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Modernization

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Thai Perceptions of Japanese Modernization

edited by

KUNIO YOSHIHARA

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■ Foreword

This volume is the proceedings of the seminar on "Thai Perceptions of Japanese Modernization", held in Kyoto on March 25 and 26, 1988. It was a sequel to the symposium held in Bangkok on January 15 and 16, 1987 on "Thai-Japanese Relations: Development and Future Prospects".* These two meetings were jointly organized by the Japanese Studies Center, Institute of East Asian Studies, Thammasat University and the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University, under the Core University Program which had been established between the National Research Council of Thailand (NRCT) and the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS).

The Kyoto seminar was attended by eleven Thai and ten Japanese scholars. In addition, there were nine observers from the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Vietnam, Thailand and Japan. Six papers were presented by Thai participants, covering religion, social organization, education, politics, Japanese management and economic development. These were commented upon by Japanese scholars who had been working in these respective fields. The names of the participants and the program of the seminar are shown in the Appendices to this volume.

In the past decade, largely because of the rise of Japan as an economic power, there has been increasing interest among Thai scholars in various aspects of Japanese modernization, as reflected in a large number of papers written on Japan both in

Thai and English. It is our hope that the present volume in which six well respected Thai scholars present their views on Japan will further stimulate interest in Japanese modernization and that this will in turn become useful for understanding and promoting the modernization of Thailand.

On behalf of the Japanese organizing committee, I would like to express, first of all, my sincere appreciation to Professor Khunying Nongyao Chaiseri, then Rector of Thammasat University, whose enthusiasm and dynamic leadership were crucial to the success of the NRCT-JSPS Core University Program. Also, to Dr. Vibulpong Poonprasit, then Assistant Rector of the same university, whose spirit of dedication and admirable efficiency contributed greatly to the success of the Kyoto seminar. I am also grateful for all the Thai participants who presented stimulating papers at the seminar, the revised versions of which appear in this volume. Last but not least, my sincere thanks go to my colleague, Dr. Kunio Yoshihara, who has devoted much of his time to the editing of this volume.

July 1988

Yoneo Ishii,
*Director, Center for Southeast
Asian Studies,
Kyoto University*

* All the papers presented in this symposium appear in Vibulpong Poonprasit, ed., *Proceedings of the Joint Symposium on Thai-Japanese Relations: Development and Future Prospects*, Bangkok, Thammasat University, 1988.

1. INTRODUCTION

Superficially, one might say that the Japanese after the Second World War have not paid much attention to religion. Quite often they would hesitate to say which religion they follow. And it takes some time to admit that their religion is Buddhism. Nevertheless, the statistics published by the Agency for Cultural Affairs shows a high percentage of people who believe in either Buddhism or Shinto. Besides these two, Confucianism, which may be regarded as more of a philosophy than religion, also has a deep influence on the way of thinking in Japan.

D.T. Suzuki, a famous master of modern Zen, evaluated Buddhist influence on Japanese society as follows:

... To see the degree to which Buddhism has entered into the history and life of the Japanese people, let us imagine that all the people and the treasures sheltered therein were completely destroyed. Then we should feel what a desolate place Japan would be, in spite of all her natural beauty and kindly disposed people. The country would then be like a deserted house with no furniture, no pictures, no screens, no sculptures, no tapestries, no gardens, no flower arrangement, no No plays, no art of tea, and so on.¹

Muraoka Tsunetsugu, one of the most prominent scholars of modern Shinto judges Shinto influences as follows:

Nevertheless, I do not think that it is mistake to say that which is "Japanese" must have had an important relationship to "that which is Shinto". . . .²

Moreover, Professor Naofusa Hirai of Kokugakuin University, states the role of Shinto as follows:

Shinto is one of the essential spiritual elements on which the Japanese people's way of life is founded. It is not a well established doctrine or an ideological system but rather a value system based on action which constitutes the main cultural stream of the Japanese people. On the cultural level, this system of evaluation has assumed a religious aspect.³

In the case of Confucianism, we can find its indisputable ideal to help develop the human resource incorporated into the Imperial Rescript on Education issued in 1980.

Our Imperial Ancestors have founded our Empire on a basis broad and everlasting, and have deeply and firmly implanted virtue; our subjects ever united in loyalty and filial piety have from generation to generation illustrated beauty thereof. This is the glory of the fundamental character of Our Empire, and herein also lies the source of our Education. Ye, Our Subjects, be filial to your parents; extend your benevolence to all, . . . , offer yourselves courageously to the State; . . . So shall ye not only be Our good and faithful subjects, but render illustrious the best traditions of your forefathers.⁴

These three main religions, of course, mingled with each other, from time to time, and lay the groundwork for Japanese modernization, having underlined Japanese thought for over a thousand of years.

Nevertheless, we must understand first that national development means the overall development of society. Many modern thinkers attach the greatest importance to science and technology, because the developed countries at present have reached their present status by industrialization based on

science and technology. Japan is now also one of the most developed countries. But Japan is not a developed country with a Western culture. Instead, it possesses an Eastern culture and has used it for its modernization. It is thus worth studying the impact of religions on the human resource in the process of Japanese modernization.

First, we want to study the history of Shinto, Buddhism, and Confucianism in order to understand their influence on Japanese history up to the present.

2. RELIGIOUS HISTORY OF JAPAN

History of Shinto in Japan. To understand a people, it is necessary to understand their basic myths. At a certain stage in history, a people's myths are often collected, interpreted, and converted into a doctrine to be propagated through an institution. Shinto developed in this way.

The teachings of Shinto, which may be regarded as a folk religion, had not been written down for a long time until the compilation of oral traditions began. Having become part of Japanese life, it was not followed consciously. Compared with Buddhism, Shinto was undoctinaire and even the word "Shinto" (the Way of *kami*) was used only recently in order to mark its difference from Buddhism (the Way of Buddha). Moreover, most of the authors on Shinto have interpreted Japanese classics in terms of Confucianism and Buddhism. But Shinto has influenced the formation of Japanese national characteristics for a long time.

During the Nara, Heian and Kamakura periods, Japan was under the influence of Confucianism and Buddhism. Shinto had to adapt itself mostly to Buddhism. It was in the Tokugawa era that efforts were made to clarify the history of the ancient past philologically. Scholars adopted a critical attitude toward Shinto classics because they felt a need to seek nationally satisfactory interpretations by resolving the moral and theoretical contradic-

tions that existed. The Shintoists conducted philological research on the Restoration Shinto (Fukko Shinto). The Restoration Shinto held a patriotic faith centering on the state and the ancient *kami*.

During the Meiji era, Meiji leaders purposely indoctrinated people with Shinto. The Department of Shinto Affairs was established, with the board of Shinto priests. It was the dark age of foreign religions, especially Buddhism. Shinto was taught to make people pay respect to the throne and the Sun Goddess. Shinto was then used to support the idea of the Greater East Asian Co-prosperity Sphere, which partly caused the Pacific War. Inevitably, after the war, Shinto was accused of having been part of the Japanese war machinery.

When Japan had to surrender unconditionally, the privileges of Shinto were abolished completely. People complained that Shinto was the religion of absolutism and dictatorship. However, I think that it is a mistake to speak about the political aspect of Shinto alone. It was unfortunately utilized by the militarists, but its real teachings emphasize harmony and humanity. In learning Shinto, we should look at the history and ethics of Shinto which played an important role in building up rapidly the human resources for a strong nation.

History of Buddhism in Japan. Buddhism was officially welcomed in Japan in the middle of the sixth century (522 A.D.). It should be noticed that it came along with political innovations from the King of Paekche (a kingdom in ancient Korea). Buddhism grew rapidly in Japan under the support of the emperor and powerful aristocrats. The first powerful supporter was Prince Shohtoku who declared: "The World is false; the Buddha alone is true."⁵

During the seventh and eighth centuries, Buddhism spread rapidly among educated people and became influential. A large number of Buddhist temples and monasteries were built, and skilful artisans made many excellent Buddhist temples and statues. However, the development of Buddhism did not entail

the abandonment of indigenous Shinto. Instead, both tended to fuse harmoniously. An example of the fusion can be seen in the type of construction known as the "shrine-temple" (*jinguh-ji*).⁶ Built within the precincts of a Shinto shrine, this shrine temple served as a place where Buddhist monks could chant sutras and perform Buddhist rites for the sake of the enlightenment of the *kami*. This custom continued for centuries until the early Meiji period when, by government order, Shinto and Buddhism were separated.

During the Momoyama era, the sixteenth century, Buddhist sects were gradually brought under control by military leaders because the sects sometimes fought against them and became a barrier in their bid for national unification. For example, Nobunaga (1534-82 A.D.) burned Buddhist temples and killed Buddhist followers, thus crushing the military power of the temples.⁷ But Japan retained the aesthetic tradition of Buddhism; the tea ceremony, Japanese gardening and *sumie* in particular.

In the following Tokugawa era, the temples became the center for welfare services. Monks spent most of their time in helping develop a community. Accordingly, they had little time to develop Buddhist teachings. People went to a temple mostly for recreation. They developed their way of life according to the Buddhist teaching, but they did not do so self-consciously since Buddhism had been part of Japanese life for many centuries.

In the Meiji era, Buddhism was separated from Shinto. It was state policy to make the latter a national religion, and to use it to build up strong nationalism. This was the period of crisis which Buddhism had never experienced before, since its introduction to Japan.

At present, Japanese society regards materialism or making money as the most important thing in life. People are struggling for wealth, and wealth means success. Those who cannot make it will feel insecure and meaningless. So Buddhist priests have been working to spread teachings which can spiritually help the poor.

And there is a movement of liberal minded Buddhists who are trying to bring about the unification of all Buddhists. There is also the development of new religions, the most famous of which is Sohka Gakkai.

History of Confucianism in Japan. Along with Buddhism, Confucianism was introduced to Japan in the sixth century. While Buddhist teaching denies worldly life, Confucianism accepts life in this world as real, in the same way as Shinto does. The Seventeen Articles of Prince Shōtoku embrace several Confucian teachings. Later in the Taika Reformation in 645 A.D., the centralized government was founded with Confucian support.

In contrast to Shinto, Confucianism competed with Buddhism in winning imperial support. In the Nara and Heian periods, Confucianism was less known than Buddhism. Confucianists often complained they were not so well accepted as Buddhist priests, despite their more modern outlook. For example, a Confucianist submitted "Opinion on Twelve Matters"⁸ to Emperor Daigo in 914 A.D., asking him to discard many old fashioned practices of Buddhism. He attacked Buddhism as follows:

... From those who were ministers and functionaries above to those who were of modest circumstances below, if they did not build temples and pagodas they were considered not to belong to the race of man. Thus many squandered their wealth in the building of pagodas. They competed for the honor of discarding their farmland for temple use, and many bought the freeman to become servants of temples... The magnificence of the edifices, the enormity of the Buddha statues, the intricacy of the craftsmanship and the rare splendor surrounding them are more like the creation of ghostly spirits than of men.⁹

Confucianism introduced into Japan during the period of Japanese feudalism was the Neo-Confucianism of Chu-hsi (1130-1200 A.D.) of Sung China and Wang Yang-ming (1472-1529) of Ming China. Those two helped develop social discipline among

the people. Since Buddhism was regarded as the state cult during the Kamakura and Ashikaga periods, Confucianism sought favour with the warrior class, and became incorporated into *bushido* or the way of the warrior. Then when the samurai or the warriors seized political power and became the ruling class, their mode of life became a model for other people (farmers, artisans, and merchants). In the Tokugawa period, supported by the Confucian schools of *han* (provincial) governments, Neo-Confucianism became an official doctrine.

During the Meiji period, Confucianism was subjected to the impact of industrialization. *Fukoku-kyohei* became a national goal in Japan's bid for modernization. Even in the Tokugawa period, there were Confucian scholars who were interested in Western sciences (for example Ogyu Sorai, Sakuma Shohzan and Yoshida Shoh'in). The Japanese of the Meiji Restoration felt that the ultimate strength of the West was in the material world, while Confucianism was a superior worldly ethic. Together, these two would help in creating a strong nation.¹⁰

In the nineteenth century, Western powers were threatening Asian countries with imperialism. Confucianists were hostile to Western learning. Especially after the Meiji Restoration, when social changes were confusing people, they began suffering from a lack of morality. Nishimura Shigeki and Motoda Eifu were the national founders of (and who spent a lot of time in propagating) a Neo-Confucian based moral system which would fit the requirements of modern Japan. As a moralist who preferred truth, justice, fairness and humanitarianism, Nishimura argued that individualism was an anti-social, selfish attitude.¹¹ Also, with Motoda's strong advice, Emperor Meiji finally announced the Imperial Rescript on Education, emphasizing loyalty and filial piety to the Emperor as the leader of a family-state. Seeing this resurgence of Confucianism from 1902, the year when the Anglo-Japanese alliance was concluded, Western countries often interpreted everything Japan did and said in terms of *bushido*, including the Emperor cult and the expansionist foreign policy.¹²

Neo-Confucianism became more Japanized from the Meiji restoration to the end of the Pacific War than in the preceding periods. National policy was to unify the nation and bring the political apparatus under the authority of the Emperor, which was justified by the Confucianists as a necessary step to build a modern state. It was seen also as a compromise between traditional Confucianists and modernists. This flexibility, it can be argued, made it possible for Japan to evolve into a fully modernized nation.¹³

From 1945 to the present, Confucianism has been attacked as a pre-modern ethic. In its place, Western philosophies have been attracting more attention. The Emperor declared that he is not a *kami*. Moreover, under the guidance of the American occupation forces, a new constitution was drafted, based on pacifist and democratic principles. Nevertheless, the Japanese cannot go all the way for Western moral principles. For example, conflicts often arise in Japanese society between Western individualism and Confucianism.¹⁴

3. THE IMPACT OF SHINTO ON JAPANESE MODERNIZATION

Creativity. J.W.T. Mason believes that there is a spirit of creativity in Shinto. In Shinto mythology, we find various examples of deities who possess powers which acted as a creative impetus to the spiritual and mental energy of the Japanese people. Japan is an example of a nation which made a quick transition from the medieval to the modern scientific period. It can be argued that this was made possible by the influence of the creative spirit of Shinto. For example, the Japanese are never tired of creating new things, by being flexible to foreign cultures. However, since Shinto is a religion of simplicity, people follow its way only subconsciously, so one often misses its true impact on Japanese society. Shintoists would argue that self-consciousness tends to make people

selfish, creating a feeling of superiority which bars them from adapting to the new environment, and that self-conscious following inhibits the growth of society, while subconsciousness keeps people more adaptable to a new way of life.

In the battered and faltering culture of the East, Japan alone has constantly followed the dynamism of the West. It continuously learns from others while at the same time preserving much of its own unique tradition. Meanwhile, the other Oriental nations blindly clung to their traditions and failed to make use of new intellectual and scientific developments in more advanced countries.

We can identify the Shinto spirit as the cause of Japanese growth and modernization because of its vision of the entire universe as an interrelated system of various parts. When they work together harmoniously, peacefully and pleasantly, they will always produce a better synthesis. Thus, both individualism and collectivism are the two essential factors of human progress. Through the struggle between these two, creative impetus is generated. Through adjustments after the struggle, a state of harmony is brought about, in which individual will merges with social will without leaving its individual form.

Shinto really emphasizes the spacelessness of spirituality more than formal religions because it never uses statues or pictures to represent divine spirits or Heaven at a Shinto shrine. A Shinto god is considered spaceless and endless. It also expresses the feeling of continuity in Japanese development. Mason summarizes it as follows:

Shinto provides the clue to interpreting the unique creative spirit of the Orient whose seeds were sown in the mythological age where the roots of Japanese culture still hold their original ground.¹⁵

Through mythology, the Shinto spirit survives as the value of creativity. It realizes that life moves forward at its own speed. Izanami and Izanagi only gave birth to things but did not interfere with their evolution.

