertainment in karaoke with their male colleagues while still adhering to their personal and cultural-religious beliefs and practices. The informants' adaptability to their social contexts (be it cultural-social or social networks with different sets of people) without compromising their personal and cultural beliefs and practices suggests the interplay and integration between social constructs and personal standpoints in a dynamic and situated manner. Moreover, the personal and social domains can be integrated in different contexts, time and space. In short, all the arguments we put forth above generally implies that personal characteristics are enabled by the women's social context. The social context provides the conditions for both the triggering and the constraining of the personal characteristics of the entrepreneurs. The women entrepreneurs' social context, e.g., their networks, provide a fluid arena whereby the social ties with different social realms shape dynamic personal traits, even though they are envisaged as enduring. Moreover, we also argue that the influence of the macro-social context may indirectly shape the micro-social context, which then have a direct bearing on individual/entrepreneurial action.

Dynamism may also be present when the personal characteristics are not just enabled by the social context, but also enabling the context. In other words, personal characteristics also determine the nature of the women's social networks while being developed and determined by the networks. This situation occurs throughout the women's involvement in their business activities, whether dealing with clients, business partners or suppliers. In the cases of the informants such as Ms. F, her personal traits of self-discipline, professionalism, hardworking and perseverance determine and influence the nature of good working relationships with her workers or employees (ibid.). Other informants also experience the same situation, especially with their customers and suppliers. Ms. F is able to motivate her workers to contribute to her businesses and have good working relationships with her.

6. Conclusion

The framework that we have constructed in this paper attempts to postulate a holistic theoretical and conceptual understanding of women entrepreneurship in Malaysia. Upon examination of existing ideas and arguments of entrepreneurship (men and women) in some literature, we found that the literature is unable to address issues concerning entrepreneurship, namely women entrepreneurial traits, in Malaysian context due to some limitations at the conceptual, theoretical, methodological and empirical levels. In general, previous personal traits models have been found to be myopic, dichotomous in nature. Some of their attempts to integrate both the *personal* and *social* perspectives have failed to provide an interactive and dynamic relationship between the personal and social perspectives. Entrepreneurial traits are argued and conceptualized as personal or individual traits that are either in-born or psychological in nature or entirely socially and externally determined. Also macro-social ecological framework and formal social context of organizational and market spheres can be challenged on the grounds that it negates the dynamic and interactive sphere.

In this paper, we firstly examine critically the literature and address common notions of the *personal* and the *social* domains in the explanation and understanding of entrepreneurial traits. Following our critique, we present our own arguments in a conceptual framework. Some relevant ideas from the literature are incorporated into our framework with some modifications. We also utilized our previous inductive work through our rsearch study to critically and reflectively propose this framework, or the personal-social dynamic perspective model as we call it, that we feel is suitable in the Malaysian context. This framework integrates both the personal and the social domains in a dynamic way. Specifically, the integration actually reflects our effort to harmonize both domains, in effect to demonstrate a dynamic and situated form of entrepreneurial traits which are quite unlike those that are commonly argued, on the one hand as purely psychological or innate in nature, or on the other hand as purely socially, structurally or externally determined. Specifically, the personal *part* (personal domain) harmonizes with the social *whole* (social domain) in the conceptual framework to better understand and explain entrepreneurship in Malaysian context. We reconcile the personal and social domains, with a nuanced interaction and dialectics of permanence and change between personal characteristics and social context that eventually leads to integration of the two domains. Sociologically, we demonstrate that the relationship between the *personal* and the *social* is intimate, without one dominating another or the *personal* and the *social* sitting on opposing ends with no linkage or interplay between themselves at all. We hope our model will provide a nuanced understanding of women entrepreneurship and traits through emphasis of the structural and agency role of the woman entrepreneur as an individual, with her shifting micro-social contexts playing a critical role. We hope our model is able to yield a holistic framework in understanding women entrepreneurship in Malaysia.

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Paper 1 The Beliefs in the Medical Treatment according to the Folk Rituals: A Case Study of the Traditional Medical Doctors at the Utong District, Supanburi

Wariya Chinwanno

Abstract

The research entitled "The Beliefs in the Medical Treatment According to the Folk Rituals: A Case Study of the Folk Medical Doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi" focuses on two mainobjectives: 1) to study the beliefs in the medical treatment according to the folk rituals among the folk medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi and 2) to collect the information regarding the folk rituals of the folk medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi which should be considered one of the most valuable Thai heritages.

The research was conducted by means of two major methods. First, the documentary research: the researcher collected books and documents about folk medicine and analyzed them in order to find the relations between the beliefs about folk rituals and folk healing behaviors among the folk medical doctors. Second, the in-dept interview: the researcher interviewed 35 medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi.

Findings from the research reveal that most of them (66%) were massage doctors. About 30% were folk medical doctors who cured patients having diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, influenza, coughing, etc. When asked about their beliefs, 58% said they believed that there were gods or sacred beings who helped them in the performance or their duty. Most of them mentioned the name "Chiwaka Komarapat" the famous Indian medical doctor who treated Lord Buddha in the Buddhist time as their teacher. The rest of them (39%) said they did not believe in any gods or sacred being but thought it was their own treatment ability that enabled the patients to relieve from their illnesses while 3% did not answer this question.

Nowadays, Thai traditional medicine plays a very significant role in the medical treatment of Thailand. This research then, aims at, firstly, studying the beliefs in the medical treatement according to the folk rituals among the traditional medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi and secondly, collecting the information regarding the folk rituals of the traditional medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanbuir Province.

Thai Traditional Medicine: Concept and Practice

Like other races in the other areas of the world, The ancient Thais had a way of life that emphasized supernatural beings and spiritual beliefs. Natural phenomena and diseases were explained by the influence of supernatural powers. Consequently, traditional Thai medicine in the earlier period was bound up with supernatural power and spiritual beliefs. Later on, from the practitioners' experience and equipments, the uses of herbs and some kinds of animals were discovered and used in the treatment of patients. (Charan Keranpong, 1982: 18-19)

By the end of the thirteenth century, Thai people were firmly established in the Golden Peninsula. With the establishment of the two kingdoms, Sukhothai (1238-1438) and Ayutthya (1350-1767), the Thais turned to India for their culture, art, religion, and even their writing system. Indian Medicine came to Thailand along with religion and culture. Thus, the old Thai medicine, which has been handed down to this day, is distinctly Indian.

In the last five or six centuries before Christ, the traditional Indian medical system became known as āyurveda meaning "the science of (living to a ripe) age." The first verbal component, āyur, implies that the ancient Indian doctor was concerned not only with curing disease but also with promoting longevity, while the second component veda has religious overtones, being the term used for the most sacred text of Hinduism. (Basham, 1976: 18). Thus, Indian medicine was a system of managing life so as to prolong it and to preserve health and vitality as much as possible.

According to the philosophy of Indian medicine, health was believed to be conditioned by the balance of three primary fluids (dosa, literally "defects") in the body: wind (vāta), gall (pitta), and mucus (kapha). When these vital factors were operating harmoniously, the body, inhabited by the jiva, the vital soul, as distinct from the innermost soul, or ātman, enjoyed health. There was a saying, "Discord is disease; concord is health." (Basham, 1976: 18) Ayurveda had a marked influence in Thailand for almost eight hundred years.

Most of the Indian medical textbooks inherited by Thai medical practitioners belonged to an Indian doctor, Chiwaka Komarapat, who was Lord Buddha's personal physician. A specialist in herbs, he produced several kinds of medicine. He was also a great surgeon for his time having to his credit several cases of brain and bowel surgery. Another remarkable accomplishment of this famous physician was the writing of textbooks on medicine and pharmacology that are still highly regarded as medical treatises (Ministry of Education, 1958: 33-63).

The Thais' acceptance of the Indian medical system was, however, limited only to medicine. It did not include Indian surgery. Basing her argument on the report of Simon de La Loubere, a French minister sent to Thailand by Louis XIV of France in 1687, Ratri Wanichlak concludes that Thai traditional practitioners had no knowledge of surgery, which was rather advanced in India in the seventeenth century. However, Wanichlak thought that, despite their lack of knowledge in the practice of surgery, Thai traditional practitioners must have had some knowledge of anatomy because one method they still employ in treating patients is to step on certain points of their patients' bodies. (Wanichlak, 1978:28)

In addition to the medical knowledge from India, Thai medicine also incorporated practices from traditional Chinese medicine. As Donn V. Hart points out, *"Thai folk medicine, borrowing heavily from the Ayuraveda also absorbed Chinese elements, but the latter are difficult to document."* (Hart, 1974: 13). The reason Thai traditional medicine was influenced by Chinese medicine was that the Chinese formed the oldest and largest foreign community in Thailand. When Thai people moved south to the Gulf of Siam in the thirteenth century and established the Sukhothai Kingdom, the Chinese were already trading in this area.

Consequently, there is a reason to belief that Thai society has been influenced by Chinese culture. The Chinese had their own medical system, and some Thai practitioners studied Chinese medical treatises and Chinese methods of treating patients. Others incorporated the Chinese medical system into their own. (Keranpong, 1955:1819). Because the Chinese medical system exercised a formative influence on Thai traditional medicine, an explanation should be given as to its nature. The popular yin/yang concept and the cycle of the Five Evolution Phases (wu-hsing) has gained significance in the Chinese sciences from their beginnings in the middle of the first millennium B.C.

In his article, "The Intellectual and Social Impulses Behind the Evolution of Traditional Chinese Medicine," Manfred Porkert explained that the terms yin and yang originally meant "the shady and the sunny side of a mountain, or the southern and northern bank of a river, respectively." It was during the second half of the first millennium B.C. that the terms yin and yang were adapted to explain interrelated phenomena. In modern terms, yang indicates "all that is active, expansive, centrifugal, aggressive, competitive, negative." While yin means "all that is structive, substantive, contractive, centripetal, responsive, conservative, positive," (Porkert, 1976: 65). These two comic forces form the material basis of the universe, and order and disorder in the universe depend on the interaction between them.

Moreover, the interaction of yin and yang generates the cycle of the Five Evolutive Phases. They are wood (potential activity), fire (actual activity), metal (potential structivity), water (actual structivity), and earth (neutral). Man's body is composed of these five elements in balanced proportions. If a man is sick, it means that his body has lost the balance among these five phases. (Porkert, 1976: 65-67). The combination of yin and yang and the cycle of the Five Evolutive Phases became part of the foundation of Thai medicine.

Taking basic principles of medicine from the Chinese and the Indians, the Thai believe that disease is caused by the imbalance of four elements. These four elements are slightly different from the Five Evolutive Phases of Chinese medicine. They exclude wood and metal but include wind. They are water, wind, fire, and earth.

According to Dr. Dan Beach Bradley, an American doctor, the Thai "believe also that matter of all kinds without the body (including everything in the mundane system) is constituted in the same way, and that it is continually operating upon the elements within producing health or disease." For example, if the element fire from without enters the body in undue proportions, it will destroy the healthy equilibrium of a person's body, and the person will get sick from many diseases under the division fire: the fevers—intermittent, remittent, and continued—measles, smallpox and so on. (Bradley, 1967: 103).

Disease, however, is not always caused by external elements. Derangement of the body's equilibrium can be caused by elements totally internal. Apoplexy, for instance, is a

disease caused by the internal wind blowing from all parts of the system with such strong force that it harms the body. Another theory of apoplexy is that the wind has made too much of a vacuum in the upper part of the body. In order to cure the disease, the wind must be forced to turn upward. Hence, the best treatment requires that the patient's stomach be filled with food, causing it to bolster up the diaphragm. (Bradley, 1967: 103-104).

For this reason, good health means maintaining a balance in the proportions of the four elements: water, wind, fire, and earth. Disease, on the contrary, is produced "either from the excess or diminution of one or more of the four elements." (Bradley, 1967: 103-104). An interesting comparison of a human body to a house was made by Prince Damrong Rachanuphap, a distinguished Thai scholar. According to the prince, a body is a house with one soul. The bones comprise the posts and the house structure. Skin makes up the walls that cover the whole structure, hair is the grass or thatch roof, and the eyes are the windows. The equipment of the body is made up of blood vessels, the mouth, and so on. The structure of the house is supported by all elements, and if one element is out of order, it should be repaired. The human body is also made up of many organs. When a person gets sick, it means that one element (or sometimes more) should be taken care of. (Damrong Rachanupab, 1923: 1-2).

The Thais have not discarded their age-old spiritual beliefs. On the contrary, such popular ideas have been inextricably bound up with Thai traditional medicine over the years. This is evident form the fact that medicinal herbs must be gathered and medicine prepared on a propitious date. Other practices to be followed include the use of herb sprigs and procedures for boiling the bottom of a pot of medicine and using a piece of cloth over the mouth of the pot and the six-pointed sign at the mouth of the pot. Other occult practices in medical treatment include the floating of offerings in the form of a clay doll together with candle and joss-stick, and such substances as salt, chili, and betel on a river or canal to alleviate illness and raise the morale of all concerned. This rite is called krabaal. (Keranpong, 1982: 19).

The Thais' Beliefs in Supernatural Beings and Its Relations with the Thai Traditional Medicine

We can say that human belief is an important part of human nature, one that occurs to every human being. Human belief was originated from the stage when man gradually learned and understood the world in which man lived that there was a secret power which affected his life either positively or negatively. Hence, he began to be afraid of this mysterious power and tried to find an effective way to prevent the negative effect which might occur as a result of the mysterious power and at the same time man also tries to please it in organizing the various folk rituals hoping that he would be rewarded by doing so. Various rituals were held to pay respect to the mysterious power which, later on, became known as god(s). Consequently, belief here means the acceptance that something exists and exercises power over human beings either positively or negatively or both. One significant point is that even though this supernatural belief, or magical belief is something which cannot be proved, its existence has been accepted among people from generations to generations all over the world.

Another point worth mentioning is that belief is one of the most important factors contributing to the traditional medical treatment by means of supernatural or magical practice. There are two reasons for this: first, human beings must have believed in the

efficiency of the magical practice as a means to cure diseases because if they do not, they would not have used it in the treatment of diseases. Second, the belief in the cause of illness is a crucial factor which helps determine their treatment method. An anthropological study regarding the illness and the treatment in underdeveloped societies reveal that there are three major causes of illness (Raymond, 1964: 88 as quoted in Podisita, 1980: 162-163).

1. **Natural Cause**

This is a common kind of illness which is not complicated and is found in every human society such as stomachache which is believed to be caused by eating decayed or rotten food. Moreover, such an illness as an insect bite of which its symptom can be seen clearly, or some genetic diseases can be diagnosed as resulting from the natural cause. The traditional medical doctor usually prescribes medicinal herbs to cure such diseases.

2. **Pre ternatural Cause**

An illness resulted from the preternatural cause is too complicated to be explained by a natural reason. For example, a person feels painful in his stomach. When he feels it, he thinks there is something in it. It the cause is not found, he may think he is attacked (tuk-kong) by his enemy or rival. That is, his enemy may use "black magic" to send some material such as the dry buffalo skin made sacred by a magical doctor into his stomach. That is why he feels so painful in his stomach. Magical science is usually employed to cure such an illness when a magical doctor is usually sent for and a folk ritual is recommended by him in order to relieve the pain and take the material out of the patient's body.

3. **Supernatural Cause**

Sometimes people believe that an illness, whether it be common or uncommon, is caused by such supernatural power as bad spirit, ancestor spirit, or tribe spirit, etc. It is believed that one of these spirits may cause their illness because the people may not pay proper respect or give proper offerings to the spirits. Proper offerings can come in the forms of giving the spirits food, side dishes, desserts, rice wine, incense sticks, candles, and flowers etc. In some cases, a person may do something against the "taboo" of the community. In this case, a special folk ritual is to be performed in order to beg the spirit to pardon him.

From the reasons mentioned above, we can realize that the medical treatment of people in ancient time was related closely with the belief in the causes of illness That is, if they believe that the cause of illness is natural, the natural treatment is employed, If, however, the illness is caused by preternatural or supernatural factor, the magical science plays an important role in the treatment. Such a belief and treatment have been handed down form generations to generations of Thai people from the past to the present and in many areas all over Thailand.

Thai Traditional Doctors in the Utong District Supanburi

In March 2007, the researchers conducted interviews with 35 traditional medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi where there is a concentration of traditional medical doctors. The research focused on two major objectives: 1) to study the beliefs in the medical treatment according to the folk rituals among the traditional medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi and 2) to collect the in formation regarding the folk rituals of the traditional medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi. This information is very valuable and useful for the traditional medical doctors themselves and to the Ministry of

Public Health. For, the Ministry of Public Health will be able to make use of the information to develop Thai traditional medicine which is now gaining more and more popularity in Thai society, particularly in the area of massage.

Personal Background of the Thai Traditional Medical Doctors

The study reveals that most traditional medical doctors were female (64%) while 36% were male. Most of them were more than sixty years old (33%). They finished the elementary level of education (61%). Only 12% of them received a bachelor's degree. Most of them were farmers who practised traditional medicine as their career (37%). The rest had other jobs: employees (34%), business owners (8.5%), vendors (5.7%), while 14% did not have any other job.

The Reasons Why They Became Traditional Medical Doctors

The major reasons why they became traditional medical doctors were as follows: firstly, their parents or relatives were traditional medical doctors and they had a chance to learn from these people. Secondly, they were ill and seek remedies from the modern medical doctors but found that the modern doctors could not help them. So they turned to the traditional medical treatment which enabled them to be relieved from the illness. That was why they were determined to learn more about the illnesses so as to be able to help other people, as well.

Categories of the Traditional Medical Doctors

Findinds from the research revealed that most of them were massage doctors (66%) About 30% were general medical doctors who could cure many diseases such as coughing, influenza, high blood pressure, diabetes, herpes zoster, cancer, etc.

In those days there were no regulations against becoming doctors and thus anyone could establish himself or herself as a traditional doctor after receiving a training from his or her predecessors. Nowadays, however, all traditional medical doctors have to get the licence from the government before they are allowed to practise their career. As mentioned earlier, Most of them have other occupations because they cannot live on the fees they receive from their patients alone as most of the patients are poor.

The Traditional Medical Doctors' Thoughts and Beliefs Regarding the Illness

As mentioned earlier, the traditional medical doctors believe that health is to be conditioned by the balance of four major elements: earth, water, wind, and fire which are considered to be the major hypotheses of illness according to the concept of the Thai traditional medicine. When these factors are operating harmoniously, the body enjoys health. On the contrary, if these four elements are not working harmoniously, the body would be affected by illness. Actually every one of the traditional doctors is supposed to know the four major rules of treatment as follows:

1. To know the kind and symptom of the illness
2. To know the cause of the illness
3. To know the medicine and its quality

4. To know how to prescribe the medicine for each disease.

The Traditional Doctor's Treatment: The Employment of Folk Rituals

The traditional doctor is the one who restores the four elements to a healthful equilibrium. The treatment starts from studying the symptom of the disease first before he is able to diagnose the illness which is similar to the modern medical treatment. The difference, however, lies in the fact that one traditional medical doctor can treat many kinds of diseases which makes him different from the modern medical doctor who is trained to be a specialist treating only one disease.

Thai traditional medicines are prepared from barks, roots, fruits, flowers and leaves found in the forest or in the home garden. They are in various forms: powdered, formed into tablets, boiled or pickled, and stirred medicine (yaa kuan). Yoddumnern, 1974: 13). The physician should be the one who knows best which disease demands a strong kind of medicine and which demands a milder one. In order to be able to use the right medicine for the right disease, the physician must examine the patient first Compared to Western medicines, Thai medicines are usually more difficult to take because of their bitter taste.

The folk rituals are also used in order to cure the patient. When asked about their beliefs, 58% of the traditional doctors said that they believed that there were gods or sacred beings who helped them in the performance of their duty. Most of them mentioned the name "Chiwaka Komorapat" Lord Buddha's doctor, as their principal teacher. They also said that they believed in some gods, but they did not specify the names. Besides, they said that their teachers were the ones they had to pay respect to everyday. That is why the traditional doctors have to provide them with such offerings as rice, side dishes (such as boiled chicken, boiled pork, etc), bananas, incense sticks, candles, rice wine before leaving their homes in the morning. Sprinkling sacred water on the patient's body, praying, and practising meditation are also included in the treatment of most of the diseases.

However, there were some of the traditional medical doctors who said they did not believe in any gods or sacred beings but thought it was their own treatment ability that enabled the patients to relieve from their illnesses while 3% did not answer this question.

Conclusion

Thai Traditional Medicine is the art of healing which has been used to treat patients in Thai society from the past up to the present time despite the arrival of modern medicine in the reign of King Rama III. The opening of the Siriraj Hospital in 1888 saw the increasing acceptance of Western medicine among the Thai public. The status of traditional Thai medicine became more shaky with the launching of the Medical law of 1937 dividing doctors into two categories: registered and non-registered.

The registered doctors are those who pass the examination supervised by the Medical Council and can practise medicine legally. The non-registered doctors either do not take or did not pass the examination and are thus considered illegal by the government, although they are accepted by their patients. It turned out to be that most traditional doctors have become illegal because they could not pass the examination. The status of the traditional medicine and the traditional doctor has declined since then.

Nowadays, traditional medicine, with its three major good qualities: inexpensiveness, subtle remedies and the traditional doctors having good relationship with their patients, has become more popular among the Thai public. More traditional medical schools were established both in Bangkok and the rural areas to teach those interested in becoming traditional doctors. More youngsters receiving more education enter those schools and can pass the Medical Council examination to become traditional medical doctors. The Ministry of Public Health established the Department of Thai Traditional Medicine in the Ministry with its main objective to promote Thai traditional medicine after the realization that Thai traditional medicine is one of the most valuable Thai heritages, which should be handed down from generations to generations of Thai people.