During the Shinto Renaissance in the Tokugawa period, there was the movement of Shinto scholars to restore Shinto in its original form of purity or simplicity, eliminating all kinds of alien influence. This movement accordingly recognized *musubi* (creative evolution) to be the fundamental concept of the Shinto doctrine. Especially, Hirata Atsutane gave importance to Ame-no-minaka-nushi-no-kami and Taka-mi-musubi-no-kami. These two *kami* were endowed with creative power. Hirata concluded that the power of creativity was passed from the *musubi* deities to the world parents, Izanami and Izanagi. *Musubi* is basic to all life and thought. It stands for creativity, potentiality, and the power of growth. *Musubi* will make people treat the world with respect. They will not desire to conquer the world nor destroy the state of harmony which brings about creativity. Man's highest honor is to be awarded with *musubi*.

With the creative spirit of Shinto, the Japanese have become optimistic, adaptable, and flexible. They always struggle to overcome any difficulty in their life. Muraoka Tsunetsugu explains it as follows.

There could be no better than this world. There were powers that constructed and destroyed life-giving power, but in the end they would be overcome: straightening action would be directed against the misfortune.¹⁶

Democracy. Both foreigners and Japanese often complain that Shinto has some characteristics which are conducive to the rise of absolutism and xenophobic nationalism.

However Shinto scholars find a spirit of democracy in Shinto as it holds that "man and *kami* are the same". Kakehi Katsuhiko in his *Kannagara no Michi* emphasizes the Shinto spirit of equality and freedom, because as a faith, Shinto is tolerant toward alien thought and religions.¹⁷ This is epitomized in the poem composed by Emperor Meiji:

May Japan become an ideal state,
Winnowing the good from the evil.

The seeding of a foreign tree
Will never fail to thrive in our garden.

Shinto is then interpreted as the universal principle underlying the evolution of life. Nowadays, as Shinto is not a state religion (which is prohibited by law), lay groups are formed for the *matsuri* (festival) of a Shinto shrine, and the keynote in this activity is harmony, which can be considered as the core of democracy.

In conclusion, one can say that there are democratic principles in Shinto. Those who worship deities are also regarded as *kami*. As Shinto has many gods, as a polytheistic faith, Shinto has no concept of absoluteness. People, moreover, are allowed to believe in different *kami* at the same time. Many deities even join together to protect people, and there has never been fighting among Shinto deities.

National Unity. The fact that Shinto recognizes an order and hierarchy among the *kami* can be seen as a religious contribution to national unity. Without an order, the *kami*'s world would be like the world of the wild beasts on earth. The Emperor is considered to be the direct descendant of Amaterasu-o-mi-kami. He has to follow divine virtues and be a model for his people. Shinto scholars naturally accept the fusion of faith in the *kami*, government, and the emperor as the ideal *kokutai* (national political system) of Japan.

The national unity of Japan is considered to originate from people's faith in their Tenno (the Emperor) who delegates power to his servants (government officials). Thus, people must respect the government. Shinto emphasizes the oneness of the Tenno and his subjects. Even the present Constitution states that "The Emperor shall be the symbol of the state and the unity of the people." The *kokutai* concept of sovereignty has changed, but the Emperor is still with his people.

Unfortunately, when Japan confronted Western imperialism in the nineteenth century, Shinto was utilized for the purpose of

national unity and mobilization. Japan scored military success in the Sino-Japanese War in 1895 and the Russo-Japanese War in 1905 with the help of Shinto. In the subsequent years, the government continued to use Shinto for the attainment of national goals, but such use of Shinto was abruptly ended by the unconditional surrender of Japan to the Allied Powers in 1945. This defeat resulted in an all-out attack on Shinto by foreigners as well as liberal-minded Japanese. At present, it is an important duty for Shinto scholars to banish people's prejudices. For the survival of Shinto, its religious and ethical aspects have to be given primacy.

Ancestor worship and group solidarity. Since man comes from his parents and ancestors, it is natural for him to feel grateful for his birth in this blessed world. It will then be his duty to treat the ancestors respectfully and hand down this tradition to the next generation.

Shinto teaches that the ancestors must not be forgotten. Respect for the ancestors is often seen in mythology and such classical literature as *The Tale of Genji* which depicts the court life of more than one thousand years ago. Ancestor worship became a Japanese custom because it is the fundamental idea of Shinto which attaches importance to the concept of unity of ancestors and offspring. This was also strengthened by ancestor-worship in Buddhism. Shinto emphasizes that man can not live as an individual without any relations with other beings, alive or dead. Thus, one of the characteristics of the Japanese people is to identify themselves with a particular group and develop a strong sense of solidarity with it.

Another thing which can be learned from the divine beings in mythology is the place of an individual in society. That is, man cannot act separately from others in his society. He must make his ideas and deeds conform to those of others in a harmonious way. Actions contrary to social norms, or actions betraying friendship, are not permitted. This leads to the concepts of self-sacrifice and self-effacement, whose examples

can be easily found in events in Japanese history. But group solidarity does not deny individualism. One can develop unique values which are not in the old life-style. In this way, creative thought brings about changes, and creation of new life-styles takes place ceaselessly.

Purification. Emphasis on this can be regarded as the uniqueness of Japanese culture. The Shinto thought on man's nature is that since everyone is the child of *kami*, it is essentially good. And even in the case of the bad *kami*, he can become good by going through purification, which is the performance to cleanse evil spirits. This is another example to show that the Shinto view of life is optimistic.

An example of the act of purification in mythology is found in the story of Izanagi who purified himself at the mouth of a river on the land of death, or the polluted land. In Shinto, pollution or "sin" (its Western counterpart) can be cleansed easily by the performance of purification.

After purification, people's minds and bodies will return to the state of their original nature. In ancient times, purification was often used to prevent sickness or to cure illness. Even in modern times, when they get sick, people often go to a shrine for purification. It is also done after a funeral, for example, getting salt sprinkled on one's body before entering the house. In short, since Shinto values purity highly, it is said to begin with and end with purification. The concepts of purity and truthfulness are interrelated in Shinto. It emphasizes *makoto-no-kokoro* (heart of truthfulness) or *magokoro* (true heart), which is usually translated as sincerity, pure heart or uprightness. Purity in Shinto can be outer purity (bodily purity) or inner purity (purity of heart). If a man is truly sincere, it is considered that he will be sure to succeed in realizing a communion with the *kami*. This requires purity or uprightness of heart. In the *Gobusho* (Five Books), it is written that "to do good is to be pure; to commit evil is to be impure". To produce the pure state of mind, purification, both physical

and spiritual, is stressed in Shinto today. It is a necessary means by which a communion between *kami* and man is possible and which enables man to accept *kami*'s blessings.

Accordingly, Shinto prizes the child as having an innocent mind and values spiritual purity and brightness. The bright, pure and straight mind of man is at once the mind of the *kami*. Shinto ethics also attach importance to the sincere attitude of man in doing his best in his chosen work or in his relationship with others.

The state of harmony. Shinto emphasizes harmony between man and nature. Man could cooperate with nature. It is considered that nature confers benefits only when man works. Thus arose the traditional belief among the Japanese that it is shameful for man not to work and nature will give no benefit to him without labor.

There is no dualism between spirituality and materiality. All things are divine gifts. In Shinto mythology, there is no story of divine punishment, such as a great flood, to destroy evil human beings. Even being evil is not sin. It is like dirt which must be periodically removed because it can be a handicap to life. "Good and evil" struggle and push each other toward a state of harmony in order to attain growth and creativity. Today, harmony between man and nature has become more important. Along with air pollution, the world seems to have lost its harmony. We must not be arbitrary rulers of nature. We must feel grateful for nature and respect it. Man and nature should live with each other harmoniously and man becomes creative in this harmony, as seen in Japanese gardens.

4. THE IMPACT OF BUDDHISM ON JAPANESE MODERNIZATION

Compassion

And in that place there is no difference between gods and men, save that under the splendor of Amida even the god must bend;

and all sing the hymn of praise beginning, "O Thou Immeasurable Light"¹⁸

This is the praising of Amida Buddha's boundless compassion. Though Buddhism had to adapt itself to the Japanese environment to some degree, it is undeniable that Buddhism has left many imprints of its own on Japanese society. One of these is the implanting of the seed of compassion. Since the Kamakura period, Buddhism has penetrated into all classes of people, especially the poor and common people whose life is full of suffering. And it is well-known that Buddhism alone offers relief from human suffering. This is supported by the fact that almost all Japanese, when they encountered disasters, prefer to go to a temple. Especially, they prefer to hold a funeral in a Buddhist temple.

The teaching that we should love, help, and be kind to each other is found in the missionary work of the Johdo sects, which took Amida's boundless light of compassion especially to the wretched. When a man reflects upon his own evil nature, he finds it impossible for him to become a Buddha by his own efforts. The Johdo or the Pure Land sect showed a way for the common people, making Amida Buddha the savior of all beings. It is preached that, becoming deeply conscious of their sinfulness and stupidity, if people believe in the absolute power of Buddha and pronounce the name "Namu Amida Butsu" with the utmost sincerity, they are surely led to final enlightenment because of Amida's boundless compassion.¹⁹ When we discover that our daily life depends on others, we are thus filled with the spirit of humility and gratitude. And we realize that we ought to be doing something for the welfare of our fellow-beings.

When I ponder over the Vow which Amida made after meditating for five Kalpas, it seems as if the Vow were made for my salvation alone. How grateful I am to Amida, who thought to provide for the salvation of one so helplessly lost in sin.²⁰

All of the Buddhist leaders in Japan always preach that men should be kind to each other; they should love and not

condemn each other; they should forgive each other. We find such a compassionate spirit in all of Buddhist literature. This can be seen, for example, in the Ten Good Vows preached by Onkoh (1718-1804) of the Shingon Sect:

...love and save all living creatures with a heart of benevolence; do not deprive anyone, from the highest officials down to common men, of his proper due but let him be in his proper place; observe decorum in man-woman relationships; do not utter falsehood; do not use flowery words, which impair the virtue of adults and go against the way of heaven and earth; do not insult others; do not be avaricious; do not yield to anger, which nullifies all good deeds; do not have a wrong view.²¹

Evidently Onkoh was mainly concerned with preaching practical virtues directly. He was not concerned with metaphysical discussion, but solely emphasized moral teachings directly useful in everyday life. This is the reason the Emperor and the common people wished to listen to his preaching.

Honesty. The word "shohjiki" was originally adopted from Buddhism. It has been used since the Nara period (710-784). Though this concept may have existed in primitive Shintoism, the term itself was adopted from Buddhism along with the word "sincerity". It is generally recognized by Japanese scholars that the virtue of honesty originated from Buddhism and it became a foundation for the Japanese way of life today.

According to Shinran, a religious faith ultimately leads to honesty. This was emphasized especially by Nichiren who said that the Hokke Sutra teaches one "to be honest and avoid trickery". He even maintained that "Nichiren is the only individual who is honest both in this world and beyond this world." Later, at the beginning of the Tokugawa period, a Zen master, Suzuki Shohsan, explicitly urged that Buddhism put into practice is nothing but the virtue of honesty acted upon.

Thus, one can conclude that Buddhists in Japan (and Shintoists as well) attached great importance to honesty which

appears much in the Buddhist texts, and eventually it came to be regarded as the central virtue of the Japanese ethic. This virtue seemed to be in harmony with the Japanese concept of loyalty.²²

Endurance. Buddhism also lays emphasis on preaching that life is suffering and encouraging people to attain the state of nirvana in which all illusions are extinguished and all causes of rebirth are eliminated. There are eight kinds of suffering in this corrupt world, called *hakkū*. They are the pain of birth, old age, sickness, death, separation from loved ones, meeting with hated ones, unfulfilled desires and attachment.²³

People must endure all such worldly suffering. In Buddhist teachings, endurance is an important theme and would later pay off because of the law of impermanence. Life-suffering and impermanence endowed people with the capacity to bear all things bravely; they strengthened the capacity for endurance or patience and made them the national traits of the Japanese. Lafcadio Hearn, the writer of *Kokoro*, argues that Japan should be grateful to Buddhism which trained it to master regret, to endure pain, and to accept as an eternal law the vanishing of things loved and the tyranny of things hated.

Endurance is always followed by self-control, which became another Japanese trait. In a chapter in *From a Traveling Diary*, Hearn tells about his Japanese servant who was always happy anytime he saw him, but who concealed his pain inside which was revealed while he was sleeping.²⁴ In Japanese literature, there are many writings on people's hardship during civil or other wars. Hearn mentions the remarkable patience and endurance of sailors when their ship was destroyed by a big gun during the Sino-Japanese War (1894-5).²⁵

Well known Japanese Buddhist preachers rarely avoided hardship. Hohnen, Shinran, and Nichiren were all exiled to the remote places for their religious conviction. Hohnen, for example, at the age of seventy five, was banished to Tosa, Shikoku for four long years. But they never succumbed to the

authorities; they continued to preach Buddhism to the common and poor people in the way they understood it.

It is well known that the Zen sect has devised many difficult tests for a *unsui* (itinerant priest) to see whether or not he is qualified to enter a monastery for training. Its master refuses at first to receive the *unsui*. Sometimes he is thrown out of the gate. No matter how difficult a test may be, the aspirant must endure it. He must keep a bowing posture for two days at the front step of the entrance hall.²⁶

Diligence. Emphasis on endurance naturally attaches great importance to hard work and diligence in life. Thus Buddhist priests teach people to be diligent and work hard. Even in a monastic life, monks emphasize the importance of daily work: meditation in movement is considered a thousand times more important than meditation in stillness. Zen Buddhism has a famous motto, which states, "A day without work is a day without food." This led to the Japanese respect for labor and its products in daily life. Dohgen, for instance recognized the sacred significance of food (a product of labor) and says that each food should be called by an honorific: for example *o kayu*, not just *kayu* (rice gruel). Such an idea was also accepted in the Jōdo sect. Thus, Japanese Buddhism tends to attach religious significance to everyday life. Diligence became another most important trait of the Japanese.

Compromising Spirit. "Though the foothills are full of roads, they all give view to one moon in the sky."²⁷ This famous statement by Ikkyū clearly shows the spirit of compromise among several Buddhist sects in Japan. In his *Amida Hadaka*, he synthesizes the Zen and Pure Land sects by arguing that the attainment of rebirth in Amida's Western Paradise and the this-worldly realization of Zen *satori* are virtually one and the same. His *Bukkigun* more exciting says "The Buddhas! Great War on Hell," and intermixed Zen, Pure Land, Tendai, Hosso and Shingon ideas. Such demonstrates Ikkyū's denial of any

fundamental difference between this world and the state of enlightenment.

It is said that Buddha's compassion is unlimited, thus the Buddhists have taken various things as an object of faith. Then all beings are the objects of salvation. In connection with compassion, one should point out that compromise and tolerance are other Buddhist characteristics. Buddhism does not force a particular thing on man. Since its aim is to lead man to salvation, it does not reject different views and beliefs. Buddhism had been tolerant to different views and beliefs from its very beginning. For example, in India, Buddhism had to mix with Hinduism; in China, with Taoism; and in Japan, with Shintoism.

The animistic forms of beliefs such as a folk belief were not attacked either. Rather, steps were taken to bring about a higher religious experience by using mystic beliefs as a catalyst. However, this tolerance produced various schools of Buddhist thought in Japan.²⁸

The compromising spirit of Buddhism has also made possible the harmony between Shintoism and Buddhism since the Nara period. During the Heian period, especially in its middle part, old gods were given the title "Bodhisattva", and they were called *gongen* which means "a temporary form that manifests itself in this world". The idea started that the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas manifested themselves in Japan in the form of Japanese gods in order to lead people along the Buddha's way. It was said that Buddhas and Bodhisattvas came from their original homes to Japan to enlighten its people. The influence of Buddhism was so deep in the Heian period that people accepted the idea without question.