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MAHIDOL-UKM 3

DIFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA: COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND INTERPRETATIONS

The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference on Southeast Asian Studies

29 November – 1 December 2007

SESSION 9
TRADITION AND FAMILY

SEMINAR ROOM 2

Chairperson: Dr. Dale Rorex

1. The Beliefs in the Medical Treatment According to the Folk Rituals: A Case Study of the Folk Medical Doctors in the Utong District Suphanburi. - *Wariya Chinwanno*

2. What's Hip, What's Hop?: Disharmonized Representations of Gender in Music Videos. - *Fuziah Kartini Hassan Basri*

3. Economic Activities in a Matrilineal Culture: A Case Study of the Travelling Merchant in Minangkabau Villages in Indonesia. - *Delvi Wahyuni & Silfia Hanani*

4. Demographic Representation and Thai Family Values. - *Matthew Copeland*

Paper 1 **The Beliefs in the Medical Treatment according to the Folk Rituals: A Case Study of the Traditional Medical Doctors at the Utong District, Supanburi**

Wariya Chinwanno

Abstract

The research entitled "The Beliefs in the Medical Treatment According to the Folk Rituals: A Case Study of the Folk Medical Doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi" focuses on two mainobjectives: 1) to study the beliefs in the medical treatment according to the folk rituals among the folk medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi and 2) to collect the information regarding the folk rituals of the folk medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi which should be considered one of the most valuable Thai heritages.

The research was conducted by means of two major methods. First, the documentary research: the researcher collected books and documents about folk medicine and analyzed them in order to find the relations between the beliefs about folk rituals and folk healing behaviors among the folk medical doctors. Second, the in-dept interview: the researcher interviewed 35 medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi.

Findings from the research reveal that most of them (66%) were massage doctors. About 30% were folk medical doctors who cured patients having diabetes, cancer, high blood pressure, influenza, coughing, etc. When asked about their beliefs, 58% said they believed that there were gods or sacred beings who helped them in the performance or their duty. Most of them mentioned the name "Chiwaka Komarapat" the famous Indian medical doctor who treated Lord Buddha in the Buddhist time as their teacher. The rest of them (39%) said they did not believe in any gods or sacred being but thought it was their own treatment ability that enabled the patients to relieve from their illnesses while 3% did not answer this question.

Nowadays, Thai traditional medicine plays a very significant role in the medical treatment of Thailand. This research then, aims at, firstly, studying the beliefs in the medical treatement according to the folk rituals among the traditional medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanburi and secondly, collecting the information regarding the folk rituals of the traditional medical doctors in the Utong District, Supanbuir Province.

Thai Traditional Medicine: Concept and Practice

Like other races in the other areas of the world, The ancient Thais had a way of life that emphasized supernatural beings and spiritual beliefs. Natural phenomena and diseases were explained by the influence of supernatural powers. Consequently, traditional Thai medicine in the earlier period was bound up with supernatural power and spiritual beliefs. Later on, from the practitioners' experience and equipments, the uses of herbs and some kinds of animals were discovered and used in the treatment of patients. (Charan Keranpong, 1982: 18-19)

By the end of the thirteenth century, Thai people were firmly established in the Golden Peninsula. With the establishment of the two kingdoms, Sukhothai (1238-1438) and Ayutthya (1350-1767), the Thais turned to India for their culture, art, religion, and even their writing system. Indian Medicine came to Thailand along with religion and culture. Thus, the old Thai medicine, which has been handed down to this day, is distinctly Indian.

In the last five or six centuries before Christ, the traditional Indian medical system became known as āyurveda meaning "the science of (living to a ripe) age." The first verbal component, āyur, implies that the ancient Indian doctor was concerned not only with curing disease but also with promoting longevity, while the second component veda has religious overtones, being the term used for the most sacred text of Hinduism. (Basham, 1976: 18). Thus, Indian medicine was a system of managing life so as to prolong it and to preserve health and vitality as much as possible.

According to the philosophy of Indian medicine, health was believed to be conditioned by the balance of three primary fluids (dosa, literally "defects") in the body: wind (vāta), gall (pitta), and mucus (kapha). When these vital factors were operating harmoniously, the body, inhabited by the jiva, the vital soul, as distinct from the innermost soul, or ātman, enjoyed health. There was a saying, "Discord is disease; concord is health." (Basham, 1976: 18) Ayurveda had a marked influence in Thailand for almost eight hundred years.

Most of the Indian medical textbooks inherited by Thai medical practitioners belonged to an Indian doctor, Chiwaka Komarapat, who was Lord Buddha's personal physician. A specialist in herbs, he produced several kinds of medicine. He was also a great surgeon for his time having to his credit several cases of brain and bowel surgery. Another remarkable accomplishment of this famous physician was the writing of textbooks on medicine and pharmacology that are still highly regarded as medical treatises (Ministry of Education, 1958: 33-63).

The Thais' acceptance of the Indian medical system was, however, limited only to medicine. It did not include Indian surgery. Basing her argument on the report of Simon de La Loubere, a French minister sent to Thailand by Louis XIV of France in 1687, Ratri Wanichlak concludes that Thai traditional practitioners had no knowledge of surgery, which was rather advanced in India in the seventeenth century. However, Wanichlak thought that, despite their lack of knowledge in the practice of surgery, Thai traditional practitioners must have had some knowledge of anatomy because one method they still employ in treating patients is to step on certain points of their patients' bodies. (Wanichlak, 1978:28)

In addition to the medical knowledge from India, Thai medicine also incorporated practices from traditional Chinese medicine. As Donn V. Hart points out, *"Thai folk medicine, borrowing heavily from the Ayuraveda also absorbed Chinese elements, but the latter are difficult to document."* (Hart, 1974: 13). The reason Thai traditional medicine was influenced by Chinese medicine was that the Chinese formed the oldest and largest foreign community in Thailand. When Thai people moved south to the Gulf of Siam in the thirteenth century and established the Sukhothai Kingdom, the Chinese were already trading in this area.

Consequently, there is a reason to belief that Thai society has been influenced by Chinese culture. The Chinese had their own medical system, and some Thai practitioners studied Chinese medical treatises and Chinese methods of treating patients. Others incorporated the Chinese medical system into their own. (Keranpong, 1955:1819). Because the Chinese medical system exercised a formative influence on Thai traditional medicine, an explanation should be given as to its nature. The popular yin/yang concept and the cycle of the Five Evolution Phases (wu-hsing) has gained significance in the Chinese sciences from their beginnings in the middle of the first millennium B.C.

In his article, "The Intellectual and Social Impulses Behind the Evolution of Traditional Chinese Medicine," Manfred Porkert explained that the terms yin and yang originally meant "the shady and the sunny side of a mountain, or the southern and northern bank of a river, respectively." It was during the second half of the first millennium B.C. that the terms yin and yang were adapted to explain interrelated phenomena. In modern terms, yang indicates "all that is active, expansive, centrifugal, aggressive, competitive, negative." While yin means "all that is structive, substantive, contractive, centripetal, responsive, conservative, positive," (Porkert, 1976: 65). These two comic forces form the material basis of the universe, and order and disorder in the universe depend on the interaction between them.

Moreover, the interaction of yin and yang generates the cycle of the Five Evolutive Phases. They are wood (potential activity), fire (actual activity), metal (potential structivity), water (actual structivity), and earth (neutral). Man's body is composed of these five elements in balanced proportions. If a man is sick, it means that his body has lost the balance among these five phases. (Porkert, 1976: 65-67). The combination of yin and yang and the cycle of the Five Evolutive Phases became part of the foundation of Thai medicine.

Taking basic principles of medicine from the Chinese and the Indians, the Thai believe that disease is caused by the imbalance of four elements. These four elements are slightly different from the Five Evolutive Phases of Chinese medicine. They exclude wood and metal but include wind. They are water, wind, fire, and earth.

According to Dr. Dan Beach Bradley, an American doctor, the Thai "believe also that matter of all kinds without the body (including everything in the mundane system) is constituted in the same way, and that it is continually operating upon the elements within producing health or disease." For example, if the element fire from without enters the body in undue proportions, it will destroy the healthy equilibrium of a person's body, and the person will get sick from many diseases under the division fire: the fevers—intermittent, remittent, and continued—measles, smallpox and so on. (Bradley, 1967: 103).

Disease, however, is not always caused by external elements. Derangement of the body's equilibrium can be caused by elements totally internal. Apoplexy, for instance, is a

disease caused by the internal wind blowing from all parts of the system with such strong force that it harms the body. Another theory of apoplexy is that the wind has made too much of a vacuum in the upper part of the body. In order to cure the disease, the wind must be forced to turn upward. Hence, the best treatment requires that the patient's stomach be filled with food, causing it to bolster up the diaphragm. (Bradley, 1967: 103-104).

For this reason, good health means maintaining a balance in the proportions of the four elements: water, wind, fire, and earth. Disease, on the contrary, is produced "either from the excess or diminution of one or more of the four elements." (Bradley, 1967: 103-104). An interesting comparison of a human body to a house was made by Prince Damrong Rachanuphap, a distinguished Thai scholar. According to the prince, a body is a house with one soul. The bones comprise the posts and the house structure. Skin makes up the walls that cover the whole structure, hair is the grass or thatch roof, and the eyes are the windows. The equipment of the body is made up of blood vessels, the mouth, and so on. The structure of the house is supported by all elements, and if one element is out of order, it should be repaired. The human body is also made up of many organs. When a person gets sick, it means that one element (or sometimes more) should be taken care of. (Damrong Rachanupab, 1923: 1-2).

The Thais have not discarded their age-old spiritual beliefs. On the contrary, such popular ideas have been inextricably bound up with Thai traditional medicine over the years. This is evident form the fact that medicinal herbs must be gathered and medicine prepared on a propitious date. Other practices to be followed include the use of herb sprigs and procedures for boiling the bottom of a pot of medicine and using a piece of cloth over the mouth of the pot and the six-pointed sign at the mouth of the pot. Other occult practices in medical treatment include the floating of offerings in the form of a clay doll together with candle and joss-stick, and such substances as salt, chili, and betel on a river or canal to alleviate illness and raise the morale of all concerned. This rite is called krabaal. (Keranpong, 1982: 19).

The Thais' Beliefs in Supernatural Beings and Its Relations with the Thai Traditional Medicine

We can say that human belief is an important part of human nature, one that occurs to every human being. Human belief was originated from the stage when man gradually learned and understood the world in which man lived that there was a secret power which affected his life either positively or negatively. Hence, he began to be afraid of this mysterious power and tried to find an effective way to prevent the negative effect which might occur as a result of the mysterious power and at the same time man also tries to please it in organizing the various folk rituals hoping that he would be rewarded by doing so. Various rituals were held to pay respect to the mysterious power which, later on, became known as god(s). Consequently, belief here means the acceptance that something exists and exercises power over human beings either positively or negatively or both. One significant point is that even though this supernatural belief, or magical belief is something which cannot be proved, its existence has been accepted among people from generations to generations all over the world.

Another point worth mentioning is that belief is one of the most important factors contributing to the traditional medical treatment by means of supernatural or magical practice. There are two reasons for this: first, human beings must have believed in the

efficiency of the magical practice as a means to cure diseases because if they do not, they would not have used it in the treatment of diseases. Second, the belief in the cause of illness is a crucial factor which helps determine their treatment method. An anthropological study regarding the illness and the treatment in underdeveloped societies reveal that there are three major causes of illness (Raymond, 1964: 88 as quoted in Podisita, 1980: 162-163).

1. **Natural Cause**

This is a common kind of illness which is not complicated and is found in every human society such as stomachache which is believed to be caused by eating decayed or rotten food. Moreover, such an illness as an insect bite of which its symptom can be seen clearly, or some genetic diseases can be diagnosed as resulting from the natural cause. The traditional medical doctor usually prescribes medicinal herbs to cure such diseases.

2. **Pre ternatural Cause**

An illness resulted from the preternatural cause is too complicated to be explained by a natural reason. For example, a person feels painful in his stomach. When he feels it, he thinks there is something in it. It the cause is not found, he may think he is attacked (tuk-kong) by his enemy or rival. That is, his enemy may use "black magic" to send some material such as the dry buffalo skin made sacred by a magical doctor into his stomach. That is why he feels so painful in his stomach. Magical science is usually employed to cure such an illness when a magical doctor is usually sent for and a folk ritual is recommended by him in order to relieve the pain and take the material out of the patient's body.

3. **Supernatural Cause**

Sometimes people believe that an illness, whether it be common or uncommon, is caused by such supernatural power as bad spirit, ancestor spirit, or tribe spirit, etc. It is believed that one of these spirits may cause their illness because the people may not pay proper respect or give proper offerings to the spirits. Proper offerings can come in the forms of giving the spirits food, side dishes, desserts, rice wine, incense sticks, candles, and flowers etc. In some cases, a person may do something against the "taboo" of the community. In this case, a special folk ritual is to be performed in order to beg the spirit to pardon him.

From the reasons mentioned above, we can realize that the medical treatment of people in ancient time was related closely with the belief in the causes of illness That is, if they believe that the cause of illness is natural, the natural treatment is employed, If, however, the illness is caused by preternatural or supernatural factor, the magical science plays an important role in the treatment. Such a belief and treatment have been handed down form generations to generations of Thai people from the past to the present and in many areas all over Thailand.

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The major reasons why they became traditional medical doctors were as follows: firstly, their parents or relatives were traditional medical doctors and they had a chance to learn from these people. Secondly, they were ill and seek remedies from the modern medical doctors but found that the modern doctors could not help them. So they turned to the traditional medical treatment which enabled them to be relieved from the illness. That was why they were determined to learn more about the illnesses so as to be able to help other people, as well.

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However, there were some of the traditional medical doctors who said they did not believe in any gods or sacred beings but thought it was their own treatment ability that enabled the patients to relieve from their illnesses while 3% did not answer this question.

Conclusion

Thai Traditional Medicine is the art of healing which has been used to treat patients in Thai society from the past up to the present time despite the arrival of modern medicine in the reign of King Rama III. The opening of the Siriraj Hospital in 1888 saw the increasing acceptance of Western medicine among the Thai public. The status of traditional Thai medicine became more shaky with the launching of the Medical law of 1937 dividing doctors into two categories: registered and non-registered.

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Nowadays, traditional medicine, with its three major good qualities: inexpensiveness, subtle remedies and the traditional doctors having good relationship with their patients, has become more popular among the Thai public. More traditional medical schools were established both in Bangkok and the rural areas to teach those interested in becoming traditional doctors. More youngsters receiving more education enter those schools and can pass the Medical Council examination to become traditional medical doctors. The Ministry of Public Health established the Department of Thai Traditional Medicine in the Ministry with its main objective to promote Thai traditional medicine after the realization that Thai traditional medicine is one of the most valuable Thai heritages, which should be handed down from generations to generations of Thai people.

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Paper 2 What's Hip, What's Hop? Disharmonized Representations of Gender in Music Videos

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Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

Abstract

Media representations of gender have always been an avenue for contestations in feminist media studies. Feminists have been concerned with how preoccupied the media are with women's appearances and bodies whilst at the same time giving focus to what men do with them. More often than not, the media emit a particular cultural message: men are players and master, while women are objects and subject. Such a message is abundant in popular music videos consumed by most young people today, including those in Malaysia. A content analysis study of three hip-hop music videos that had the highest ratings in the MTV chart during the fourth week of January 2007 – *That's That, Dangerous,* and *Tell Me* - discovered various oppressed representations of the female, while men are represented as powerful and central to everything. The hip-hop music videos focus on the female bodies ('hip') and how men behave towards them ('hop'). Such representations belittle the increasing effort of Malaysian policy makers to propagate gender harmony in the home, the workplace and society at large. What are the implications of such media consumption on the gender consciousness and sensitivity of young Malaysians? The paper explores this issue based on a focus group discussion of male and female students in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Introduction

Media representations of gender have always been an avenue for contestations in feminist media studies. Feminist media scholars have been concerned with how preoccupied the media are with women's appearances and bodies whilst at the same time giving focus to what men do with them. More often than not, the media emit a particular cultural message: men are players and master while women are objects and subject.

Feminism is a useful analytical tool to look at media content. Generally, feminism is a perspective in the critical theory genre that attempts to decipher meanings based on gender. Feminists are interested to see how dominance and power are divided according to gender in society. They view the world and human experiences as influenced by male dominance, and thus they set out to challenge such order, i.e., male dominance that oppresses women (Littlejohn, 1999). They criticize the situation as unjust because it brings various effects and implications in society. Although they are capable of doing so, opportunities for women to develop themselves as individuals are closed, just because they are women and men traditionally hold the power positions in social institutions. Feminists aim to change the social situation that are in favor of men and seek justice for women. There are many means to achieve this end, and one of them is through the popular mass media.

Unfortunately, the mass media have not been supportive in this stance. In fact, media content is proliferated with gender stereotypes and sexploitation. Such a message is abundant in popular music videos consumed by most young people today, including those in Malaysia. With the global media gaining popularity among local audience, there is also an increasing consumption of its array of content. This paper follows from a content analysis study of three hip-hop music videos that had the highest rating in the MTV chart during the fourth week of January 2007 – *That's That, Dangerous,* and *Tell Me.* These music videos contained various disharmonies in their representations of gender through the lyrics, narratives, and audio and visual codes. Consuming such representations of gender cumulatively cultivates and consequently sanctions male domination vis-à-vis female subjugation. They can also belittle the increasing effort of Malaysian policy makers to propagate gender harmony in the home, the workplace and society at large, as demonstrated in *Dasar Wanita Negara* (the National Policy on Women). What are the implications of such media consumption on the gender consciousness and sensitivity of young Malaysians? The paper explores this issue based on a focus group discussion of male and female students in Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia.

Gender in the media

Gender is quite a complex concept compared to sex. While sex is classified by biological characteristics, gender is a social, symbolic creation. In 1792, Mary Wollstonecraft declared that most differences between the sexes are socially constructed, not natural. The meaning of gender grows out of a society's values, beliefs, and preferred ways of organizing collective life and is not based on genetic factors (Wood, 2001).

Thus gender, unlike sex, is learned. From the time we are born into society, we are encouraged to conform to the gender that society prescribes for us. These are socially endorsed views of masculinity and femininity and they are taught to individuals through a variety of cultural means. Indeed individuals are socialized into gender. When socialization is effective in teaching us to adopt the gender society prescribes for our sex, biological males learn to be masculine and biological females become feminine (Wood, 2001). These learned meanings are communicated and further perpetuated through structures and practices of culture.

In our daily lives, we are surrounded by communication that announces social images of gender. We switch on the television and we see the corporate man leading his big company and then calling his wife at home to tell her that he will be back home late for dinner; we open the newspaper and we read a piece of news that a woman has been raped by her boyfriend; we turn on the radio and listen to a female singer crooning for the man she loves who has left her for another woman. We go to a restaurant and the waiter presents the check to the man; we participate in a project and a man is appointed the leader. Such experiences create the illusion that these are normal and natural roles for women and men to assume. In fact, it seems to persuade us to believe that these are proper and correct ways for men and women to behave. In relations to that, the repeated and cumulated similar gender images in the media also give the impression that they are sanctioned by society.

Wood (2001) suggests three ways in which the media interact with cultural images of gender: by mirroring, suggesting, and gatekeeping. In mirroring, media reflect cultural values and ideals about gender. They portray women, men, and women-men relationships in ways that mirror understandings and ideals widely shared in society. In suggesting, media reproduce cultural views of gender in individuals. By portraying women, men, and relationships between the sexes in "normal" ways, media suggest how we should be as women and men. In gatekeeping, media become filters of information and images. To a significant extent, they control what we see and know by deciding what programs to air, what news to feature, how to represent issues and events, and how to portray women and men. This is the selective characteristic of the media. By selectively regulating what we see, media influence how we perceive gender issues, ourselves, and women and men in general. Hence, the media mirror, suggest and filter our images of gender.

Thus the importance of mass media as image carriers should not be underestimated. The media have the potential to portray individuals or group of individuals in a negative or positive light, or in whatever directions they feel fit to describe. According to Faridah Ibrahim and Rahmah Hashim (1996) one cannot deny that opinions are formed in part by gathering pieces of information that have been portrayed through the mass media and comparing them with the images of events or people, which already have been stored in our minds. Negative portrayal of individuals or nations or group of people in the media, might conjure negative perceptions in the minds of the audience.

Faridah Ibrahim and Rahmah Hashim (1996) studied the coverage of women by the mass media during the 1995 Fourth World Conference on Women. They found that when the print media chose to allocate space for women news, devilish terms such as "burning bras", and "nude women running around the streets of Huairou" were freely printed. These messages would give the reader the impression that women who attended the Conference were radical beings with nothing better to do but to "burn bras." These depictions generally eclipsed the many positive accomplishments at the Conference.

According to Garcellano (1995) women are often times invisible and silenced in economics, politics, religion, science and technology but not so in media and advertising, where women are made to be highly visible yet "powerless". Through the mass media, we can see that the exploitation of women have gone beyond the traditional setting into the more sophisticated modern world where women's so-called natural weaknesses and femininity are being exploited both by men and women for economic gains. Women who are vocal and fight for their cause are being dubbed as hardcore feminists, while those who become commercial symbols, especially in media advertisements and television commercials, are portrayed as superficial and mindless (Fuziah & Faridah, 2004).

Media imagery of the female in movies is also profound. Over the past decades, a great deal of movie messages via Hollywood, Bollywood and even Mallywood (Malaysian movie industry as dubbed by many), has perpetuated the notion of women as property or commodities "available" for sexual and other use (Fuziah & Faridah, 2000). These messages are played over and over again in movies which show images of the female as the gentler sex, passive, weak, needing

protection, subservient, scatter-brained, dependent, comforting, nurturing, caring as well as beautiful (so convenient as a sex-object), while the male images are forceful, strong, capable, aggressive, demanding, independent, successful, as tycoons, heroes, playboys and the stoic macho-men. According to a manual entitled Confronting Violence (1992) published by the Commonwealth Secretariat, it is these images that reinforce ideologies of masculinity and femininity, demonstrating that while the male is 'naturally' aggressive, the female is the 'natural' target for aggression.