Even now, the god enshrined in many Shinto shrines, called Hachimangu, is called "Hachiman-Daibosatsu", whose original home is the Pure Land in Buddhism. Moreover, Amaterasu-omikami, the goddess who is said to have created Japan, is said to be the reincarnation of Bodhisattva Avalokiteshvara. The Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines cooperated with each

other to lead people spiritually. (This relationship was, however, broken up at the Meiji Restoration because of government policy.) Even now, people often have both *kamidana* and *butsudan* as family altars. The *danka* and *ujiko* are the supporters of a temple and a shrine respectively. Buddhism is now considered a completely original religion in Japan.²⁰

The sense of compromise or harmony has introduced into Japanese society the gentleness of spirit (*yawaragi*). Probably because of this, the Japanese are skilful in negotiation. Even in the realm of art, the ideal type of performance must demonstrate the spirit of harmony, as shown in the tea ceremony.

The incense burning is never strong and stimulating, but gentle and pervading. The windows and screens are another source of gentle prevailing charm, for the light admitted into the room is always soft and restful and conducive to a meditative mood. The breeze passing through the needles of the old pine tree harmoniously blends with the sizzling of the iron kettle over the fire. The environment thus reflects the personality of the one who has created it.²¹

Simplicity. Simplicity has been one of the distinguished characteristics of Japanese art. When Buddhism penetrated the masses in the Kamakura period, it was much simplified. An example is Shinran's theory of salvation, which is epitomized in the saying that "even a good man will be received into Buddha's Land, how much more a bad man!". The Johdo sect solely requires faith in Amida's compassion and uttering of "Namu Amida Butsu". The believers are told that they will be born in Amida's Pure Land or paradise. Zen Buddhism began to be popular among the samurai in the Kamakura period, and later spread to other classes. It too had an important influence on Japanese life. It attaches great importance to "simplicity", "tranquillity", "peace", "serenity", and even "aloneness".

Closely related to simplicity is the sense of loneliness. An ideal tea house is said to demonstrate the Japanese fondness for simplicity:

The tea house is a kind of a wooden hut ... surrounded by woods.

Inside the small room, with a low ceiling, we can notice an ancient-looking *kakemono* in the alcove with some handwriting or a picture of Sumie type. The flower-vase contains no more than a single stem of flowers, looked humble but enhanced in beauty and attracts the attention of the visitors. Along with the fragrance with an incense-burner, the sound of boiling water in the heavy iron kettle, a man will feel here as if he were sitting alone in a mountain-hut where a white cloud and pine music are his only consoling companions.²⁴

Thus, what is common to Zen and the art of tea is the constant attempt both make at simplification. The art of tea is the aestheticism of primitive simplicity: it is a way to come close to nature. It enables one to cast off what he thinks, or what he possesses, even life, and get back to the ultimate state of simplicity, solitariness and tranquillity.

Aesthetic Buddhism. The Japanese people are fond of nature. The Buddhist monks contributed to such taste for nature from the Kamakura period when they chose mountain areas to be their headquarters, which are an ideal setting for bringing out a poetic spirit. For example, the Zen monk poet, Saigyô (1118-90), while alone in his hermitage somewhere in the mountains, was often awakened by a shower striking against things like a roof or door, and the feeling of loneliness this setting elicits was incorporated into his poems.²⁵

D.T. Suzuki, the great Zen writer, said that, "In the worshipful attitude toward Nature there is a highly religious feeling that I should like to see in these days of science and economics and war." Though Shintoism appreciates nature and has many natural gods, it is undeniably the Buddhist monks, both in art and poetry, that introduced and strengthened the Japanese trait of worshipping the beauty and sacredness of nature. Zen Buddhism made an important contribution to aesthetic Buddhism. Zen treats nature not as an object to conquer for human service, but as a friend, or as a fellow-being who is destined like ourselves for Buddhahood. Zen also believes that nature lives in us and we in nature. As a result, Zen

aestheticism centers around simplicity, frugality, straightforwardness, and virility, though making no attempt to utilize Nature for selfish purposes. One monk said, "Heaven and earth and I are of one substance."³³

Purity. Buddhist simplicity and love of nature inevitably brought about a new concept of purity to the Japanese mind. Originally, purity meant Shinto's physical cleanliness. Buddhism then added a spiritual dimension. According to Buddhism, purity means keeping body clean and mind clean at all times. During the medieval period, the monk Myoe Shohnin was said to be the one who represented the older form of Buddhism. He was well known for precepts. His purity caused the regent Hohjoh Yasutoki to establish the fifty-one articles of the Joh'ei code which commanded the government to rule people with unselfishness.³⁴

In the famous tea ceremony which has been popular since the middle ages, fresh water is required from the garden which is kept clean and free from dust and dirt. This is an important part of bringing about spiritual purity, as explained as follows.

The spirit of cha-no-yu is to cleanse the six senses from contamination. By seeing the kakemono in the tokonoma (alcove) and the flower in the vase, one's sense of smell is cleansed...and by handling the tea utensils, one's sense of touch is cleansed. When thus all the sense organs are cleansed, the mind itself is cleansed of defilements...³⁵

Buddhist Influences on Politics. Buddhism was introduced in Japan along with the political innovations of the King Paekche of Korea. The ruling Emperor at that time admired the beauty of the Buddha statue and sutras brought from Paekche since ancient Shinto had no images. Then, when Paekche was defeated, a number of Korean Buddhist artisans fled to Japan. During the Kamakura period, Chinese Zen masters also fled to Japan because of the Mongol invasion.

It was the wish of Shohtoku Taishi (574-622), who may be

regarded as the real founder of Japanese Buddhism, to give his people a better moral code. Article II of his Seventeen-Article Constitution says:

Sincerely revere three treasures. They are Buddha, the "law", and the monastic orders, which are the final refuge of all living things and are the supreme objects of faith in all countries. But if they do not betake to the three treasures, wherewith shall their crookedness be made straight.²⁰

Prince Shohtoku found in Buddhism a universal basis for the relationship between the ruler and the ruled. This helped in achieving national unity and to subdue consciousness. Thus, Buddhism in the beginning was regarded as a guardian religion of Japan. In describing Japanese Buddhism, such words as "state religion" and "guardian religion" are often used. Emphasis was on the worldly gains and benefits to be derived from praising Buddha's virtues. It was generally believed that by worshipping Buddha, "calamities will be avoided and happiness will be brought about". Thus, Buddhism came to have an important influence upon state ceremonies. It also played an important role in the Joh'ei Code and the Rokuhara Code of the Regent Hohjoh who aimed at the relief of the poor and the welfare of the people. In Japanese Buddhism, prayer and worship are generally directed to Buddha, not only for the sake of self but also for the sake of all people and for the country as a whole, using such statements as "protecting and strengthening the country by the true Dharma".

The Buddhist role for state protection is said to be in the Sutra of the Golden Light. Especially, the Four Deva Kings (Vaisramana, Dhartarastra, Virudhaka, and Virupakas) are given the task of protecting Buddhist nations:

Fitting indeed! Fitting indeed! If there are kings who propagate and study the precious Sutra of the Golden Light, we the Four Deva Kings shall come to protect them always, and be with them at all times. Whatever the calamities may befall or curse cast upon

them, we the Four Deva Kings shall extinguish them. Eradicating all fears and pestilence from them, we shall increase their longevity, and let them share in the propitious happiness of heaven. Their hearts' desires shall be fulfilled and there shall be an outpouring of joy. We shall also make all soldiers in their countries to become strong.³⁷

Buddhist Influence on Nationalism. As the religion of the rulers, the first aim was to increase the happiness of the royal family, avoid misfortunes, and increase the welfare of the state. It was through this orientation that Japanese Buddhism became frequently associated with nationalism.

In the late eighth century, the Japanese government was forced to move the capital to Heian (Kyoto). To escape from the influence of Nara Buddhism, a new Buddhism was encouraged and it was under this political setting that the Tendai school of Saicho and the Shingon school of Kuhkai were born. Saicho frequently said that "To make people abide to the Dharma eternally is to protect the nation." He believed that the flourishing of Buddhism would bring about tranquillity to the nation. Kuhkai also advocated the principle that Buddhism pacifies and preserves the nation. Both of them preferred Mikkyo or Esoteric Buddhism, resorting to magical rites. Under their influence, Mikkyo came to enjoy the status of a state religion. During the Kamakura period, Buddhism also served the state by bridging the Shogunate in Kamakura and the court in Kyoto. Nichiren is the best example of a nationalist at this time. Since Nichiren worshipped a national god, he became closely connected with modern Japanese nationalism and Shintoism. It is interesting to note that "new religions" in the following years usually have their origin in Nichiren's Buddhism. Nichiren stubbornly denounced all other sects and said that the Hokekyo (Lotus Sutra) alone is the true teaching of Buddha, for Japan is the only land of Hokekyo. He called Japan the Divine Land, and always prayed for the peace of the land and the tranquillity of the state. During the Muromachi

period, Zen Buddhism acquired the status of a state religion. Even during the Meiji period, although Buddhism did not equal Shinto in importance, it was treated favorably by the authorities relative to other religions. Under the present Constitution, however, because of the freedom of belief, Buddhism does not enjoy any special privileges.³⁸

Buddhist Influence on Social Welfare. There is no question that Buddhism has played an important role as the supporter of social welfare since the introduction of Buddhism to Japan. In many ways, it has been the protector and reliever of the poor. For example, the monk Dohshoh, who first introduced the Hosso sect to Japan in the late seventh century, devoted himself much to the promotion of the social welfare of people all over the country. The present Uji Bridge in Uji, Kyoto, is said to have been constructed by him. Later Gyohgi who studied under Dohshoh was famous also as a social worker, following the spirit of Bodhisattva. Upon his death, he was called by the imperial order, "Gyohgi Bodhisattva".³⁹

Moreover, it is said that Buddhism stepped into a vacuum that had been created by Shinto's abhorrence of disease, physical mutilation, sight of blood, and death. Early Buddhist monks from Korea brought a knowledge of Chinese medicine (medical herbs), and spread it in Japan. However, when the Buddhist monks noticed that Shinto incantations and exorcism were the quickest way to reach the people, they also adopted magical rites. Thus, by mixing those with their knowledge of Chinese medicine, they made Buddhism a protective screen against disease and a cure for sickness. Temples have served as hospitals, and have made money from this until today. The role of a Buddhist monk as a doctor is illustrated in the famous sculptures of the Nara period. Among the large bronze images, the most impressive is the head of Buddha Yakushi, the "Buddha of Medicine", found at Kohfuku-ji in Nara in 1937. The Sutra of the Golden Light also reveals that Buddha is not only the possessor of supreme reason but also the greatest healer.

Thus, the sutra contains a chapter devoted to medicine and healing.

During the Heian and Kamakura periods, all chief monks devoted their lives to the social welfare of people. The most well known are the social activities of Zen Buddhism. Since Zen does not avoid social life, Zen literature abounds with such phrases as "in the market place", "in the middle of the cross-roads", meaning involvement in all kinds of work. As discussed earlier, Zen does not despise manual labor because "a day passed by doing nothing is a day of no-eating". The market place is where a Zen serves society, while the mountain is where a Zen trains himself to be qualified for public work. A monastery is not meant just to be a hiding place from the worries of the world; on the contrary, it is a training station where a man equips himself to do all that can possibly be done for his community. All Buddhists talk about helping people to cross the stream of birth and death.

Eisai, while attempting to propagate Zen Buddhism, argued that Zen was conducive to the promotion of general welfare. He also recommended tea to be the national beverage because of the medicinal substances in it:

The basis of preserving life is the cultivation of health, and the secret of health lies in the well-being of the five organs (liver, lungs, heart, spleen, kidney). Among these five the heart is sovereign, and to build up the heart the drinking of tea is the finest method....In the great country of China they drink tea as a result of which there is no heart trouble and people live long lives. Our country is full of sickly-looking, skinny people, and this is simply because we do not drink tea. When one is in poor spirits, one should drink tea. This will put the heart in order and dispel all illness. When the heart is vigorous, then even if the other organs are ailing, no great pain will be felt.⁴⁰

Though tea-drinking later became a ceremony, it was first introduced for the purpose of social welfare by Buddhist monks who encouraged people to drink tea in order to prolong their lives.

After a few centuries of civil war, peace returned when Tokugawa Iyeyasu reunited the country in 1603. In the Tokugawa period (1603-1867) the temple became a government institution. All families were compulsorily made to belong to a temple. They were called "danka" (the supporters of the temple) and all births, marriages, deaths, funerals, and travels were registered there. It enjoyed state protection in a way, but its power was considerably weakened by the government which devised the system of the *hatto*. The relations between the main temple and its sub-temples came to be regulated, and also the power of each sect was divided between the temple in Kyoto and the newly-built temple of the same sect in Edo (Tokyo). In short, temples came under political control and were made use of for the ruling of the land. As a result, stagnation set in, and monks became busy with artifice and their own protection.

When the civil wars ended and a long peace returned during the Pax-Tokugawa, people looked for worldly pleasures and were absorbed in material pursuit. This changed temples: they became interested in gaining followers and profits only. This in turn made people further lose faith in temples.

From the Meiji to Pacific War periods, Buddhism had to adapt itself to the policy of national unity and nationalism. A strong reaction set in against this after the war, but at present, people are beginning to appreciate Buddhism as one of the great philosophies of the East.

5. THE IMPACT OF CONFUCIANISM ON JAPANESE MODERNIZATION

Confucianism and Japanese politics. Historically, Japan did not regard Confucianism as a religion. In a way it is an ethical system, and it is more philosophical than religious. However, it has had an important impact on the Japanese way of life, and also on Japanese development, influencing modes of perception and behavior.

In Japan in the sixth and seventh centuries (as in the Sui and Tang dynasties in China), Confucianism was regarded as the way of modernizing the country. It influenced Prince Shōtoku's Seventeen-Article Constitution of 604 A.D. and the Taika Reformation. The followers of Confucianism centralized the political system. According to the Confucianist ideology, it was preferable to build a state ruled by the sovereign with the bureaucracy under his control rather than a coalition of great clans. Confucianism taught people to cherish harmony; to obey an imperial command; to act on the basis of decorum; to abandon covetousness for national possessions; to be responsible for one's duty; to attend the court with sincere intention; to have only one master or emperor; and not to be envious of others. In the earlier stages, Confucianism was partly a political ideology and the ministers of state were well versed with Confucianism.¹¹

During the Fujiwara period, in the ninth and tenth centuries, foreign cultural imports declined, and the process of Japanization of foreign cultures set in. At the same time, strong and wealthy local lords began to challenge the power of the central government. However, these lords and their samurai had a strong faith in the Confucian ethic. The virtue of loyalty was useful in binding spiritually the retainers and their lord. According to the Confucian scheme of things, society was classified into four classes: the first class was the military, and the military ethics of loyalty were followed as a model by the other classes.

In the Tokugawa period, Confucian virtues were studied widely. Neo-Confucianism or Chu-hsi Confucianism (1130-1200) of Sung China became especially influential in shaping Japanese thought and behavior. Wang Yang-Ming Confucianism was introduced, but did not become as influential as Chu-hsi Confucianism. In political outlook in this period, Japan was far closer to China than in any other period.