The mass media not only help to carry the images of women across the masses but also reinforce cultural stereotypes formed in the minds of the masses – that women are basically the inferior ones of the sexes. With constant reminder, inferiority becomes habitual and familiar and even desirable (Faridah, 1989). Hence, for the women, the influence of the mass media can be viewed from two extremes. On one side of the coin, media are seen as powerful to shape behavior and capitalize on the potentials of women that can be used to their advantage, while on the other, media reinforce existing stereotyped attitudes, expectations and values that could hinder their advancement in societies.

In Malaysia, researchers began actively researching media representations of women since the early eighties. Asiah Sarji (1985) content analyzed images of women in five P. Ramlee (a reknown filmmaker in the golden age of the Malay cinema of the 1950s and 60s) movies released at different times, namely *Penarik Beca* (1956), *Ali Baba Bujang Lapok* (1961), *Ibu Mertuaku* (1962), *Madu Tiga* (1964), and *Nasib Do Re Mi* (1966). Her analyses indicated that women were portrayed as emotional, sensitive and tearful. Basically, two types of women were depicted: the rich, materialistic and husband-hunting kind, and the poor, helpless, weak and polygamy-willing kind. In addition, women were most often characterized as widows, mothers, domestic helpers, singers, nurses and clerks.

Similar images are also seen in Jins Shamsuddin's (a reknown 1970s Malay filmmaker) movies of the seventies and early eighties. Soh Geok Choon (1988) content analyzed *Menanti Hari Esok* (released in 1977), *Esok Masih Ada* (1980), and *Esok Untuk Siapa* (1981). In these movies, Soh discovered that women were mainly depicted in a negative light, in that they were peripheralized, dependent on and submissive to men. Generally, they were made to appear as second-class citizens who are trapped in a patriarchal system that degraded their very existence.

Fuziah and Faridah (2005; 2000) looked at eleven Malay movies produced in the 1950s, the golden era of Malay movies. This qualitative-interpretative analysis demonstrated that stereotyped female images dominated the silver screen then. Women were portrayed in two extreme poles --- the good-hearted, demure, submissive, domesticated and "ever-willing-to-sacrifice-everything' female; and the evil, scheming, conniving, home-wrecking, materialistic woman. Such characterizations not only added drama to the narratives, they also rhetorically functioned to propagate the conceptual metaphor of the desirable female as "pure, white and innocent" whereas the most undesirable one is "defiled, black and sinful." It is clear that the filmic rhetoric here is a good woman is one who is willing to sacrifice everything, including her life, for the benefit of others, such as the man she loves, and that she must accept her fate although it means suffering and hardships. More often than not the good woman is sacrificed at the end of the movie, such as

through death, and is eventually exalted. Woman on the opposite end (the bad woman) is extremely bad, but alas she dies a tragic death. Good or bad, the woman usually dies one way or another. It is as if a woman's life is secondary compared to that of a man.

Although much of the empirical literature has focused on women, they are always studied in comparisons with the other gender. Generally, researchers discover several common themes of gender representations in the mass media. These themes include the under-representation of women; stereotypical portrayals of women and men; and the sexploitation and normalized violence of women by men. Such depictions are found in various genres of media content ranging from children's cartoons, news, television serials and music videos to blatant pornography. One thing that is clear in all these depictions is the constant absence of respect between women and men in their daily encounters and relationships. If respect between women and men is a key element that can propagate gender harmony, then what is the media doing to ensure that this is being communicated? Or have they ignored this issue altogether?

The research findings

This section of the paper reports on research findings of a content analysis of the three selected music videos in the study and the qualitative analysis of a focus group of university students discussing their readings of the music videos and the larger implications toward gender harmony. In the study, gender harmony is understood as the presence of mutual respect between women and men in everyday social life such that both sexes recognize each other's strengths and weaknesses as persons, thus enabling each other to play equal, balanced and complimentary roles in the home, the workplace and society in general. In this position, the domination of one sex over another does not occur since complimentary behavior nullifies it.

The music videos

Music videos are a type of short film or video that contained the complete creation of a musical composition. They are produced as a vehicle or advertisement to promote and market a song, and are especially targeted for the young and music-loving audience. In USA alone, the music video industry is a billion-dollar enterprise. Although music videos have been around for quite some time, they became a worldwide phenomenon with the advent of the music television format as a broadcast genre in the 1980s and 1990s. In Malaysia, both MTV and Channel V are popular channels, thus spurring the creation of a local music television channel, Hitz.TV, on Astro, the Malaysian satellite television broadcaster. This local channel does not necessarily air local music videos; in fact, it is heavy on foreign music videos since local artists do not really invest in music videos to market their albums, as they are expensive to produce. Hence, the music television channels show more foreign music videos compared to local ones for local consumption.

Music videos are heavy on the senses as they can manipulate audio and visual codes through camera and editing techniques as well as special effects and multimedia pacing. Among the various music genres that utilize music videos to win global

audiences, the hip-hop genre is most prevalent. Hip–hop is a music genre that is said to have originated from the ghettos of America when African-American youth began singing about their oppression and discrimination by the white majority using their unique style and rhythm to voice their protests, thus establishing a new musical identity different from mainstream white music. The hip-hop genre is sometimes referred to as rap music as they include rapping (mcing) and djing (audio mixing and scratching). Interestingly, hip-hop music videos always have a dance choreography that demonstrates traditional African influence, breakdancing, krumping and crotch-grabbing, and other sexy body movements.

In this study, the three hip-hop music videos analyzed are *That's That* by Snoop Dogg featuring R. Kelly, *Dangerous* by the Ying Yang Twins featuring Wyclef Jean, and *Tell Me* by P. Diddy featuring Christina Aguilera. These music videos are media texts, and as media texts, they are polysemic in nature, thus inviting various readings and interpretations. In this analysis, a basic feminist framework is used to look at various semiotic units such as lyrics, narratives, characters and characterizations, camera angles, shots and framings, mise-en-scene, costumes and make-up, facial expressions, as well as dance and body movements. This paper does not account the details of the semiotic analysis conducted, rather it only excerpts the main findings of their gender representations and images as seen comprehensively from their narratives.

That's That depicts two rich and heavily-bling-ed (wearing shiny accessories) men driving to an exclusive party where they meet up with heavily made-up and scantily-clad women who performed wild and erotic dance moves for the pleasure of the onlooking men. The dances became more sensuous and sexy when money is thrown all over and around them. The word "shit" is repeated in the lyrics as if to degrade the female dancers who would do anything and everything for money. The use of water in the earlier *mise-en-scene* of the music video is a subliminal play of the oncoming seduction and sexual tone. There are many close-up shots of the woman's body, especially hips and breasts, as she gyrates and moves to the beat and rhythm of the music. The final frames show Dogg and Kelly driving home with satisfied looks as Snoop wipes his lips and winks to the camera.

In *Dangerous*, the Ying Yang Twins tell of their adventure in a fictional place, Twin City, where they seem to be in charge, yet some women try to overpower them wherever they go by using their sexuality and charm. The women are shown in seductive costumes, poses and dances so as to lure and capture the twins for their luxury car and money. In some close-up shots, a woman is shown to have fangs, which immediately emphasizes and foregrounds her evil character and intention. Eventually, the final frames indicate the force behind the women's behavior. In actual fact, the women are being used by Wyclef Jean to deceive the Ying Yang Twins, hence reaffirming the power of men over women and how men can always use women, even in the execution of dangerous and criminal acts.

Tell Me portrays a relational episode between a man and a woman, whereby each is communicating to the other their wants and needs in the relationship. In the beginning, P. Diddy is presented a remote control by a woman who, upon his instruction, puts on a DVD to be played. Diddy takes the remote control and points to the DVD player. At the touch of a button, Cristina Aguilera appears on a flat screen

television, singing and dancing to a tense and fast tempo. The audience is next transported to a "wind tunnel" where Aguilera is singing and dancing, and then Diddy walks in confidently rapping and singing. Again there are many close up shots of Aguilera gyrating and touching her body seductively. This is interspersed rapidly with close-up shots of another woman's body as she seductively dances, while long and medium shots of Diddy show him walking confidently, unperturbed and in control. A listening of the lyrics indicate a dialogue between Aguilera and Diddy in which she tells him what she wants to do and he responds with repeated "do that" and "I want." Although he says "I don't want to control you but I want to console you," his command of "do that, do that" indicates otherwise. In short, a man has a way of making a woman thinks she is in control even when she is not.

All the three hip-hop music videos stereotyped and sexploited women in almost similar ways, through the narratives, visual depictions and nonverbal body politics. The music videos show that women are the oppressed gender or second-class citizens whose existence are defined and controlled by men and that they are sexual objects that fulfill the pornographic fantasies of men. In contradistinction, men are represented as powerful, stylish, cool, cunning and central to everything that they are able to use women at their whims and fancies.

The various degrading representations of the female in the music videos vis-à-vis the consistent strong representations of the male is a deliberate effort to construct ambivalent female images, hence the lack of identity, while men are given the dominant and powerful presence, hence the master of all. The props, fancy cars and sophisticated remote control, as well as expensive costumes, dark shades, jewelries and blings, are all symbols of the powerful male, whilst less costume and more flesh, alluring make-up and seductive body movements semiotically explained the objectification of the female. In short, the hip-hop music videos focus on the female bodies ('hip') and how men behave towards them ('hop').

The focus group discussion

Four boys and girls participated in the focus group discussion. They are Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia undergraduates who are studying in the Media Communication program at the second year level (sophomore). This is purposively done to underscore their concerns about gender representations in the music videos given that this is a subject that they are exposed to and thus need to be critical about. In terms of social background, they are quite heterogeneous as they come from urban and rural settings, have parents of different educational and occupational status, hail from big, medium and small-sized families, and have different media habits. Theoretically, such a social background would have equipped them with different cultural tools, yet their academic exposure had more or less neutralized this expectation. Hence, their readings of the gender representations of the music videos and their perceived implications on the gender consciousness and sensitivity of young Malaysians are generally similar.

All the students, both male and female, agree that the hip-hop music videos portray disharmonized gender representations. They echo that all the men in the music videos appear cool, rich, strong, muscular, "so powerful and in control", while the women are "so, so, so low and gets lower and lower" because they have nothing but

their sexuality in order to survive in this social world. The women seem nothing more than objects of sexual desire or "trophy" for men to own and parade around as a token and symbol of their strength and position. One of the female students suggests that women have "sexual power" and that this power can "melt down any man", although the women may not intend to do so. This suggestion invites a male student to respond that women usually use their sexuality for material motives, which most men can provide. He rationalizes that "no cat will turn away if it sees a fish dangling in its face." When asked if this is a typical male response, the boys believe it is so in their culture but do not think it is necessarily unmanly to act otherwise.

Albeit so, all the students do not condone the use of female sexuality for material gain. The girls are concern that men have such a perception about women. They insist that a woman "pretties herself for her own satisfaction" and are sad that men think that this is done to "seduce them." One of the female students expresses worry that such imbalanced portrayal of men and women in the music videos can propagate the "already popular notion that guys give love to have sex, and gals give sex to have love." The rest of the students agree that this idea is dangerous and can trap any young girl and young boy into superficial relational commitments. They urge the media not to foster such a portrayal for, "in the long run, it is harmful to young and vulnerable audiences, such as my little brother and little sister."

The gender representations may not harm their own gender consciousness because "being media students, we know better that the images are just *merepek* (nonsensical and false)." However, they feel that "younger people who are not thinking" can be "harmfully influenced by the hedonistic portrayal" in the music videos. To make matters worse, hip-hop music and their stars are considered "icon of pornographic music videos" because of the sexual depictions and concentration of the body in their dances. The students posit that the media can "disrupt family socialization, parental role and proper upbringing" because gender images are stereotyped and repeated in the media in both direct and "more subtle ways."

Do music videos like these belittle the effort in Malaysia to achieve gender harmony and equality as espoused in the National Policy on Women (NPW)? NPW, endorsed by the Malaysian government in 1989, "articulates the needs, interests and situations of women and ensures that these concerns are included in mainstream development policy and programs with women participating as full and equal partners at the community and national levels" (Pelan Tindakan Pembangunan Wanita, 1997). The overall objectives of the NPW are:

- To ensure equitable sharing in the acquisition of resources and information as well as access to opportunities and benefits of development, for both men and women; and
- To integrate women into all sectors of national development in line with their abilities and needs in order to improve the quality of life, eradicate poverty, abolish ignorance and illiteracy and ensure a peaceful and prosperous nation.

Besides the effort of the Government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) were also galvanized to spearhead the NPW. One such NGO was the National Council of Women's Organizations Malaysia (NCWO), which formed several commissions to work out action plans for the implementation of the Policy.

One of the commissions established was the Commission on Media, whose action plan includes the elimination of negative portrayal of women in the media and sensitizing gender awareness in media programs. It has been almost two decades now since NPW was endorsed, and although discourses remain alive, most of the action plans are "merely documents on paper." With the onslaught of globalization and the global media, it became more and more difficult to realize the NPW's media objectives, since the borderless world means media content is beyond a nation's control. As such, music videos such as these hip-hop ones with disharmonized gender representations can be found abundantly in the content industry.

The students, being aware of NPW, realize that the gender images in the music videos can be detrimental to the country's effort to create gender equality and harmony. However, they also believe that there is no way to stop such media content since banning or jamming is "not the solution to the problem, what more with the new media and its technology." Although the students said that not everyone is gullible to media messages, efforts must be continuous to counter the effects of imbalanced gender representations. "We cannot shut down or hide such programming in the global media from our people, less we will be like *katak di bawah tempurung* (literally, frog under a coconut shell), so we must build resistance within ourselves." One student suggests that the media authority rates music videos in the same manner that movies are rated. This rating will make us more aware of the content of the music videos and so become more cautious and selective in our viewing. It will also help "parents supervise their children's viewing."

To the suggestion of increasing media literacy by introducing it as a curriculum in primary schools, the students think that it is sound and rational. They feel that Malaysians need to be prepared at an earlier age because "an understanding of the process, system, effects and appreciation of the media can help us become critical and discerning users of the mass media." The students expressed their disappointment at some of their campus mates who seem oblivious to gender discourses in the media and therefore are "not fit to be university students." One boy states that everyone should promote gender awareness and that we should not "leave it to the authorities alone to combat" disharmonized gender representations in the media. The students in the focus group conclude that knowing how to resist unwanted images in the media is becoming increasingly important in the era of global media, and that this a more meaningful action compared to "shutting down our skies and banning foreign content."

Conclusion

Modern women are already in the public sphere, out of the homes and into organizations in this new era. At a time when women are contributing much towards society's progress, some of the portrayals in the media are irrelevant; they only perpetuate the ideology of male dominance-female submissiveness. From a

communication perspective, the use of this conceptual paradigm in a medium deemed so influential to young minds is culturally detrimental. We need to continuously advocate a change so that we can ultimately practice the humanistic view of gender equality in our daily lives. This can propagate gender respect and gender harmony, and thus can help eliminate crime and violence against women.

The mass media have the potential to be a vehicle of change. The study of gender images and representations in the mass media is an apt starting point to start a dialogue with the folks behind the scene so that they may be gender-sensitive in their work. For now, it is obvious that the content industry of the mass media is dominated by a male perspective and does not reflect the realities of being female. Although the content may circle around a woman's life, the storytelling is very much male. Perhaps this is a consequent of the lack of female players and decision-makers in the industry. Still, increasing the number does not mean the situation can be rectified because in the final analysis, "the crucial question is not who is telling the story, but how the story is told" (Gallagher, 2001).

As Wood points out, the media mirror, suggest and filter images and this influences our constructions. Media content is not limited to be a symbol of reality. More important, it must also be a symbol for reality. This means gender portrayal in the mass media can be used as advocacy materials to change whatever is necessary for the betterment of society. It is time for media producers to view their content from a wider and deeper perspective, specifically as rhetorical tools to gain adherence to gender-sensitive practices (Fuziah, 2005; 2003).

In communication, the media are powerful tools for gender setting (Gallagher, 2001), i.e., a device to help individuals rethink the true meaning of being a woman and a man so as to add dignity to our positions and roles in society. In this manner, proper portrayals of gender relations in the media can educate our women and men about gender roles and responsibilities and along the way promote gender respect and harmony. Clearly, music videos are influential tools for gender advocacy among young people, but it is unfortunate that the producers and performers are not doing enough toward this end. The push for a conscientization process among the industry folks should be included in our gender-setting, whilst at the same time promoting media literacy among the consumers.

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Paper 3 Economic Activities in a Matrilineal Culture: A Case of the Travelling Merchant in Minangkabau Villages in Indonesia

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Abstract

The Minangkabau ethnic group is indigenous to the highlands of West Sumatra, in Indonesia. Their culture is matrilineal. There are two prominent effects of this culture towards Minangkabau women. Firstly, they have privilege as the heir of *"harta pusaka"*. (Ancestral property). Secondly, Minangkabau women have economic responsibility for the children who live with them. Ideally, *"harta pusaka"* is fully passed down to women. Recently, there has been a radical change in Minangkabau society with regards to the inheritance system, because that harta pusaka have been made private ownership. As a consequence, Minangkabau women have lost their privilege, yet they are still expected to maintain their role as the main staple of family economics. Being a travelling merchant is one alternative for the Minangkabau women to accommodate to this change and at the same time to fulfill their responsibilities. As travelling merchants, they travel from one traditional market to another, both near their domicile and to areas further away. Consequently, this travelling trade has changed the pattern of raising children and the nature of family interactions. Nevertheless, it is proven that by being travelling merchants, the Minangkabau women are able to increase their families' prosperity. Thus, this paper explores the impact of being trading travellers on the harmony of their families.

INTRODUCTION

Minangkabau is one of the many ethnics which make up Indonesia. This ethnic resides in the province of West Sumatra. Record shows in 2005 there were 3 747 343 Minangkabau peoples which make up 88.35 % of 4 241 256 of overall of West Sumatra's population. Minangkabau is the majority ethnic in this province and one of its indigenous inhabitants. The table below will explain the composition of overall West Sumatra's population.

Table 1: West Sumatra's population based on ethnicities

Etnik	Jumlah	%
Minangkabau	3 747 343	88.35
Batak	187 656	4.42
Javanese	176 023	4.15
Mentawai	54 419	1.28
Melayu	21 654	0.51
Chinese	15 029	0.35
Sundanese	10 993	0.26
Betawi	672	0.02
Madurese	370	0.01
Others	27 097	0.64
total	4 241 256	100.00

Source: West Sumatra in Numbers 2005

There are three typical characteristics enclosed to this ethnic. First, *merantau* (going overseas/ leaving native places) is seen as a tradition with the perspective of economic interest (Mochtar 1979; Kato 1989; Clamer 2000). Second, Islam is this ethnic official religion (Hamka 1978; Dt. Sangguno 1987; AA navis 1988; Dt. Rajo Penghulu 1997; Mochtar 1999). Third, this ethnic develops matrilineal cultural system (Mansoer 1979; Kato 1988; Amir 1999). This paper is an attempt to explain and analyze the involvement of women as economic participants in this matrilineal culture.

This paper focuses on the involvement of Minangkabau women in economic activities in the current context. This paper observes the activities of Minangkabau women who travel from one to other traditional markets as merchants. This activity began to gain popularity as an occupation for Minangkabau women when severe monetary crisis hit Indonesia in 1997.

Sikaladi is the location of this research. In accordance to the governmental system, Sikaladi is a village within Tanah Datar regency, West Sumatra. Record in 2006 shows there were 9.913 people in Sikaladi (www.tanahdatar.go.id). This area is famous for its cool climate and fertile soil. Moreover, Sikaladi happens to be in a strategic junction of transportation which enables its population to commute as well as to travel as merchants.

Geographically, Sikaladi is located on a plateau in the foot of Mount Merapi, the highest mount in West Sumatra. In regards with its geographic location, it can be predicted that most of Sikaladi people earn their living by doing agricultural activities.

Historically, Sikaladi is the neighbor of Pariangan which is considered as the oldest *nagari* for the Minangkabau people. According to historians, Pariangan is the initial *nagari* for the Minangkabau people. Due to the increasing of the population, other villages were founded. A group of villages in Minangkabau is called as *nagari*. A village in a *nagari* is called as *jorong*. Hence, Sikaladi is a *jorong* within the *nagari* of Pariangan (Mansour 1970; Mochtar 1984; Kato 1988; AA Navis 1988; Silfia 2002).

Before 1997, Sikaladi was an agricultural centre for Tanah Datar regency. As the result, Sikaladi was able to drench the demand of vegetable in Batusangkar market as the biggest market in that regency.