Bushido, which was born in feudal Japan, was first articulated by Yamaga Sokoh (1622-85), a famous Confucian scholar and leading samurai. In his view, the other classes

(farmers, artisans and merchants) were engaged in economic activities, and thus could not really follow the way of Confucianism. Thus, it was left for the samurai to uphold the way, especially in serving one's own master. This Confucian code of ethics for the samurai became known as *bushido*. The values of *bushido* were then followed by other classes who recognized the samurai as their leaders, and they became a basis for the code of national ethics.

Along with the arrival of the West, the Hirata school of National Learning aroused nationalism in the mid-nineteenth century. After the Meiji Restoration of 1868, it became national policy to enrich the nation and strengthen the military. For this purpose, the Meiji government redefined the loyalty of *bushido* from loyalty to a feudal lord to loyalty to the Emperor.¹² In the Pacific War, Japan explained that its expansion was not a selfish military acquisition, but based on Confucian moral precepts. The war was justified as follows:

The Oriental idea of love, benevolence, and mutual help condemns war for selfish ends. Japan's armament—always a "divine sword that slays not"—is dedicated to the peace of East Asia and to the welfare of the world; it is employed only against the force inimical to international justice and to the common interest of East Asia. Japan's advance, inspired by humanity, should not be confused with aggression for gain at the expense of other nations.¹³

When the Pacific War ended with the defeat of Japan, there were some people who thought that it was impossible to accuse Japanese military leaders as war-criminals because of their sincere devotion to Confucian ideals. But we must keep in mind that such men of action as General Araki Sadao or Ohkawa Shuhmei were really ultra-nationalists whose deeds were so far from Confucian ideals as to make their sincerity seem superficial. This made many people very critical of Japanese expansion.

Confucianism and Social Modernization

(a) *Educational Development.* Confucianism influenced Japanese education in many important ways. This can be seen in the fact that the Ministers of Education were all Confucianists for some time in the pre-war period. There were times when Confucianism competed with Buddhism for influence. For example, Miyoshi Kiyoyuki (847-918 A.D.), the professor of literature and rector of the university in the Fujiwara period, openly attacked Buddhist ceremonies as a waste of money and time.

Confucian education became popular in the Tokugawa period when *terakoya* schools were used to bring up children as good citizens with Confucian teaching. The Confucian scholar Hayashi Razan (1583-1657) was employed by Tokugawa Iyeyasu to be an adviser for his administration. This raised the position of Confucian scholars and contributed to the development of Confucian schools and institutions in the Tokugawa period. Generally speaking, Tokugawa Confucianists were experts on cosmology, social organization, the nature of man, and epistemology. It was then a period of "extension of knowledge" and "investigation of things", as found in the Great Learning of Confucianism.¹¹

The Chu-hsi school of Confucianism was used to convince Japanese people of the necessity of learning for social and national development. The samurai were also taught Confucianism. It led to Hirata's National Learning which opened the way for modern nationalism. Hayashi Razan explained the necessity to teach the Confucian ethic in schools as follows:

...if the way of human morality is not understood, society will be chaotic, the nation will not be at peace, and disorders will never cease... The printing and diffusion of [Confucian] books is the most important task of a benevolent government.¹²

After Commodore Perry's arrival in 1853, Western learning began to gain many adherents. Confucianists blamed the weak-

ened Tokugawa government for this, but they could not stop the increasing influence of Western learning. However, the policy of the Meiji government which replaced the Tokugawa government was "Western Science, Eastern Culture". Sakuma Shohzan (1811-64) expressed his attitude on this matter as follows:

...Now the learning of the West is science, while the teaching of Confucius is morality. Morality may be compared to food, and science may be compared to vegetables and meat which can help the savor of food. Who could say that with vegetables and meat you can destroy the essence of food?¹⁶

However, industrialization after the Meiji Restoration inevitably caused social unrest since the people's mentality could not adjust to the rise of materialism unleashed by the modernization policy. Motoda Eifu who was close to Emperor Meiji persuaded him to declare the Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890 to attack the corrupting moral influence of Westernization. After this, such Confucian virtues as loyalty and filial piety were re-emphasized in schools. The Confucian ethic was also used by the military for discipline and moral education.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, people began to talk about national unity (*kokutai*). Shibunkai, a new Confucian society, was formed in 1918 and spread its activities throughout Japan. After that, Confucianism became increasingly important in the process of modernization, especially in school curricula. Many famous Confucianists were appointed Ministers of Education. The most significant feature was the increasing tendency to associate Confucianism with the spirit of Japan and Shinto. This was unavoidable under the rise of Japanese nationalism.

From the 1930s to the end of the Pacific War, the Confucian-based moral course became compulsory in elementary and secondary schools. Loyalty and filial piety were taught as basic ideals of family life, harmony in society, and execution of one's duties to the Emperor.

Moreover, the *kokutai no hongi* (the Fundamental Principles of the Nation) was a required reading at a higher level than the secondary school. The purpose was to instill nationalism into the readers. It described loyalty and filial piety as follows:

Our national morality is founded on reverence for the deities and our ancestors, and has brought forth the fruits of the great principles of loyalty and filial piety; and filial piety becomes loyalty. Herein do loyalty and filial piety join in one and become the source of all good.¹⁵

Eventually, Confucianism came to be used to justify Japanese entry into the Pacific War; the leaders emphasized the common heritage provided by Confucianism for all Asia. In fact, Confucianism in the educational field fitted nicely to Japan's expansion policy.

(b) *Moral Development.* Confucianism helped develop the human resource needed to modernize Japan. It was used for such purpose in the sixth and seventh centuries by Prince Shōtoku and the architects of the Taika Reformation. Confucian influence was felt in the political, social and moral fields.

In the political field, the Confucian virtues of loyalty and filial piety were first used for the centralization of government under the Emperor who was made the father of a family-state. Interestingly, in feudal times, the loyalty to the Emperor was changed to the loyalty to one's immediate lord or daimyo in his domain.

Tokugawa feudalism was unique. Confucianism was then taught as a means to cultivate inwardly one's mind which was thought necessary for reinforcing his skills as a fighter. Consequently, there arose a warrior-cult, *bushido*, which extolled courage, self-discipline and asceticism.

In the social field, Chu-hsi and Wang Yang-ming schools of Confucianism played a prominent role. Chu-hsi Confucianism emphasized mental discipline as well as formality and severity. On the other hand, Wang Yang-ming Confucianism emphasized

the spirit that leads to proper behavior; single-mindedness was considered as the key to a right action. Thus, it had an important influence on the serious samurai.

Certainly, Confucianism denies Western individualism, for its teaching begins with social relations. The five relationships which were regarded as universal by Hayashi Razan are: between lord and retainer, parent and child, older children and younger, husband and wife, and friend and friend. In Japan's feudal society, the greatest importance was attached to lord-retainer and parent-child relations. Accordingly, loyalty and filial piety were emphasized whenever morality was dealt with. Hayashi justified the five relationships as the way of Heaven which always upheld the righteous.³⁶

As discussed earlier, *bushido*, or the way of the warrior, which arose in feudal times was also underlined by Confucian virtues such as loyalty to the sovereign and filial piety to the father.

Confucianism also taught that the reason for observing the five relationships correctly was to gain virtues: benevolence, righteousness, propriety, wisdom and faithfulness. During the Meiji period, there was renewed emphasis on those virtues, which the Confucian scholar Motoda Eifu characterized as a spiritual renaissance. He stressed the superiority of Confucian spiritual values over Western material ones. If Japan lacked humaneness, righteousness, loyalty and filial piety, he argued that society would be chaotic and have no peace and order.

Agitation against Christianity during the 1890s was so effective that many Confucian virtues were retained as dominant values in the moral courses in elementary and secondary schools. The Confucian virtues which received greatest emphasis were loyalty and filial piety because they were most useful in bringing about a strong feeling of nationalism.

In the Imperial Rescript on Education in 1890, loyalty headed the list of virtues, and it was followed by other Confucian virtues such as filial piety, righteousness and benevolence. These virtues were extolled to bring about the sense of national

unity. Moreover, Western individualism was said to destroy loyalty and filial piety.

In the 1930s and 1940s, Confucianism mingled well with Shinto in arousing nationalism while attempting to solve political, economic and intellectual problems in a Confucian way. Interestingly, it explained that Japanese expansion to Korea and Manchuria was to form a humanitarian state. Confucianists also idealized Japanese society, by saying that social justice, peace and harmony were achieved because everybody understood their proper positions. Confucianism became intimately associated with Japanese nationalism and eventually became an integral part of the Japanese *kokutai*:

...We do not study Confucianism for the sake of uselessly transmitting the Way of Confucius, but we must study Confucianism for the sake of creating a great Civilization.⁴⁹

As a result of such evolution, Japanese Confucianism justified the claim of the superiority of the spiritual civilization of the East and led Japanese to consider themselves as the leaders of Asian civilization. Such feeling justified Japan's intervention in neighboring countries and the commencement of the Pacific War.

6. COMPARISON BETWEEN THAILAND AND JAPAN

Generally speaking, Buddhism in Thailand seems to have been useful for development of an agricultural society since its outlook was pre-modern, mingling with Brahmanism or superstitions in remote areas. In contrast with Japanese religions, Buddhism in Thailand was rarely politically used; from time to time, the Thai leaders tried to restore old Buddhist values, instead of changing them to suit their purposes. On the other hand, Japanese Buddhism and Shinto were more consciously adapted to the new intentions of political leaders.

In general, Thai people pay more respect to Buddhism as the foundation of good deeds. There is a firm belief among them that the Buddhist way of life will fulfill their hopes in this world and the next. Thai people prefer learning the Buddhist doctrine as it is and practising it strictly in daily life. But the Japanese prefer to follow religions practically. Confucianism, Shinto and Buddhism were absorbed into Japanese culture. Their influence is, for example, manifested in the tea ceremony, the arts, and literature. Moreover, they adapted religions to their traditional culture so cleverly that even newly imported religions became eventually Japanese religions.

Buddhism in Thailand primarily teaches people to develop their own mind and spirit, emphasizing "spiritualism". It values spirit above material things and is offered as the way to get rid of suffering. In Japan, Shinto, Buddhism and Confucianism cooperated to lay the foundation for people's behavior. The common virtues center around people's duty and ethics. As a result, the Japanese are flexible and group-oriented while the Thai respect individualism and self-reliance. For example, the Japanese is well known as being a good member of a team while the Thai does poorly in team work.

Thai society holds three things sacred: the nation, religion and the king. People, monks and the king have their own duties according to Lord Buddha's teaching. In a way, Buddhism is supreme over politics. In Japan, however, since the beginning, Shinto and Buddhism were introduced along with political innovations. The Japanese rulers preferred to use religion to create a strong nation. They even destroyed Buddhist monasteries and killed monks when they thought those were in their way. Moreover, they used Shinto to create the ultra-nationalism which led to the Pacific War.

The Buddhist doctrine in Thailand can be used to encourage economic development and solve economic problems. Buddhist economics are really practical and always modern. For example, such dharma's as *iddhipada* (the four paths of accomplishment), *santosa* (satisfaction with whatever is one's

own) or the law of impermanence can bring about physically and spiritually satisfactory national development.

In Japan, since a religion was often used politically, both Shinto and Buddhism stressed people's creative power. For instance, Zen Buddhism emphasized patience and diligence to overcome obstruction. Both helped a great deal to create faith in worldly success and money-making.

Thai Buddhism bases human quality on spiritual development. It emphasizes religious precepts and doctrines. People are encouraged to get rid of or reduce their worldly ambitions and desires. As a result, they seem to have become passive toward material improvement. In comparison, the ideal world of the Japanese is colorful and exciting. People are struggling for a better material life.

7. CONCLUSION

Japanese culture is said to be patterned after Chinese culture, especially that of the Tang and Sung periods. There are two schools of thought which have influenced Japan a great deal: Buddhism (Mahayana) and Confucianism. Each, when it came to Japan, tried to enter the mind of the Japanese by blending with the native cult, Shinto. Though Shinto mixed with Buddhism fairly well and Dual Shinto developed in the early middle ages, it seemed that Shinto and Confucianism fused much better. For example, people developed strong faith in loyalty (the Confucian concept) toward the Emperor (the Shinto concept), and this helped create a strong modern state.

Unlike Shinto and Buddhism, Confucianism cannot be really called a religion because it does not teach about heaven, hell, before-life, after-life, gods or the creation of the world. Instead, it teaches about human ethics and values. Confucianism has given the Japanese social ideals; helped lay the foundation for social order, becoming an indispensable part of Japanese culture; and helped build a modern Japanese nation.

What is then the relative significance of those three main faiths in Japan? One might answer, quoting the following passage from Yoshida Shinto: "Buddhism may be the flower and fruit of all principles of order ... and Confucianism their branches and foliage, but Shinto is their root and trunk."¹⁰

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*Surichai
Wun' Gaeo*

Continuities and Discontinuities in Japanese Social Structure: Toward a Sociology of Thai Perception

2

1. INTRODUCTION

The view of foreign social structure by an outsider may be very different from what it actually is. There is very often a gap between perception and reality. This article does not aim at explaining Thai perceptions empirically. But rather, I try to depict the Thai perception of Japanese social structure from a sociology of knowledge perspective. Starting with some discussion on the key concepts employed, such as social structure, paradigm and sociology of knowledge, I try to put present-day interest in Japan in the changing context of Thai-Japanese relations, and then show some trends where there exists a perception gap which contributes to a kind of vicious circle of mutual misunderstanding. At the end, I propose some ways to overcome it.

2. A SOCIOLOGY OF KNOWLEDGE PERSPECTIVE

Sociology of knowledge is a subfield of sociology. It is a study of why a particular knowledge and perception exists in a specific social milieu at any given time. What is regarded as knowledge includes sciences, philosophy, religious beliefs and popular perceptions. The focus of inquiry accordingly is on how such particular knowledge is related to or even caused by social and

political factors. In this regard, there need to be at least three interrelated intellectual processes: first, analysis of social forms of knowledge; second, investigation into the processes by which individuals acquire knowledge; and third, analysis of the institutional organization and social distribution of knowledge. By employing a sociology of knowledge approach, it is believed that we could understand better our way of perceiving Japan and looking at ourselves, and our attitudes toward Japan.

On the process of how a particular knowledge (in this case, perceptions of Japanese social structure) develops, there are at least two major views. The first view emphasizes the accumulation of knowledge. It is the idea that each new generation receives knowledge from the previous generation; its task is to build up the stock of knowledge and pass it over to the next generation. The second view emphasizes the fact that bodies of knowledge compete with each other in a complex process where various groups with different political and economic interests advocate different interpretations of reality. The second view, rejecting development-by-accumulation, sees the prevailing body of knowledge as a reflection of social structure at a particular time. This view is closely identified with Thomas Kuhn.¹

For Kuhn, scientists always work with a paradigm which is the general way of seeing things in the world and dictates what kind of theory is acceptable. In sociology, this term has become vaguer or broader, creating different schools of sociological thought. What is central to Kuhn's theory is his attack on the then prevailing idea of scientific change as a linear process of development by accumulation. This concept of paradigm has cognitive and social aspects. As a cognitive framework, it presupposes three things: unquestioned premises, shared value commitments, and shared puzzle-solving exemplars.

The second aspect is that a paradigm presupposes social structure. What is equally important is the structure of the group which collectively holds the paradigm.² Specifically, a paradigm presupposes an integrated community of prac-

tioners. On-going puzzle solving occurs only when there is a group which shares a body of beliefs so that a consensus exists with regard to the problem investigated and methods employed. If this aspect is ignored, the social nature of a paradigm cannot be grasped.

Another concept, social structure, generally refers to such features of social organization as social institutions and status, which ensure a continuity of the patterns of behavior over time. In our paper here, however, although this interpretation is kept in mind, we will consider social structure more broadly. When we say Thai perception of Japanese social structure, we mean an image of Japanese people and their society.