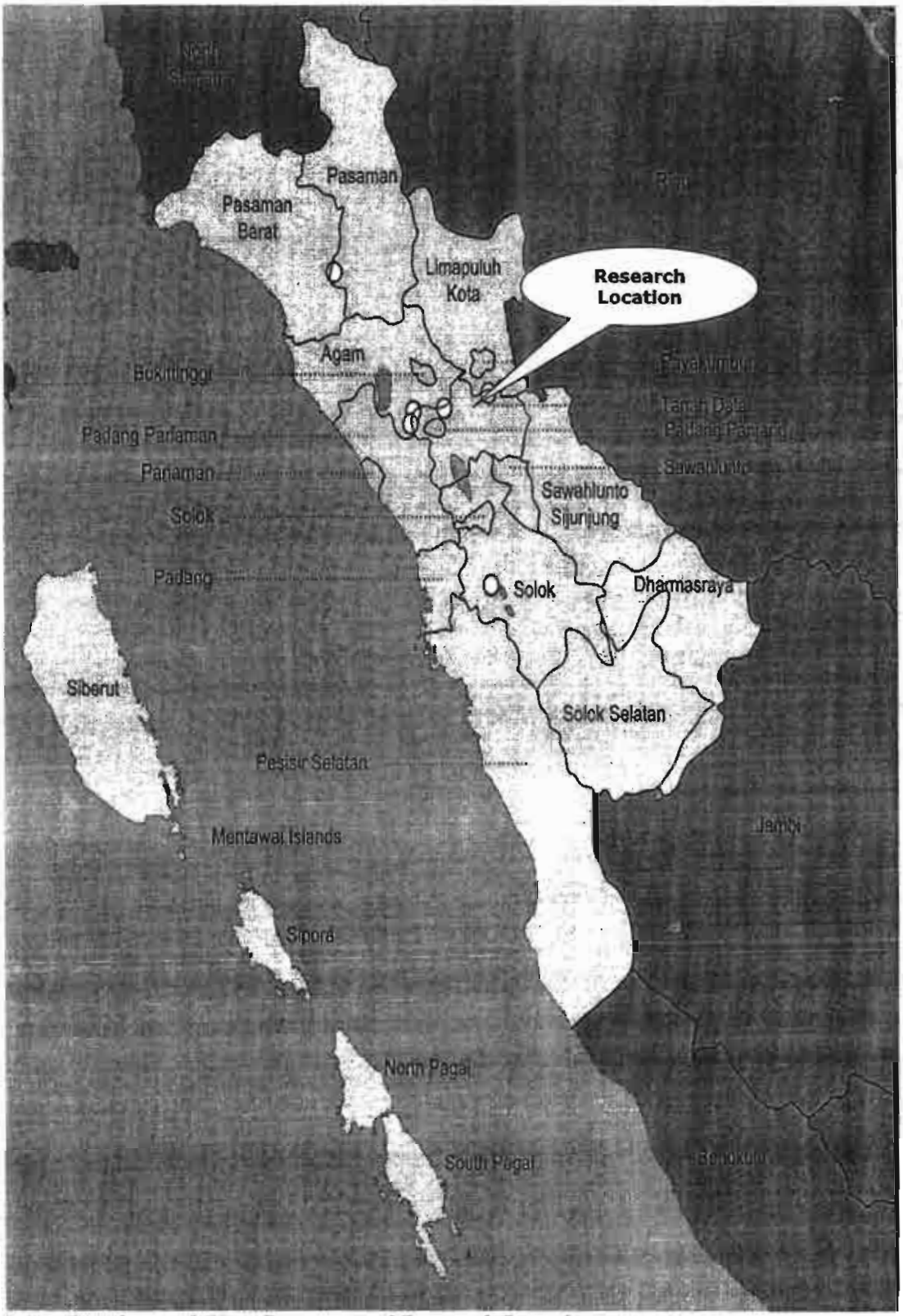
In 1997, monetary crisis hit Indonesia which directly affected Sikaladi as an agricultural centre for the price of fertilizer skyrocketed and the government quit subsidizing the prize of the fertilizer for the farmers. As a result, there was a radical change in terms of occupation pattern for most of the women folk of Sikaladi. Formerly, most of them were housewives. Their main activities are attending their land when the season to plant the paddy has come or helping their husbands in their vegetable patches. Currently, most of Silakadi women travel from one to another traditional market as traveling merchants. However, there is no radical change for the men folk for they are traditionally traveling merchants.

Regarding the *merantau* tradition, traveling as merchants can be seen as the semi-*merantau* activity. Meaning, the men folk leave their native village for a few days to travel as merchants to various traditional markets. After collecting sufficient amount of money, they travel back to their village. Subsequently, after that amount of money has faded away, the men folk travel again to trade (Mochtar 1987; Kato 1988).

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Map: Province of West Sumatra and Research Location.

DESCRIPTION

The economic crisis which hit Indonesia in 1997 has resulted in pushing Minangkabau women from domestic domain to public domain, especially in terms of occupation. Moreover, Minangkabau women began to leave agricultural sector to participate in trading sector (Aryunis & Silfia 2002). Now, those women are engaging actively in the economic market. As a consequence, this activity does so much to the economy of the house hold. Thus, the monetary crisis is not a continuing dilemma for those women who work as traveling merchant.

Interestingly, Minangkabau women who are not able to continue their study choose to engage in trading activities to help their parents who are already traveling merchants themselves. It cannot be denied that the involvement of this productive work force into traveling merchant activities has helped to overcome the problem of unemployment as the direct result of the 1997 economic crisis. Indonesian Central Bureau of Statistics has noted in 1997 that there were 4, 18 million of unemployed persons, 6, 03 million (1999), 5, 81 million (2000), 8.005 million (2001), 9, 13 million (2002), 11, 35 million (2003). Then, the statistics show that in 2001 there were 144,033 million people of productive age, 98,182 million work forces, 90,807 million employed population, 8,005 million open unemployed people, 6,010 million semi-forced employed people, 24,422 million semi-voluntarily unemployed people. In 2002 the statistics show 148,730 million people of productive age, 100,779 million work forces, 91,647 million employed population, 9,132 million open unemployed people , 28,869 miilion semi-forced umployed people.

The traveling trading activities done by the Minangkabau women is not similar to that of the Minangkabau men in the previous time. Those women leave their village on the basis and return in the same day. They travel to traditional markets in accordance to *hari balai* (market day) of that particular market. Every traditional market in West Sumatra as well as in Indonesia has its own scheduled market days or *hari balai*. Hence, within a week there are seven traditional markets of which those women travel to. This kind of activity is called by *manggaleh kaliliang ka pasa-pasa* (literally: traveling from market to market to trade)

This activity then becomes the Minangkabau women's routine activity. They leave for the market before dawn or before *azan subuh* (a call for prayer at dawn) in groups riding *oto cateran* (public means of transportation such as buses, mini buses, cars). Some of them also use the service of *oto langganan* (they routinely hire someone with a car or a bus to take them to their destination and bring them back home). At dusk, also in group, they travel back to their native village. *Salapeh maghrib* or approximately at 19 pm. is the earliest time for them to get home.

Most of them sell vegetables, fruits, soybean products such as tofu (bean curd) and *tempe* (fermented soybean cake). The traded commodities are derived from the family's farming in the case of vegetables and fruits, or home made productions in the case of tofu and *tempe,* or they just buy them from someone else. The amount of the commodity is not scaled in kilogram but in the amount of the container of the goods be it in the form of bags or sacks. Each woman brings minimally three bags or sacks. They pay the transportation fare based on the amount of the bags or sacks they carry. Averagely, one sack costs 2500 IDR ($ 0.25) for the transportation fare.

In the market, they have got their own place or post to run their business. That post is commonly called as *tempek manggaleh* of which size is usually 2 meter square. In that place they sit on the floor or on a small stool or squat or *bersimpuh* (sit with knee bent and folded back to one side) while dealing with their costumers.

They recognize several marketing systems. First, they sell their goods based on their weight in kilogram or it is simply called as *kilo*. Second, there is the system of *onggok* (heaps, stacks or piles). Meaning the measurement of their goods as well as the price are based on that *onggok*. The third system is the system of *kabek* or bunch especially for vegetables. These three systems are called generally as *manjua enceran* (retailed selling).

The profit that they get from this commercial activity is heavily depended on two factors. The first factor is the grade of the expensiveness of the price of the commodities that they are selling. Meaning, during *musim harago naiak* or the period where the price of the commodities skyrockets, those women will gain major profit. It is the happy time for those women travel traders. The second factor is particular events and periods which enable them to earn more profit than in the usual days like pay day time, few days before the fasting month or Ramadhan, and Islamic holidays such as Id Fitri and Id Adha. The beginning of each month is the prime time for those traders for it is the pay time for both public and private employees. Meanwhile, the profit that they gain in anticipating the Ramadhan, Id Fitri and Id Adha suggests the strong and total Islamic hold over the people of Minangkabau.

At the peak time of *musim harago naik* those women can gain more than 150.000 IDR ($ 15) per day which enables them to save some of the money. Usually, they use that money to repair or even build a new house and purchase various luxury (sometimes) household equipments. Hence, it becomes a kind of tradition when they get more profit those women will compete with each other in terms of repairing their houses of buying various equipments for their houses. Thus, it is a common view to see permanent and well preserved houses in the *jorong* of Sikaladi.

Therefore, it is proven that the change of the women occupation pattern has reduced the degree of poverty in this region. This change has also reduced the number of unemployment among women of productive age in Sikaladi. Currently, it has been noted that there are 69 woman traveling merchants in this *jorong* which means 40% of the overall women population of the *jorong* are traveling merchants.

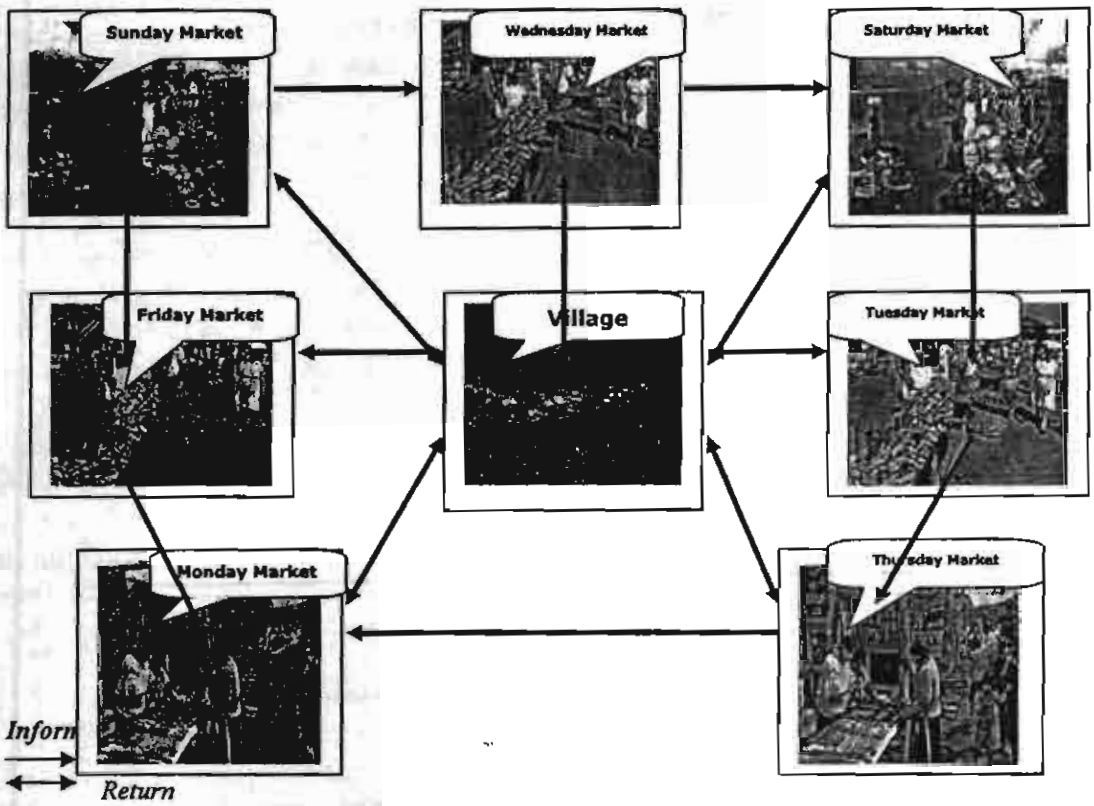


Figura: *Berdagang Keliling* Market to Market

Reverse sexually labor division

This new occupation for Sikaladi women has changed the pattern of sexually labor division. Formerly, occupations for women as constituted by both customs and social constructions are bound to domestic sphere. Meanwhile, men are demanded to earn for the family in the public sphere. The shift from extended family to nuclear family which is entailed by the decline of the practice of passing down the *tanah/harta pusako tinggi* (customary property) to Minangkabau women also contributes to the changing of occupation pattern for Minangkabau women.

The extinction of *tanah/harta pusako tinggi* forces Minangkabau women to assist her husbands in their work like helping them in the paddy field. As the result, the household chores are done by the oldest daughter of the family. Meaning, a wife is a partner for her husband in terms of earning the living. At that time, engaging in agricultural activities is the main source of living.

However, totally dependent to agricultural sector in feeding the family is becoming difficult for there is a time when the price of the fertilizer climbs highly into the degree of unaffordable. Worse, at the same time, the price of the agricultural products jumps down as it is not able to cover the cost of the production. As a consequence, the Minangkabau women have to look for another job to make the end meets such as being traveling merchants. Subsequently, household chores are trusted to the oldest daughter of the family if there is any. If the children are too young to do the chores, the husband will take over the responsibility. To put it in another way, the husbands turn to be *urang rumahan* (those who stay at home). This change of occupation pattern suggests the social change where there is a reverse pattern of

appreciation. When women are in the domestic sphere, they become men's 'worshippers'. In other words, the wives should be ready with the best service they have got whenever their husbands return from their work. However, with their current occupation, the husbands are expected to serve the wives when they return from the market.

The change however does not trigger domestic conflicts. It is quite surprising for it has been prescribed socially that the responsibility to take care of the children is given to women and the responsibility in terms of economy is granted to men. In other words, this change which is contradictory to common social constructions does not affect the family's harmony.

In this context, it is proven that Karl Marx's economic determinism is at work. The sufficient earning from the activity of traveling trading which is done by the Minangkabau women does not raise any family conflicts in spite of the changing in terms of occupation pattern which is not in line with the common social constructions.

The Changing on the Management of the Family's Economic Asset

Before traveling trading becomes a kind of trend in this region, the family's economic assets such agricultural land are managed by both husband and wife. Occasionally, they will have someone does particular tasks regarding the land. However, when the wives become fulltime travel trader and the husbands do most of chores at home, the land is subsequently managed by someone hired by the family. Sharing system is also widely recognized. Meaning, the owner of the land shares the profit which is gained from the harvest with those who work the land upon the previously agreed percentage. Therefore, agricultural activities are not popular anymore amongst the family of which women folk work as traveling traders.

In accordance to Minagkabau customary law, the family's asset is managed communally. There are two kinds of family's asset constituted by the customary law. The first one is the *harato kaum* or communal property which is commonly called as *harato pusako tinggi* in the form of land. This land is passed down to the oldest woman of the clan and managed communally. Importantly, the profit gained from the land is used to satisfy that clan's interest. Usually, that land is used for agricultural activities where women are in charge of the land. The customary law has constituted that it is forbidden to sell the land for it has something to do with the clan's prosperity. However, the change of the local governmental system and the passing of the Agrarian Laws in 1988 have caused the disruption to the legacy of the communal land. People begin to divide it as individual property. Worse, for the land has become individual belonging people begin to sell the customary land. The second family asset is the *harato pusako rendah* which is the asset of the nuclear family. In other words, this property is earned together by a couple of husband and wife. This land is used in accordance to the family's interest.

The *harato pusako rendah* or the nuclear family's land is commonly managed by the husband as the bread winner of the family. The wife's role is to assist the husband when it is needed. Most of the time, the wife is at home to raise the children and does household chores. Hence, the labor division in the nuclear family is clear

enough. Yet, since women begin to go to the market as traveling traders, the management of the family's economy is consequently changed as well. The husband is not the dominant manager anymore for the family has hired some one to work for the land.

This change suggests that the family's economy does not depend on the agricultural sectors anymore. Engaging in trading seems to be more promising for they, especially the woman traveling traders, can earn more money than what they earn by cultivating in their land. Thus, the occupation as farmers becomes less popular especially for the women.

Interestingly, for the family which has several adult children, the land is still a prominent source of living. Due to the availability of the men power which comprises of the father and children, that particular family works their own land without relaying to hired workers. The role of the women folk of the family which comprises of the mother or the daughter is to sell the harvest in the market.

It is a common thing for the people in the *jorong* of Silakadi to have a successful harvest which results in major profit. Thing becomes better for those who work for their own land for they do not need to spend a particular amount of money to pay the hired workers. Their only expenditure is the cost of fertilizer, pesticide and agricultural equipments highly related to the crops that they cultivate. The success story of these farmers continues when the harvest time coincides with the high price of the particular crops they plant. It is a common practice that they plant a particular crop which has been predicted to have high price at the harvest time. Most importantly, the profit grows bigger for the women folk of the family know how to sell their product directly to the market without interferences from the middle man.

The emergence of mechanic solidarity

In a society where most of its member travels routinely as in the case of the woman traveling merchants in the *jorong* of Sikaladi found a change in terms of solidarity pattern from organic to mechanic. The first thing that is responsible to this change is the significant length of the time the woman traveling traders leave their family and native village daily (from dawn to dusk) denies those women maximum chance to communicate and interact with their neighbors. Due to traveling daily (seven days a week) it is difficult for those women to keep making many social relationships which consequently responsible to the change from organic to mechanic pattern of social solidarity.

Before being active as traveling merchants, women have enormous time to interact with their society member. Most of the time, they participate in many social functions in their neighborhood. It is apparently supportive to the social dynamic which practices the pattern of organic social solidarity. However, thing changes when those women's time is spent mostly in the market.

The tradition of *batandang* (literally: visiting neighbors' houses) begins to wane as the notion of being traveling merchants hit the trends. *Batandang* facilitates the women to communicate with their neighbors and to acquire information about the

latest news or gossips in the neighborhood. The communication which occurs in the procession of *batandang* is called as *maota* (to have a chat). The topic of the chatting it self has no restrain. Most importantly, *maota* itself is the discussion forum for them.

The tradition of *maota* is not the privilege of the women folk since the men folk also practice it. Usually, the men will visit a *lapau* (a shop) to have a cup of coffee for a while before going to their rice field or farm. At this moment, the tradition of *maota* is a common view. They discuss about many things from family matters until political matters even global issues like wars or world sport evens. Uniquely, this kind of gathering in the *lapau* becomes the forum to socialize the government's policy in their region. However, this tradition begins to wane along with their wives' activity as traveling merchants. The husbands now replace the wives' responsibility to take care of the children if the family's children are still young. In the morning, they have to deal with their children who want to go school or feed the toddler children that deny them the opportunity to have a cup of coffee and to have a long winding chat in the *lapau*.

The waning of this kind of communication tradition affects the already established organic social solidarity pattern. According to Durkheim and Tonnis (Johnson 1987) the interaction pattern which is practiced in the society is an important factor to the existence of solidarity in a society. Moreover, communication is a kind of interaction which is responsible to bearing a strong bonding amongst the member of the society. The change in the tradition of communication has a great role in transforming the organic solidarity pattern to the mechanic solidarity pattern as evident is the waning of the tradition of mutual aid within the society.

THE ADAPTATION OF CITY LIFESTYLE BY THE VILLAGE DWELLERS

Trading brings more prosperity to the economy of the family which enables the family to have a life style. It is evident when the newly emerging 'rich' families begin to build a 'better' house in a sense of wood houses are replaced with stone houses and the adoption of modern and western architecture for their houses. For an instance, formerly, the kitchen and the bathroom are detached from the main building. Currently, those parts have been integrated into one building.

The change of the architecture of the house into a 'modern' one is entailed with the purchasing of more modern house hold equipments as well. Cooking using wood to make fire in a hearth has become obsolete. Kerosene or gas stoves hit the trends. The usage of kitchen cabinet to store the cooking equipments has also become a new trend. A television set is a must in the living room of the family house. As the result, the household equipments advertisements storm into the family's domain which generates the consumerism lifestyle. A refrigerator which is formerly not a necessity has become a new demand for an instance. These new and modern kitchen utensils and household equipments become the kind of barometer for the family's prestige. Consequently, the profit gained from trading is spent carelessly on these stuffs instead of investing it for a better future. Besides, wearing precious jewelries for the women and following the current trend in terms of fashion also suggest the family's prestige. It is noted that people has left the tradition of sitting on the floor while having break fast, lunch or dinner to a favor of a set of modern dining table.

Interestingly, they are also affected by the worldwide campaigned advertisements of being beauty means being slim as the teenagers begin to practice diet. In short, the change of the life style is at work.

In this context it can be understood that there is a significant relationship between the economy of the family with their life style. Their new profession as traveling merchants in fact has prospered that family which is responsible for the change of the life style. In this case, Karl Marx is right when he predicted that economy is the changing agent of tradition. The ownership of economic facilities has brought a new life style for a group of people. The new lifestyle unavoidably brings the culture consumerism. Yet, it uplifts the prestige amongst the society members. As the result, they choose to be consumerist to keep their prestige. Thus, the city lifestyle has been adopted by the village dwellers.

THE NEW AWARENESS TOWARD THE IMPORTANCE OF EDUCATION

Education in Indonesia is a kind luxury enjoyed by those who have strong economic power. It is commonly know that the education cost in this country is comparatively high and for some is unaffordable. During the 1997 economic crisis, girls who cannot continue their study due to economic restriction assist their mothers in the market. Meaning, they are the bread winner of the family as well.

Interestingly, people's perception towards education turns into a more positive mood. Formerly, education is regarded as the government's programs which will only waste money despite the family's ability to send their children to school. This perception is responsible to the practice of children commodification. Meaning, children are measured as economic property for they are assigned to help their parents economically. Yet, the new economic boom as the result of traveling trading activities which is conducted by the women has changed that perception.

In 2000 girls of basic education age stop helping their mother as full time traveling merchants. The newly established family's income enables them to continue their study. Besides, the ability to send the children to attend higher educational institutions like university either public or private one has become the symbol of prosperity and prestige as well as paving the way for the better future for the children. They believe that attending universities will help their children to land in high prestige jobs with generous salary.

This betterment in terms of economy in the *jorong* of Sikaladi is seen as the main factor that accelerates the improvement in the education sector. It is evident as the statistics show that in 2005 there were 12 children who could not continue their study, yet in 2006 the number reduced into 4 children. Thus, it is clear that along with the newly acquired prosperity, the family's quality of education is significantly improved.

CONCLUSION

The radical change of Minangkabau women's role is the direct effect of the demise of the practice of passing down the *harato pusako tinggi* to the women of the clan. As a result, the Minangkabau women are denied their cultural role as the manager of the communal land. Subsequently, those women and their husbands have to work hard to feed the family. Moreover, the formation of nuclear family is also responsible to the division of labor which is based on sex.

In 1997, Asia was hit by economic crisis and Indonesia was hit most severely which causes this nation was shrouded by poverty. This structural poverty lowers the people's quality of life, especially in villages. It was difficult for farmers at that time to cope with the skyrocketing price of fertilizer and agricultural equipments. Worse, the prices of the agricultural crops jumped down so that they suffered great lose. This circumstance makes women try hard to make the end meets. Hence, being traveling merchants is the best choice of the time to keep the family from the grip of continuous poverty. Most importantly, the involvement of women as traveling merchants is also responsible to other changes in Minangkabau social system.

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