3. PERCEPTION OF JAPANESE SOCIAL STRUCTURE: A PERSISTENCE OF MYTHS

For contemporary Thailand, its relations with Japan have become complex and special, with no parallels in its history. In the last few years we have been witnessing many levels of exchange between the two countries.

A casual observer would detect two extreme views of Japanese society and things related to it. As no one could easily ignore the existence of "Japan" in Thai realities these days, consciously or not, people tend to fall into either of the two extremes. On one extreme, Japan, with its society, economy, and people, is seen as an aggressor, a source of danger; this is the negative pole. On the other extreme, Japan is viewed as an excellent model for development or its culture as a wonderful culture, being much closer to ours than the Western ones. In short, Thai perception of Japanese social structure could be put into either the positive or negative poles.

The above-mentioned polar grouping is, however, too simplistic, particularly in view of the reality of the perception of the Thai public and intellectuals. As Likhit Dhiravegin notes, "Japanese studies or studies about Japan should not be ... only

for praising Japan nor for blaming her, but for getting the real picture without biases".³ Here we could include at least three major types of perception of Japan.

1. Japan as a model of development;
2. Japan as the source of trouble for Thailand to tackle;
3. The Japanese as inevitable Asian friends and human

beings.

In the cognitive and ideological aspects of Thai interests in the Japanese and their society, we can detect different orientations. To try to categorize cognitive processes is also to grasp their underlying paradigms. At least we can point out the following three major orientations.

1. Emulation of Japan. The economic miracle of the last few decades and the strength of the Japanese economy immediately suggest the desirability of "looking East", which implies a "studying up" approach to development by following this seemingly close but actually distant "Asian" model. Even some secondary and high school texts idealize successful Japan to inspire our younger generations, while neglecting the social and moral costs involved in the process of development.

2. Watchfulness, suspicion and fear of domination. Much of this is due to the experience of the Pacific War and more recently, of Japan's economic domination. This is in contrast to the emulation orientation, in which feelings of empathy are not much involved. This can at times result in "unpredictable reactions" towards Japan or the Japanese. It can also strengthen a sense of collective competition with Japan, sometimes promoted in terms of why-can't-we logic.

3. Interest in Japan as a land of people, not particularly of a special tribe or race. In this, there is eagerness to understand the Japanese people as they are, appreciate their ideals, and understand their success and failure, happiness and suffering. This kind of orientation is very much needed. The approach is not "studying-up" a country but studying fellow human beings of a different culture.

After a little more than a decade of research and studies on

Japan and a few decades of economic and cultural relationships with Japan, the present knowledge of Japan in Thailand seems to divide into two streams. On the one hand, Japanese courses are taught largely as insulated subjects at social sciences faculties and development study programs in universities. It is only at times that they are related to problem solving and policy issues. On the other hand, there is a knowledge of Japan coming from non-university information sources, for example, the Japanese government-operated Japan Information Center, JETRO, commercial and journalistic sources. The information from these sources has resulted in a peculiar contrast. While many books and articles on Japanese economic success and how to emulate Japan became available, more and more people are getting to know *ikebana*, and even *ekiden* (a long-distance relay race). On the other hand, there still persist myths and stereotypes about Japanese culture and society; perception gaps exist and at times even get larger.

In this respect, we can point out at least three major take-it-for-granted myths. They are as follows:

1. The myth of consensus. Sathian Pantarangsi's *Bushido* has been a long best-seller and is now in seventh printing. Wilas Maniwat talks about *sangkom maengmum* (spider society) in his *Yipun Mai* (New Japan). Kosa Ariya talks about "ant society". They view Japan as a country of total harmony and conformity, using the obsolete "national character" concept. A large part of it is just a caricature.

2. The myth of Japan as a ready-made model to emulate. Because of economic success, many people and companies are ready to accept the Japanese methods and institutions which might promote their interests as the lessons for Thailand to adopt. Young pupils are ordered to walk to and from school in an orderly line following a group leader with a flag. Q.C.C. training and other secrets of Japanese management are also promoted all over the country.

3. The myth of historical similarities in initial conditions for the modernization race. There have been always some kinds of

comparison between the two societies. It is said that at the time of the coming of the Western imperialism, both were major rice-growing societies, primarily Buddhist, and monarchical in political structure. Both remained politically independent of the West, and the Meiji Restoration and the Chulalongkorn's Chakri Reformation roughly coincided. This line of thought usually starts with take-it-for-granted facts, and is followed by such characteristic questions as "How did Japan make it, while Siam did not?", "Why was Thailand unable to catch up with Japan?", and "Why did Thailand develop much more slowly than Japan?"

It is not uncommon to find such a myth in operation in Thailand. For example, a former President of Thai Scientists Association said:

Although Japan opened her doors for Western civilization around the same time as Thailand, i.e., during the reign of King Chulalongkorn, it has now progressed so far ahead of Thailand and reached such a high level that we cannot even take it as our model.... During the reign of King Chulalongkorn, we stood on the same level as Japan. But now, she has left us so far behind.¹

4. CRITICAL EVALUATION OF THE MYTHS

The consensus myth contained in such phrases as "Japan Inc.", "economic animals", "samurai with a brief case" usually project the image of Japanese as a group-oriented, conformist and undifferentiated people. Those phrases, some of which have a wide currency, are no more than caricatures. They are usually one-sided presentations. To understand another society in that way makes us intellectually very static, and barren at the end, not seeing the whole process involving, for examples, conflict, competition, and strong horizontal social links.

This kind of perception contributes greatly to a kind of vicious circle of misunderstandings, sometimes resulting in

unpredictable reactions. It is antithetical to a knowledge which creates a more sustainable relationship between the two countries.

Furthermore, a myth often starts with the present Japanese development success. There are almost "classic explanations" for it. They emphasize orderliness, diligence, good discipline, punctuality (for example, in the electric train schedule), etc. Undoubtedly, Japan has those social attributes, but there are problems in such an application-oriented line of thought; they are as follows.

Firstly, it often falls into the logical pitfall of *post hoc, ergo propter hoc* arguments by taking whatever happens before to be the causes of what comes after.

Secondly, the question "Why did Japan become successful?" is in itself a value-loaded one, i.e., from a particular set of values, say, economic growth. To recognize what values are implicitly held is crucial for our understanding of Japanese experience in its specific and universal sense.

Thirdly, in suggesting learning from Japan, learning what aspect of Japan from what period of its history is rarely made clear.

As a forerunner in development, there is no doubt that there are many things in Japan that can be lessons for Thailand. The problem, however, lies in the temptation of accepting them without considering their specific contexts; this could become very harmful and self-defeating.

As for the myth of historical similarities in the race for modernization, problems arise because of the way questions are posed. The first is the assumption of linear directionality. To progress along in one direction is considered necessary, inevitable and desirable. The second is the assumption of similar initial conditions at the point of departure for modernization. It is considered that Japan and Thailand (Siam) were structurally similar and were at the same level of development to start with. Furthermore, it is believed that the problems faced by Japan and Thailand were the same.

5. CONCLUDING REMARKS: OVERCOMING STEREOTYPED PERCEPTIONS

Despite the concern of the well-informed people and scholars of both countries, the vicious circle of perception gaps and mutual misunderstandings is very hard to overcome. But there are a few things we can try.

1. There is a clear need for a paradigmatic consideration of our Japanese studies. It seems appropriate for us to understand the present status of our Japanese studies and the social and institutional factors involved.

2. There is a need for promoting variations in approaching Japan, its people and society. Prasert Yamklungfung's characterization of the Japanese economy as "Confucian capitalism" offers a new perspective. Pensri Kanchononmai helps to bring us closer to the complexity of Japanese religions. Kosa Ariya brings up competition and cooperation in understanding Japanese social structure. Phra Rajavaramuni, a most well-known Buddhist scholar of Thailand, without belittling Japanese success, points out certain dangers in its collective competitive spirit.

3. There needs to be a closer relationship between Japanese studies and the social sciences in order to put the former firmly on an academic and intellectual basis, so that the stereotyped or idiosyncratic way of understanding Japan occurs less frequently. The less the phenomena of isolated "bonsai type of studies" occurs, the better. More frequent dialogues between Japanese area studies and social science disciplines are called for.

4. It should be recognized that a knowledge of another society could be applied only after reaching a certain level. There should be all-out efforts to correct and avoid the temptation to get ready-made answers from take-it-for-granted models, as has been warned by Phra Rajavaramuni over and over again.⁵ Furthermore, the case of Japanese studies presents to us the difficulty of distinguishing valid knowledge from value-judgments. Especially, with reference to development impli-

cations, one should make clear one's values while retaining scientific methodologies.

There is a clear need for a cross-cultural research team to carry out more empirical but historically-based studies.

A meaningful understanding of the Japanese and their society should not be seen as being out there, ready-made, and waiting only for us to discover and learn. Rather I see a meaningful understanding as a natural enemy of the dichotomous way of thinking, e.g. we-against-them. A meaningful understanding is the process of stimulating creativity in the theory and praxis of development and thus helping us to explore the possible, potential, and desirable world of ours.

NOTES

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Thai Perceptions of Japanese Modernization: Education

3

1. FROM THE AMERICAN MODEL TO THE JAPANESE MODEL

Until recently, for about three decades, if we had asked people in education (or even in business and politics) which country should be the model for the modernization of Thailand, almost all of them would have said that it should be the United States. The most important reason for this is that the country produces high quality products and possesses high technology. Thai leaders were willing to follow an American model in politics, the economy and education. A large number of American experts came to Thailand and also many Thai professionals went to America. As a result, an American model was intensively studied and adopted in various fields.

After only about two decades, what was believed to be a model worth emulating did not turn out to be right for Thailand. It developed very much in a materialistic way; cities grew (for example Bangkok enormously expanded); numerous factories were built; and concrete buildings rose everywhere. But these developments brought about problems. For instance, human minds became more evil; many rural areas were left behind, while cities became more prosperous; the level of pollution increased; slums grew rapidly; the poor remained poor while the rich became richer. Even though these problems did not cause political instability, they became social problems and disturbed the consciences of Thai people.

As a result, confidence in an American model declined, and at the same time America also began lowering its profile in Thailand. In its place, Japan emerged as a new model. At present, Thai education pays more attention to Japan than to America. The number of books and articles in journals on Japan has increased very rapidly. By making inquiries at the Chulalongkorn University Book Center, I learned that books on Japan are selling well, especially those on quality control.

For a study of journals, I would like to concentrate on journals in education. An informal survey of three educational journals – *Khuru Prithad Journal*, *Khurusaad Journal*, and the *Journal of the Office of the National Education Commission* shows that from 1967 to 1977 there were not many articles on Japan, but that in the following decade (1978–87), there were more than 20 articles on Japan. These figures clearly reflect the interest of Thai people and academics in Japan.

I want to discuss briefly my experience with graduate students in the courses that I taught in two universities: "Philosophical Foundations of Education" at Kasetsart University, and "College Teaching" at Chulalongkorn University. Most of the students were administrators or instructors in educational institutions in various parts of the country. They had passed a highly competitive examination to be admitted. I asked which country they would consider to be a model for modernization of Thailand. The answers are shown on Table 1.

Table 1. *Answers to "Which country should be a model for Thailand?"*

A. Graduate students at Chulalongkorn University (N=28)	B. Graduate students at Kasetsart University (N=88)
Country (Frequency)/Reasons	Country (Frequency)/Reasons
Japan (16)/discipline, diligence, endurance, devotion, technology	Japan (41)/identity, patriotism, alertness, endurance, national strength, achieve- ment orientation.

Table 1 (Continued)

A. Graduate students at Chulalongkorn University (N=28)	B. Graduate students at Kasetsart University (N=88)
West Germany (3)/high quality of people, honesty, sincerity, discipline, not taking advantage of others	Switzerland (11)/peacefulness, pleasant atmosphere for living, neutral foreign policy, not taking advantage of others
United States (2)/freedom, mobility, equality, justice, original technology.	United Kingdom (9)/discipline, peacefulness.
Singapore (2)/discipline, similarity between the people of Singapore and Thailand	United States(8)/materialistic comfort, freedom of thought, discipline
Switzerland, Israel, New Zealand, and other countries (1 each)	Thailand (8)/identity, Buddhism Israel, Korea, China, Singapore New Zealand, Norway, Taiwan, Australia (1 each).

The data above indicate that a fairly large number of graduate students I taught, who will play significant roles in Thai society in the future, consider that Japan can be a model of modernization, especially in the aspects of modernization which emphasize national identity, endurance, national strength, alertness, patriotism, and achievement orientation.

2. THE ATTITUDES OF THAI PEOPLE TOWARDS JAPANESE EDUCATION

In general, we can say that most Thai people and students do not know much about education in Japan; they knew much more about American education during three decades of intensive interest in the United States. This can be seen from a small number of books and articles on education in Japan and the curricula in teacher education institutions in Thailand.

At Chulalongkorn University, there is not much interest in comparative education. Most of the interest there is of individuals rather than of groups or associations. Seminars on Japanese education are not frequent, especially compared with those on American education. The Program for Comparative and International Education at the Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University has thought about organizing regular seminars on Japan, but there has been no strong support.

There are still few books which would interest people in general. People interested in Japanese education will pick up two to three translations such as *Education and Japan's Modernization* by Makoto Aso and Ikuo Amano, *Higher Education in Japan: Its Take-off and Crash* by Nagai Michio and *Philosophy and Education in Japan* by a Thai instructor who got an IATSS Forum scholarship to study the Japanese philosophy of education at Osaka University. However, from my experience at teacher education institutions, I feel that those books have not yet had much influence upon the education of Thailand.

My survey of articles about Japanese education in the past five years shows that they can be divided into three categories. Table 2 shows the major contents of each of the three categories of articles.

Table 2: Articles on Japanese Education

Articles expressing opinions (3) ¹	Articles presenting data (3) ²	Translations (5) ³
1. Education instills a rational habit	Concise history of education	1. Japanese education policy in 1977
2. Education develops discipline	(a) Tokugawa period: education for the nobility, samurai and common people (shijuku, terakoya, etc.)	2. Educational achievements are due to parents' attention

Table 2 (Continued)

Articles expressing opinions (3) ¹	Articles presenting data (3) ²	Translations(5) ³
3. Education develops a sense of responsibility	(b) Meiji period: the Fundamental Code of Education of 1872	3. The value of education
4. Education promotes national unity	(c) Modern period: the Fundamental Law of Education of 1947	4. The common standard
5. Education instills love for one's country	(d) The present state of Japanese education: yohchien (kindergarten), shohgakko (elementary school), chuhgakkoh (junior high school), kohtohgakko (senior high school), daigaku (university)	5. Instructors are important
6. Japan's level of education is high		6. Emphasis on rules and discipline
7. Instructors are respected		7. Emphasis on particular matters
8. Education contributes to the advancement of the country		8. Encouragement of recitation/extra tuition
9. There are bad effects in the competitive university entrance examination system		9. Violence in a classroom
		10. Benefits for the rich
		11. Bad effects of examinations
		12. Selective education

Notes

1. "How does Japan Train People?" (in Thai), *Midtra Khruu* (Teacher's Friend), September 15, 1983. "Japan and National Development" (in Thai), *Midtra Khruu*, June 15, 1984; "Japan's Examination Hell" (in Thai), *Isaan Pnithad* (Northeastern Review), September 1981.
2. "The Japanese Educational System" (in Thai), *Khuru Pnithad* (Teacher Review) March 1985, "The Development of Education in Japan" (in Thai), in Chaiwat Khamchoo ed., *Jipun Sygsaa*, Bangkok: East Asian Institute, Chulalongkorn University 1987, "Education System in Japan" (in Thai), *ibid.*
3. "Japanese Educational Policy" (in Thai), *Waarasaan Kaansygsaa Henchaad* (Journal of Office of the National Education Commission), June-July 1983; "Education in Japan" (in Thai), *Waarasaan Kaansygsaa Henchaad*, February-March 1985; "Should We Imitate Him?" (in Thai) *Khuru Pnithad*, October 1984, "The New Ideas of Education in Japan" (in Thai), *Saan Phadthanaa Lagsaad* (Curriculum Development Review), November 1984, "Behind the Accomplishments of Japanese Education" (in Thai), *Ramkhamhaeng Journal*, Special Issue No. 2, 1983.

The data above indicate clearly that Thai educationists' attitudes towards education in Japan are positive. They also have a great deal of data on education in Japan. The translation articles point out the positive sides of Japanese education as well as its weaknesses. The weaknesses are presented with the expectation that they will be corrected in the future.

Most Thai educationists, at least the group who write articles on Japan and those I talked to, perceive Japanese education as having many achievements, particularly in developing people to possess desirable human qualities, such as perseverance, hard work, seriousness, discipline, sticking to rules and regulations, devotion to the group, love for the country and respect for elders. On the other hand, Thai educationists do not attach much importance to the advancement of science and technology in Japan. The obvious problems of education in Japan are competition, especially relating to entrance examinations, and violence caused by the tension which accompanies such a competitive system.

Despite an increasing amount of information on Japanese education, it has not had much effect on Thailand. Thai people are not certain whether they are really satisfied with the image of Japan they have come to form. But is it an image that they have come to form after knowing Japan well? It is the weak point of Thai people to assume that they know and understand Japan without carefully considering the relations between education and society.

3. EDUCATION FOR MODERNIZATION: THE POLICY OF COMPLETE ENGAGEMENT

It is generally accepted that modern Japan has had two periods of growth: the Meiji Era and the postwar period. The way Japan pushed modernization in these two periods might be different, but the following are some points that I found interesting.

Meiji Era	After World War II
1. Influence of Western ideas	1. Influence of American ideas
2. Intensive and serious studies of the West by sending people abroad for study and inviting foreigners to teach	2. Studies of the American system, having American experts to help set up a new institutional system
3. Efforts to catch up with Western countries and eventually overtake them	3. Attempts to fully utilize new American systems
4. Adherence to the policy of imitation	4. Creation of a system similar to that of America
5. Modernization of science and technology	5. Industrial modernization

Modernization in these two periods resulted in growth and expansion. The modernization of the Meiji Era brought about military expansion and invasion leading to the Pacific War. The

modernization in the postwar period led to economic expansion and the current enormous economic invasion of Thailand by Japan. The expansion and invasion of both periods are based on industrial modernization. It would have been difficult for Japan to plunge into war with a poorly developed weapons industry and it would have been impossible to have economic growth if industry had not been strong. Thus, the Japanese path of industrialization can be an interesting model, being very much different from that in the West. The following is a table of differences between the two.

Western Path	Japanese Path
1. Emphasis on individuals: each individual enjoyed freedom of thought	1. Emphasis on the same model and standard
2. Emphasis on equal participation	2. Emphasis on seniority
3. Promotion of individual experiments and researches	3. Experiments and researches under the supervision of a leader
4. Beginning with own inventions and institutional innovations	4. Emphasis on imitations and following examples
5. Emphasis on general learning and experiments	5. Emphasis on particular learning and modernization

The Western path mentioned above is the model of modernization based on initiative and creative thinking. It is the model for overcoming individual differences and allowing the development of individuality. This type of society can better develop new products and make new discoveries which are indispensable for creating the foundation of the industrial society we know. America is an example of such a society.

After society creates such foundation for development, education is organized on a similar basis. It emphasizes individual differences, individual development, democratic cooperation and equality, in order to encourage creativity. This has been a

model which developing countries have studied and followed for a long time, for about thirty years in the case of Thailand.

The Japanese path is the opposite. Both social system and system of education are very much different from the Western systems. The modernization characteristics of the Japanese path are translated into education in the following way.

Japanese Modernization Characteristics	Japanese Education
1. Emphasis on the same standard	Schools in Japan are organized and operated on the same model and the same standard throughout the country.
2. Emphasis on seniority	Teachers are respected. Seniority is still significant among the students and juniors must be obedient.
3. Emphasis on the supervision of experiments and researches	Studies and researches are usually conducted by a group under the supervision of a leader, for example, a professor at a national university often acts as such a leader in scientific researches.
4. Emphasis on imitating and following an example	There is strong emphasis on reciting, introduction of examples from abroad, translation of foreign text-books and employment of foreigners
5. Emphasis on development in a particular field	Emphasis is on passing examination to enter a particular institution rather than on getting to know one's field well or becoming a man.

The above characterizations are brief, but will not be too far from reality. Looking into the relations between education and modernization, which are widely publicized in the guideline of

education modernization (which has been influenced by the West), we should first point out that we *should not* promote science and technology to the extent that they will bring about such a large and progressive industry as in Japan today.

Thus, what is the foundation for Japanese achievements which have been extensively talked about? Some people call it Japanism. In my perception, these achievements depended on the policy of complete engagement which has the following outstanding features.

1. Policy of Advancement. To "advance" is to go forward, quickly if possible; to look into the future; to catch up with the West and eventually overtake it; to get educated to defeat others; to work competitively in a company; to establish a company to make it the best; and to do everything possible for Japan. I consider that Japanese society is a society with targets; Japanese leaders have clear directions and look forward all the time.

2. Ambitious Leaders. The word "ambition" means looking far ahead and trying to get there. This can be realized only with hard work and dedication, especially in education and daily life.

3. Doing the Utmost. This is a particular feature of Japanese society. In education especially, I see Japanese instructors do their utmost even to the extent of getting exhausted.

4. Squeezing Out Reasoning and Intelligence. In Thai the words *khan*, *khen*, and *riid* mean squeezing something out, and what comes out does not resemble what it is squeezed from. Education of Japan has a feature comparable to those Thai words, and squeezes out reasoning and intelligence from students. But it neglects personal freedom and individual differences, harming their full personality development.

5. Creating Common Conscience. Education both at and outside school in Japan promotes the feeling of social togetherness, and this makes realistic the policy of advancement and ambitious leaders' commands to achieve good results. Consequently, the role of groups and associations is very important. The sense of belonging (to such associations as teachers' associations and university alumni associations), loyalty, devotion, patriotism and love for their country, which have been extensively talked about, are good examples of the Japanese feeling of social togetherness.

6. Creating the Power to Persevere. At school, if a child is bullied, he is taught not to show his suffering. If he does show it, it brings shame on him, and he loses face. He takes it stoically, not responding with violence and aggressiveness. But when he sees someone bullied, he shows sympathy and offers assistance to him. This stoic, and at the same time, compassionate attitude prevails among students in Japanese schools, demonstrating the effectiveness of Japanese education on character formation.

4. MAJOR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND SOME FAILURES IN JAPANESE EDUCATION

Before discussing the achievements and failures of Japanese education, I would like the reader to read the views expressed by three Thai educationists. The first is an instructor in a private higher education institution; the second is an officer in the Ministry of Education; and the third is a counseling instructor and a free-lance writer.

I appreciate the achievements Japan has made after the damage and destruction of World War II. Japan has modernized in every aspect including the economy and education (the only exception is politics; it is not completely modernized). This

shows that Japan emphasized modernization of people. Without people who have knowledge, responsibility, and real determination, modernization cannot be achieved rapidly and successfully. Many countries attempt to imitate Japan, but cannot do so because people are underdeveloped. Japan is now a modernized country, so it has to expand its role and responsibility to the world, for it cannot live alone. Otherwise, it will face international sanctions.

2 The modernization of Japan has brought about the advancement of science and technology. Japan has done better in development than other countries in the world, but the outcome of such economic success may leave Japan alone, without any sincere ally. Japan's only friends will be those who look for materialistic benefits. Japan has put emphasis on improving the quality of people which is a good policy and should be adopted in Thailand. However, a lot of social problems were created in Japan, being an industrial society with capitalism as its economic system. If they are not solved satisfactorily, the country will be in trouble.

3 Japan is moving in a worrisome direction. In the last ten years, results have been very satisfactory — they have emphasized good nutrition, discipline and love for their country, but they have not emphasized moral principles, nor love for other than their parents and nation. Instead, they have emphasized competition which would produce good results in a short run. In this way, they quickly uplifted themselves and became equal to Western countries. But in the long run, their mental health will suffer from too much competition and their mind will not be in peace. They will get depressed if they lose in competition over an extended period of time.

Their way of life will become closer to that of a machine; it will lack real spiritual tranquillity. The pressures the system produces may explode and produce various negative consequences. The system of education in Japan at present is not up

to what is expected of a leading country. It emphasizes only the competition for entering a few good educational institutions. Preparation for the competition starts before entering a kindergarten. Teaching stresses learning through memorization. However, one good thing about Japanese education is that instructors' welfare has been well taken care of; good people have been attracted to become instructors – better than possible under the present system in Thailand.

It can be said that these three pieces of writing reflect the representative views of Thai educationists because many instructors at graduate schools of education I know have opinions similar to those above.

The purposes of Japanese education are not too difficult to see and understand for Japanese as well as outsiders. It promotes the industrial system by creating a good foundation for knowledge and technology; it is made available as broadly as possible, and tries to educate every child well. At present almost 100 per cent of junior high school graduates go to senior high schools, and almost 40 per cent of their graduates go to university. Education at each level serves students efficiently, responding well to the social requirements mandated by the overriding objective of modernization. So, one can ask how much autonomous leadership education has. Hasn't it always been a follower? Since it did not have independent leadership, serving as an instrument of society, educationists could not develop their own identities. The weak points of Japanese education arose under this setting.

These weak points of Japanese education came into existence as a mirror image of its strong points.

Strong Points	Weak Points
1. Creation of clever leaders	1. Inequality in education/ classification of people into categories

(Continued)

Strong Points	Weak Points
2. Strictness, and discipline - instructors are serious - parents are strict - discipline is emphasized in school	1.2 High competition/ too serious teaching/ those who fail are stigmatized and fall into a lower class immediately 1.3 Looking down upon each other/despising others as fools/ respect for the clever/ Thai people in general feel that Japanese (not a few of them) admire Westerners but do not respect Asians 2.1 High tension/one-way relation/physical punishment 2.2 Suicide/violence/ bullying classmates 2.3 Emphasis on individual survival/ forced response under pressing conditions
3. The same standard and model - uniform syllabus - emphasis on training - emphasis on groupism	3.1 Individual differences do not receive much attention 3.2 Children's walking manners do not have individual characteristics - they just follow the others
4. Response to the industrial system - emphasis on diligence - up-to-date information and technology - systematic way of life	4.1 Creating people who think and do things the same way/ individual differences are not promoted 4.2 Organizing education like a factory, with a fixed model/ instructors and students are cogs in a machine 4.3 Teaching of moral principles and ethics is not emphasized 4.4 Too little appreciation of humanity and too much emphasis on progress

(Continued)

Strong Points	Weak Points
	4.5 Too little emphasis on sympathy and too much concern with industrial growth and profit

Those educational problems were bound to arise. Some Japanese educationists have not been happy about them, and are trying to do something. But can they succeed in solving them or reducing their severity? This is a big challenge facing them in the future.

5. THE PATH TO THE FUTURE: TOWARD A HARMONIZED EDUCATION FOR MANKIND

Many new ideas have arisen in education in recent years. For example, there is more than one (Western) model for developing creative thinking; the way to teach discipline to children need not be dictated by the needs of those in power (as is done in some Eastern European countries); the industrial system can grow outside the West, and for this, it is important to fully utilize human potential. According to these new ideas, Japan has become an alternative model for various countries, especially those in Asia, in the same way that the People's Republic of China used to be in the last decade.

But the people in Thailand who argue for the Japanese model are a little hesitant, at least in my opinion, since behind this model there is some extremism. If we look into the past, we find that there is no model which lasts long and eternally. The United Kingdom and France used to have many colonies and virtually ruled the world. But colonialism collapsed. The United States used to be a world policeman, but now it has to play safe to survive. Several industrial countries thought they could

benefit from taking care of the world, but history taught them that it is not possible.

What is certain then? There may be different answers, but I believe that education should aim at balance, harmony, and unity. Education in the future should be based on a balance between individual and whole, harmony of material things and mind, and the unity of mankind. Education should teach the dignity of man in the middle of the storm of materialism and commercialism which is rapidly engulfing us today.

The One-and-a-half Party System and the Halfway Democracy: A Comparative Perspective

1. INTRODUCTION

The Japanese democratic political system has been characterized for decades by the dominance of the Liberal Democratic Party with the other parties remaining only on the periphery.¹ Thus came the term one-and-a-half party system. In Thailand, after two great political events, the October 14 1973 student-led mass uprising in which the military regime was overthrown and the October 6 1976 massacre at Thammasat University (to be followed by a military *coup d'état* the same evening) marking a departure from a full-fledged democracy, the political system has evolved and is known as halfway democracy. The halfway democracy or demi-democracy is characterized by the elected House of representatives and the appointed Senate with a prime minister nominated with the consensus of the political parties which form a coalition. The prime minister does not have to run for election.²

Both the Japanese political system of one party dominance and the halfway democracy of Thailand are deviant cases of Western democracy. If anything, the two cases only buttress the fact that traditional culture and values in the two societies have persisted and that an alien political system imposed upon them has given birth to a hybrid system. Thus, one sees the combination or in some cases the juxtaposition of old and new elements in a society which has imported a political system and

installed it as a functioning system for that society. It is similar to a fruit-bearing tree of a temperate zone which does not grow or bear fruit when it is transplanted in the soil of a tropical zone, or in the more lucky case it may bear fruit but the fruit will be different, either with a reduction in size or change in taste. Unless more research is done by bio-technicians or genetic engineers to make the plant suit the new environment, the plant will remain unhealthy. The same can be said about a political system. Some modification is necessary if a new system is to function more effectively or the environment will have to be changed in such a way that it becomes more congenial to the new system. As long as the political environment remains traditional, democracy, which is widely regarded as the ideal political system of a "modern" era, will stumble along in such societies as Japan and Thailand.

There are two distinctive common features in the Japanese and Thai democracies. The first is the dominance of personalities. In both systems, there are certain individuals around whom their followers rally. As a result, these individuals serve as their patrons. They either form cliques or factions (*habatsu*) in a political party (in the case of Japan), or form groups in a political party and sometimes form new parties (in the case of Thailand). The preponderance of cliques, factions or groups in the political parties of both countries merits an examination.

The other salient feature is the role of money in politics. To be sure, one can argue that democracy and capitalism are Siamese twins. As such, the influence of money in political processes is inevitable. Business enterprises will seek to protect or promote their interests by developing political connections through financial contributions to politicians and political parties. Thus, the role of money or business people in political processes is a topic which has to be discussed.

This short paper will examine those two common features of the Japanese and Thai democracies. A comparative study should make us understand better the structure and processes of the political systems of the two countries.

2. THE TRADITIONAL FOUNDATION OF CLIQUE POLITICS AND GROUP POLITICS

The Habatsu. At the outset, it must be pointed out that the word clique is used to refer to a faction in the Japanese political system, which is known as *habatsu* in Japanese, while the word group is used to refer to what is called *kloom* in Thai. The word *kloom* is used to refer to an association of people which is formed more loosely than in a clique. It is more ephemeral because it is based more heavily on short-term interests than a Japanese *habatsu*, which is sometimes held together by common beliefs and inspires a tint of loyalty among its members.

Feudalistic elements still remain in the hierarchical social structure and personalistic social relationships of Japan today. For example, a person who is higher up in the social hierarchy is given deference and respect by those below him. A type of superior-inferior relation is the *oyabun-kobun* (parent-child) relation. It is an unequal relationship, with important political implications. It has given rise to a political grouping in which the leader receives respect, deference and obedience from the followers. This particularistic relationship, reminiscent of the feudalistic emotional ties of the followers to their leader, has dominated the social relations of Japan, and influenced its political processes. Indeed, this *oyabun-kobun* relationship is pervasive. As Chie Nakane expounded:

Most Japanese, whatever their status and occupation, are involved in *oyabun-kobun* relationships. There was an excellent example in a recent election for Governor of Tokyo. When the successful candidate, a well-known professor of economics, was asked to stand as the joint candidate of the Socialist and Communist Parties his first act was to run to his former teacher (*oyabun*), a very well-known economist almost eighty years old, to take advice on whether he should accept the offer or not. The press took this action as natural and anticipated the meeting of two professors; the following day's newspapers carried pictures of the meeting and stressed the importance of the opinion of the *oyabun*

professor. The *oyabun-kobun* relationship comes into being through one's occupational training and activities, and carries social and personal implications, appearing symbolically at the critical moments in a man's life. Indeed, the *oyabun* plays the role of the father, as the term suggests. And it is by no means exceptional for the *oyabun* to play a more important role than the father.⁵

Given the social relationship, it is not surprising that the *oyabun* and *kobun* exist in Japan's political organizations. In fact, the *oyabun-kobun* relationship serves as the foundation for *habatsu* politics today. If one probes deeper, one will find that the origin of the *oyabun-kobun* relationship dates back to the Japanese "feudal" period in which the head of a commune is called *oya* while the members were called *ko*, meaning workers. The commune is patterned after a "household" or *ie* which formed the basis of the *han* or *fief* during the Tokugawa era. But for some reasons, the terms *oya* and *ko* have evolved to mean parent and child. As Tetsuo Najita put it:

The social principle governing this definition of the daimyo's domain was that of the "house" or *ie*. According to the pioneering anthropologists on this subject, Aruga Kizaemon and Yanagida Kunio, the *ie* was grounded in ancient history. It was a multi-kinship functional commune whose head (called *oya* or *oyakata*) symbolized power and talent and assumed responsibility for the prosperity and continuity of the entire group. The members were called *ko*, meaning "workers". Although at some undetermined point *oya* and *ko* came to mean parent and child, they continued to retain a functional nonkinship meaning as well, which helps to explain the virtually undifferentiated character of "loyalty to lord" (*chu*) and "piety to parent" (*ko*), both of which were linked in a single compound.⁶

The bond between *oya* and *ko* which in simple parlance denotes love and compassion existing between parent and child has evolved into a bond of loyalty between the head of a clique and his followers. As such, one would be advised to be careful when trying to highlight the *oyabun-kobun* relationship as that

of parent and child. The closest meaning will be a nonkinship relationship of the lord and his followers.

But is loyalty the only bond of relationship? To be sure one cannot forget the fact that the essence of politics is, regardless of a system, resources allocation. In the case of Japan's *habatsu*, it is also a two-way relationship. An ambitious politician who aspires to become a prime minister has to be able to give something to his followers in return: a position or a handsome sum of money (a point to be later discussed).

In the Liberal Democratic Party, there are altogether five major cliques. These are the cliques of Takeshita (the present prime minister), Miyazawa, Abe, Nakasone and Kohmoto. There are also a number of smaller cliques. The members of the cliques who belong to the House of Representatives or the House of Councillors number as follows: Takeshita 120, Miyazawa 88, Abe 86, Nakasone 87, Kohmoto 30. Needless to say, what constitutes a clique is the *oyabun-kobun* social principle. But one would expect that political interests play a role here. However, as will be pointed out later, compared with the *kloom* in the Thai case, the tie between the leader of a Japanese clique and his followers seem to be stronger.

That the structure of *habatsu* in Japanese politics and the *modus operandi* of a supposedly modern political system incorporates a traditional pattern of "feudalistic" relationships reflects the socio-political reality of the country. The critics who view the phenomenon of clique politics and one-party dominance as deviations are suffering from Western biases. A more correct view would be to see Japanese politics as a blending of tradition and modernity. Indeed, one cannot forget the fact that the existing democratic framework in Japan was forced upon it during the occupation period by the Supreme Command for the Allied Powers (SCAP), more specifically General D. MacArthur. As one would expect, an imported political system cannot grow on alien soil. Thus, while the *gunbatsu* was replaced by democracy, the traditional values and principles have given rise to *habatsu* politics. Even *zaibatsu*.

which were dissolved by SCAP, has re-emerged in the form of business groups, serving a similar purpose, a point to be taken up again later on.

Instead of viewing *habatsu* as a deviation, can one argue that apart from being a reflection of the socio-political reality, it is a product of Japanese eclectic ingenuity which produced modification of a modern organizational structure with traditional values and institutions?⁶ The case of halfway democracy in Thailand may be viewed in a similar vein.

Kloom in Thai Political Parties. The *kloom* or group in a Thai political party is based upon the Thai behavior pattern of rallying around a certain individual who has the quality of being a patron. The followers or the clients who hold on to the patron do it out of a mixture of motives, both conscious and unconscious. The conscious part involves practical considerations. It is a simple game of power in which one can attain certain political objectives if one sides with the right man, most especially the person whose star is rising. The unconscious part is sometimes abstract. It reflects the psychological need of many Thais to belong to a hierarchical relationship. This need probably has its roots in the age-old patron-client relationship.

As in the case of Japan, an early political system in Thailand was marked by a parent-child relationship. The Sukhothai Kingdom has been characterized by scholars as a system based upon a patriarchal ruler or *pho khun*.⁷ Indeed, this is a common phenomenon in a traditional society in which the basic unit, the family, is expanded to serve as a model government for a larger unit, a village, city or kingdom. Similarly, the imperial system of China was patterned after the family system. It was a microcosm of the family. In the case of Thai society during the Sukhothai period, especially in its early years, the political system was a patriarchal kingship. It was later weakened by the Dhamma-raja concept in which the King was to possess the quality of Buddha. In the Ayudhya period, the Devaraja cult in which the ruler was viewed as a demi-God, a divine being who

descended to rule over the kingdom, further diluted the influence of patriarchal rule. However, it has been regarded as traditional Thai and is still referred to as a benevolent system in which the ruler considers the people as his children. That such a concept still shows its influence on Thai society can be noted from the fact that Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat whose dictatorial power lasted from 1958 until his death in 1963, based his legitimacy and administrative philosophy on the *pho kun* concept. But as in the Japanese case, one should not jump to the conclusion that it was a parent-child relationship in a pure form. The word *pho* literally means a father but the word *khun* means a ruler. As such it was a combination of father and ruler, or a governing power with the compassionate sentiments of a father toward his children. But it is commonly known that in Thai political culture a ruler is supposed to exercise both *pra kun* (kindness as would be shown by a father to his child) and *pra dej* (power as would be shown by a ruler to the ruled).⁸

Nevertheless, one should note that the concept of treating people as a father treats his children was reflected in Field Marshal Sarit's statement to a group of township (*tambol*) headmen in 1960:

...*Kamnan* (*tambol* headmen) are important persons in our administrative system. They are close to people and serve as the intimate link between people and government. They are appointed with consent of people. The *Kamnan* serve to integrate the traditional political system with that of the new system. The Thai traditional political system is patterned upon a father-child relationship. We call our King *Pho Kun* meaning the highest father. We then have *Pho Muang* which means the provincial governor, down to *Pho Ban* to refer to the *Kamnan* and Village headmen and last, *Pho Ruean* to refer to a family head.

Although at the present time, administrative systems are called by names other than the term *Pho*, I still cling to the traditional principle of the father-child relationship. I have often said that the nation is like a big family and the ruler is none other than the head of family who takes people under his rule as his children and grand-children. He has to be kind and benevolent, seeing to it that the welfare of people is taken care of the same

way he would take care of his children and grand-children, I myself have taken this principle as the guideline for my administration of the country. Whenever a calamity strikes, I will inspect the situation on the spot. I try to get close to people, taking care of their welfare the same way I take care of my family....⁹

The question is whether this concept will be antithetical to democratic development. To be sure, the new social and economic conditions brought about by the transformation of the Thai economy (the emergence of a new middle class) have made an open or semi-open political system a prerequisite. However, the idea of a patriarchal ruler who protects the welfare of people still persists. One often hears of visits by important figures to slums to distribute gifts to the poor. The underlying attitude of the bureaucrats from Bangkok who are in charge of provincial administration, especially at the township (*tambol*) and village level, still remains largely patriarchal.

Such a concept is at a societal level. This is the distinction between the Thai and Japanese cultures. In the case of Japanese culture, the *oyabun-kobun* relationship works at two levels; societal and personal. The *pho khun* concept in Thailand applies only to the societal or polity level. The only phenomenon which arises at the personal level can be seen, for example, during the present General Prem Tinsulanonda's premiership. General Prem has been referred to as *pa* (meaning father) while his protégés have been referred to as *luk-pa* (children of *pa*). But it would be a great mistake to identify it with the Japanese *oyabun-kobun*. What is happening in Thailand for the moment stems from the idiosyncrasy of General Prem, and the phenomenon is expected to be ephemeral.

What underlies the *kloom* in a political party then? As already mentioned, the head of a *kloom* is a patron while his followers are his clients. This relationship has its root in the traditional Thai socio-political principle based upon the *moolnai-prai* system, a brief discussion of which is now in order.¹⁰

The Ayudhya societal system consisted of four major institutions. These four underlay the social system of the Ayudhya and Bangkok periods until the reforms of King Chulalongkorn. Those institutions have been important in shaping Thai society.

Monarchy was the core institution during the Ayudhya period. Two other supportive institutions were the *sakdi na* and *prai* systems. The fourth was the religions which included animism, Theravada Buddhism and Brahmanism. These religious faiths, apart from serving to teach people meritorious deeds and to provide them with spiritual sanctuary, also served to legitimize and sanctify the monarchical institution. For example, the Devaraja cult and the Dhamma-raja concept had roots in religions. As such they also served the function of a political ideology. As for the *sakdi na* system, it started as a system of land allotment according to social status and bureaucratic ranks, but it evolved into a social status system based on land allotment (but not necessarily having the exact amount of land stated by the number of *sakdi na*). Thus, a *phraya* with a *sakdi na* of 10,000 rai means that his social status is 10,000 rai (2.5 rai=one acre), though he might actually possess only a few thousand rai of land.

Closely related to the *sakdi na* was the *prai* system. All males with a height of 2 *sok* and one *keub* (approximately 125 centimeters) measuring from the shoulder down would be drafted into corvées. There were two types of *prai* — *prai luang* or royal *prai* and *prai som* or *prai sasom kamlang*, literally meaning reserved *prai*. *Prai luang* were registered under the King and governmental departments while *prai som* were registered under ennobled officials and members of the royal family. All ennobled officials and the members of the royal family were the *moolnai* or lords to whom a certain number of *prai* belonged. These *prai*, unless they paid taxes in cash or in kind (if they did, they become *prai seuy*), would render their services every alternate month, toiling in paddy fields or helping the master in some other ways. While in service, they

had to bring their own food. How the *moolnai* treated prai depended on his luck and how he behaved himself. When the *moolnai* died, he might be assigned to a new *moolnai*. Until the age of 60, he had to remain under a *moolnai*. To seek a patron who would be kind to him and who would benefit him materially was thus important. He would also have to know how to behave so that the *moolnai* would treat him well. The *moolnai* was sometimes referred to as *chaonai* meaning also a lord or master. When combined with the word *khun*, the ruler, we have a combined term of *chaokhun moonlai*. The term carries a conservative bureaucratic tone. Under the set-up of today, two other terms are used for a leader: *chaonai* and *lukpee*. *Chaonai* is the old *sakdi na* term meaning a lord or master while *lukpee* means a leader or a superior. The term *lukpee* is somewhat folksy and free of feudal connotations. In the private sector, the bureaucracy and political parties, the two terms are still used.

The patron-client relationship serves as the basis of the *kloom* or group in a political party in Thailand today. The *kloom* is formed when a certain individual is chosen as a *lukpee*. He is usually a man of financial means with some political clout or seniority. He forms a group in the party and bargains with the support of his followers. In the Democrat Party, for example, three groups are observed. The first group is led by Pichai Rattakun, the deputy prime minister. Pichai owns business enterprises and has had considerable political experiences. He is presently the chairman of the party. Then there is a dissident group which is led by Chalermphan Srivikorn and Veera Musikapong. But Veera has now disengaged somewhat from political activities because of the guilty verdict on the *lèse majesté* charge which had been brought against him. This group is known as the "January 10 Group". There is the third group led by Chaun Leekphai, present Speaker of the House of Representatives. His group is supposed to be moderate. In the Chart Thai Party, there are two groups; that of General Pramarn Adireksarn and that of General Chartchai Choonhavan. It is also

believed that Banharn Silapa-archa, the party's secretary-general, has a considerable number of followers in the Chart Thai Party.

When one studies intensively the *habatsu* and the *kloom*, one gets an impression that the Japanese group is more cohesive and established. The Thai one is situational and is based more on immediate considerations. Shifts in alliance often take place. Indeed, some observers compare Thai politicians to chameleons.

Another point of difference is that in the Thai grouping, there is a greater element of individualism. The leader of a *kloom* often leaves the party and forms a new party of his own. Many parties in Thailand are spin-offs of the Democrat Party. Such individuals as Samak Sundaravej, the leader of the Thai Citizen Party and Kukrit Pramoj, the former leader of the Social Action Party, were once members of the Democrat Party. Also, some of those new parties headed by the *kloom* leaders can be considered as one-man parties and in terms of ownership structure, are similar to solely owned business enterprises.¹¹

3. THE ROLE OF MONEY AND "DEMOCRACY" IN JAPAN AND THAILAND

It is often argued that democracy and capitalism are intertwined. As such, one can expect that money will play a big role in democracy, especially during elections. But this argument is countered by the example of India. Despite its poorer economy, vote-buying in India is not as rampant as in Thailand.

In the case of Japan, it is an established fact that there is a close linkage between politics and business. In the case of Thailand, money dumping and vote buying during elections are an open secret. There is also an increasing number of businessmen getting involved in Thai politics.

The close link between politics, business and the bureaucracy is said to be the secret of Japan's economic success. But

in our study, we are more interested in the linkage between money and politics, especially in the election of high-ranking officials.

The linkage discussed above started with the prewar period in which the *zaibatsu* played an important role in policy formulation. After the war, the *zaibatsu* were dissolved by the SCAP as part of its policy to destroy the bases for Japan's prewar militarism. However, as expected, institutions die hard. In the place of *zaibatsu*, Japan today has business groups which function in a similar way. It can be said that Japan's economic success has been contingent upon the coordination of business, bureaucracy and politics. Organized business, party government, and administrative bureaucracy are the three legs of the tripod on which the Japanese political system rests. They are interdependent. As Chitoshi Yanaga put it:

Organized business initiates and proposes policies. It sponsors and supports the party in power. The party in turn forms the government and selects candidates for the Diet, who function as legitimizers of government policy. The administrative bureaucracy proposes drafts, modifies, interprets, and implements policies under the surveillance of the party and the government. The most important functions of the bureaucracy involve the protection and promotion of business and industry, on whose behalf it formulates long-term economic plans, makes forecasts, sets goals, and establishes priorities. Organized business provides members for the cabinet, the Diet, and government advisory councils and administrative commissions. It hires retired government officials as corporation executives and trade association officials.

In return for political contributions by organized business, the party in power strives to create a political climate conducive to carrying on profitable business enterprises.¹²

Comparing the spectacle of Japanese politics to drama productions with the business community, ruling party, and administrative bureaucracy, as its participants, Yanaga writes as follows.

Organized business is the playwright as well as the financier. The ruling party as the producer, director, and stage manager, adapts

the play and makes sure that the production meets with approval of the playwright-financier. It is also responsible for picking the leading actors, who must be *persona grata* to the financier. The administrative bureaucracy utilizes its expertise in looking after the technical details as well as the business of the production.¹³

The most well-known example of money as the springboard for a high political position is that of the former prime minister, Kakuei Tanaka. His campaign funds came from transport and construction firms, many of which were owned by him. It was the obvious case of a close relationship between money and the attainment of a high political position.¹⁴

To have a glimpse of the role of money in Japanese politics, one may examine the way fund-raising is done and the amount of money involved. In June 1985 Susumu Nikaido, Tanaka's chosen successor, threw a party for fund raising at a Tokyo hotel for which 35,000 tickets were sold at ¥35,000 each. The total rake-in was ¥1.057 billion. The rival "new leaders" did likewise. Shintaro Abe and Kiichi Miyazawa were able to raise ¥1.2 billion and ¥1 billion respectively. In 1987 Noboru Takeshita held a party at the Phoenix Room of the Tokyo Prince Hotel. More than 70,000 tickets were sold for a haul of ¥2.1 billion with 13,000 people attending.¹⁵ Mr. Rei Shiratori, a professor at Dokkyo University, estimated that in 1986 about 300 billion yen (US\$2.1 billion) was raised for political purposes.¹⁶

What are the big sums of money for? It is observed that they are used as election campaign expenses, contributions to constituent's family funerals, and entertainments at expensive restaurants or golf courses. There is also a murky area of political pay-offs that seldom come to light.¹⁷

As Japan is one of the most economically advanced countries, it is natural that its focal policy is concerned with industrial production and international trade. As we have seen, there is a triangular relationship between business, the bureaucracy, and political parties, and it is only natural that money from business firms plays an important role in Japanese politics. If anything, one can argue that what is happening in Japan is only a reflection of bourgeois politics which accompanies

democracy and capitalism. Indeed, "Tanaka-era money politics" epitomized Japan's money-dominated, clique laden, one-and-a-half party system.

If "money politics" characterize Japanese democracy, it is "business politics" which starts to loom large on the Thai scene. In the existing halfway democracy characterized by an appointed Senate, a prime minister who does not have to run for election and an elected House of Representatives, there emerged a larger number of politicians with business backgrounds. This has been brought about because economic development, which started during the regime of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat in the late 1950s, has produced a relatively large capitalist class. Many second or third generation successful Sino-Thai businessmen are involved in politics. Their businesses are no longer simple trading shops but multi-million enterprises. As a result, they have to get involved in politics in order to protect or enhance their business interests. Judging from the number of those with business backgrounds who hold cabinet or party executive posts, we can say that an increasing number of businessmen have become involved in the running of government. Indeed, there are three ways Thai businessmen can influence government decisions.

First, they can give financial support to politicians or parties before or during election campaigns, thereby building up political connections. Second, they can support political parties openly and assert themselves by becoming executives of a political party (chairman, vice chairman, secretary general, etc.), thus participating in policy formulation directly. Third, they can run for election, and, if successful, through their financial means, become Cabinet members.¹⁸

There are two negative effects in the participation of businessmen in Thai politics.

As a businessman in Thailand is likely to run his political organization in the same manner he runs his company, it is complained by some members of the House of Representatives that the M.P.s who are on the pay-roll of a party boss to add to their meager income from their office, have wound up

becoming his employees. They have lost their independence and bargaining power. But more important is the fact that many politicians run for office to use it for business gains. Indeed, it was shocking to many people to hear the statement made publicly by the secretary-general of a political party who joined a coalition government that before that the party had suffered financially as an opposition party. The implication was that after joining the government, the party started making up for past financial losses. In Thai politics, vote buying and donation of a big sum of money for a cabinet post as a *quid pro quo* are an open secret. Obtaining commission fees for a government license for a large project is also known as a not-uncommon practice. As a result, some military officers who are not happy with the situation have characterized the existing political process as "business politics". It is the Thai counterpart of Japanese "money politics", both reflecting the importance of money in "democratic" political processes.

4. CONCLUSION

This comparative study of the one-and-a-half party system of Japan and the halfway democracy of Thailand have led to the following points:

First, the *habatsu*, which came about as the result of the legacy of traditional values in contemporary Japan, and which date back to the feudal period, still dominate party politics in Japan. If anything, the existence of multiple cliques has prevented a single clique from monopolizing power within a party and at the same time has kept the party stable. In the Thai case, the emergence of *kloom* seems to reflect the patron-client relationship which has its roots in the *moonlai-prai* social principle of the feudal *sakdi na* system. But one would suspect that political interests play a more important role in the formation of *kloom*. Contrary to the Japanese case in which *habatsu* keep a party stable, the Thai case is just the opposite.

The emergence of a *kloom*, especially with a dissident orientation, works to undermine party stability. In the case of a party which is part of the coalition government, it works to undermine government stability. The "January 10 Group" of the Democratic Party is a case in point. Moreover, in the context of Thai political culture marked by the dominance of the bureaucracy which has placed great emphasis on orderliness and harmony, the emergence of *kloom* also works to undermine the legitimacy of democracy.

Second, the role of money in the "democratic" process is important in both Japanese and Thai cases. "Money politics" in Japan and "business politics" in Thailand reflect the political reality of a society marked by a semi-open political system and a capitalist-oriented economy. The influence (direct or indirect) of business on political processes is inevitable directly or indirectly. The question is whether democratic processes will turn out to be dysfunctional over time. In other word, will "democracy" work only for the benefit of the bourgeoisie?

Third, related to the second point, is the fact that interest groups are important in this kind of set-up. Only the group with bargaining power can have a share in a limited pie. In the case of Japan, the farmers get their share by giving support to the Liberal Democratic Party at the time of elections. But in Thailand, the farmers are poorly organized and have little bargaining power. They are at a disadvantage in promoting their interests compared to their Japanese counterparts.

Fourth, the Japanese case seems to demonstrate a much higher degree of institutionalization. The system is rather stable and succession processes are generally smooth. In the Thai case, we are not yet sure whether political stability will be maintained and whether power transfer will be peaceful.

In conclusion, one can argue that both Thai and Japanese cases serve as good examples of a political system which has been grafted on a traditional society which is undergoing modernization processes. In other words, in contrast to Western countries where the growth of capitalism and develop-

ment of democratic political processes came together in the course of historical evolution, Japan and Thailand imported an external model and adjusted it to their socio-economic conditions. As a result, there is a mixture of traditional and modern (alien) elements. The existence of *habatsu* and *kloom* in their political parties respectively is the proof of the legacy of the "feudalistic" values and patterns of behavior, while the influence of money and business on the political processes is the reflection of the growth of capitalism and its accompanying materialistic culture. Meanwhile democratic processes deviate from the original model in Western European countries and the United States. The one-and-a-half party system in Japan and halfway democracy in Thailand arose because the democratic political development of both cultures have not yet been completed. Their political systems can best be characterized as a feudal-capitalistic, semi-democracy.

Table 1. *The Background of the 29th-47th Cabinet Ministers*

Cabinet of	1 The Number of Cabinet Ministers	2 The Number of Cabinet Ministers with Business Background	%
29th Sarit Thanarat	15	-	-
30th Thanom Kittikachorn	20	-	-
31st Thanom Kittikachorn	26	-	-
32nd Thanom Kittikachorn	28	2	7.1
33rd Sanya Dharmasakti	29	2	6.9
34th Sanya Dharmasakti	31	1	3.2
35th Seni Pramoj	31	6	19.4
36th Kukrit Pramoj	26	8	30.8
37th Seni Pramoj	36	11	30.6
38th Seni Pramoj	34	11	32.4
39th Thanin Kraivichien	18	1	5.6
40th Kriangsak Chomanand	34	3	8.8
41st Kriangsak Chomanand	45	3	6.7
42nd Kriangsak Chomanand	23	2	8.7
43rd Prem Tinsulanonda	38	13	34.2
44th Prem Tinsulanonda	39	8	20.5

Table I (Continued)

Cabinet of	1	2	%
	The Number of Cabinet Ministers	The Number of Cabinet Ministers with Business Background	
45th Prem Tinsulanonda	40	14	35.0
46th Prem Tinsulanonda	44	16	36.3
47th Prem Tinsulanonda	45	17	37.8

Sources: Anothai Watanaporn, ed., *Karnmuang Thai Yookmai* (Thai Politics in the Modern Era). Bangkok, Prae Pittaya, 1984, p. 144, Table 6 and *Siam Almanac B.E. 2529*, Matichon, August 12, 1986, pp. 117-120.

Note: The 35th-38th cabinets were the cabinets of the democratic period following the October 14, 1973 uprising. The 43rd-47th cabinets were those of halfway democracy under General Prem.

Table II. The Names of Party Executives and Their Background/Business Affiliations

Party	Leader	Position	Background/ Business Affiliation
1. Social Action	1. A.C.M. Sidhi Savetsila	Chairman	Government Official
	2. Pol. Capt. Surat Osathanukroh	Deputy Chairman	Big Business
	3. Chaisin Ruengkarnchanaset	Deputy Chairman	Big Business
	4. Pong Sarasin	Secretary-General	Big Business
	5. Udorn Tantisoonthorn	Deputy Secretary-General	Local Business
	6. Prayoon Chindasilp	Executive Committee Member	Financier
	7. Prairoj Chaiyaporn	Executive Committee Member	Big Business

Table II (Continued)

Party	Leader	Position	Background/ Business Affiliation
2. Chart Thai	1. Maj. Gen. Pramarn Adireksarn	Advisor	Industrialist
	2. Maj. Gen. Chartchai Chunhawan	Chairman	Business
	3. Sa-ard Piyawan	Deputy Chairman	Local Business
	4. Banharn Silpa-archa	Secretary- General	Business
	5. Surapan Chinawat	Deputy Secretary- General	Local Business/ Big Business
	6. Paibul Panichchewa	Executive Committee Member	Big Business
	7. Udom Witayasirinant	Executive Committee Member	Big Business
3. United	1. Boonteng Tongswat	Chairman	Lawyer
	2. Col. Pol Reongprasertvit	Advisor	Big Business
	3. Tamchai Kambhato	Secretary- General	Banker
	4. Kosol Krairik	Executive Committee Member	Business
	5. Sawat Kamprakob	Executive Committee Member	Lawyer
	6. Prem Malakul Na Ayutthaya	Deputy Secretary- General	Business
4. National Democ- racy	1. Gen. Kriangsak Chornanand	Chairman	Military
	2. Ob Wasurat	Deputy Chairman	Business

Table II (Continued)

Party	Leader	Position	Background/ Business Affiliation
	3. Prayot Neungchamnon	Deputy Chairman	Business
	4. Bansombool Mitpakdi	Deputy Chairman	Business
	5. Sompong Amornwiwat	Deputy Secretary General	Big Business
	6. Boonthom Yenmanoch	Executive Committee Member	Big Business
	7. Suraphol Asawasirayothin	Executive Committee Member	Exporter
5. Democrat	1. Bhichai Rattakul 2. Lek Nana	Chairman Deputy Chairman	Business Business
	3. Chalermbhang Srivikorn	Deputy Chairman	Big Business
	4. Sanoh Pungsanoh	Deputy Chairman	Local Business
6. Thai Citizen	1. Samak Sundaravej 2. Olark Payakkhaporn	Chairman Deputy Secretary- General	Journalist Business
	3. Yingphan Manasikarn	Executive Committee Member	Business
	4. Udomsak Uch-chin	Executive Committee Member	Business
7. Com- munity Action	1. Boonchu Rotchanasathian 2. Darong Singtothong	Chairman Deputy Chairman	Banker Local Business

Table II (Continued)

Party	Leader	Position	Background/ Business Affiliation
	3. Rawat Sirinukul	Deputy Secretary- General	Local Business
	4. Surasak Chaowisit	Deputy Secretary- General	Business
8 Ruam Thai	1. Narong Wongwan	Chairman	Big Business
	2. Kiatchai Chaichaovarat	Executive Committee Member	Local Business
	3. Sornsat Ratanasak	Executive Committee Member	Local Business
	4. Sa-nga Vacharaporn	Executive Committee Member	Local Business
9. Rassa- dorn	1. Gen. Tienchai Srisampan	Chairman	Former Deputy Commander- in-Chief of the Army
	2. Gen. Mana Ratanakoset	Secretary- General	Former Assistant Commander- in-Chief of the Army
	3. Wisarn Pataraprasit	Deputy Chairman	Big Business
	4. Boontheng Pholpanich	Executive Committee Member	Business

NOTES

1. LDP has enjoyed the monopoly of governing Japan since 1955. The change of a prime minister has been only the change of a clique leader, not the change of a party leader.
2. For further discussion on halfway democracy, see Likhit Dhiravegin, *Demi-democracy: Thai Politics in Transition*, Research Report Submitted to the Volkswagen Foundation, 1987.
3. Chie Nakane, *Japanese Society*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1970, p. 43.
4. Tetsuo Najita, *Japan: The Intellectual Foundations of Modern Japanese Politics*, Chicago, The University of Chicago Press, 1974, pp. 23-4.
5. For discussion on the *gunbatsu*, see Y.M. Zhukov, *The Rise and Fall of the Gunbatsu*, Moscow, Progress Publishers, 1975.
6. For discussion on the blending of traditional values with modern organizational set-up, see, for example, Thomas P. Rohlen, *For Harmony and Strength*, Berkeley, University of California Press, 1974.
7. Thak Chaloemtiarana, *Thailand: The Politics and Despotic Paternalism*, Bangkok, Thammasat University Press, 1979; Toru Yano, "Sarit and Thailand's Pro-American Policy", *The Developing Economies*, VI, September 1968.
8. See Likhit Dhiravegin, *Thai Politics: Selected Aspects of Development and Change*, Bangkok, Tri-Sciences Publishing House, 1985, p. 308.
9. Thak Chaloemtiarana, op. cit., p. 166; Dhiravegin (1987), op. cit., pp. 281-2.
10. Dhiravegin (1987), op. cit., pp. 59-85.
11. Likhit Dhiravegin, "Karnmuang Thai Nai Tosawat Lang 6 Tulakom 2519", (The One Decade of Thai Politics After October 6, B.E. 2519), Bangkok, Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University, 1987.
12. Chitoshi Yanaga, *Big Business in Japanese Politics*, New Haven, Yale University Press, 1968, p. 28.

13. Ibid., p. 29.
14. See "Kakuei Tanaka and His Money-Making Way in Politics", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, August 27 1987.
15. Ibid.
16. "Japan Chooses Its Leader the Old-Fashioned Way", *Bangkok Post*, September 22 1987.
17. Ibid.
18. Dhiravegin(1987), op. cit., pp. 401-404.

1. INTRODUCTION

Japanese investment has been a powerful force in the economic development of Thailand. The inflow of direct investment from Japan increased from US\$18.4 million (424.2 million baht) in 1976 to US\$112.2 million in 1984 (2,588.1 million baht).¹ In parallel with this, trade between these two countries also increased substantially.

Japanese companies have been considered as a model by Thai managers because of their success and perceived efficiency. There has been great interest in the management practices of Japanese companies in Thailand, with the intention of adopting some of these practices in Thai companies. To further the understanding of the management practices of Japanese companies in Thailand, it is necessary to study the basic principles of Japanese management and to observe how these basic principles have been adapted and modified for use in Thailand.

In order to uncover what features of Japanese management are unique and what features are universal, and what modifications are necessary when implemented in other countries, Kono suggested two methods.² The first method is to observe the practices of Japanese subsidiaries in foreign countries; and the second is to look at the practices of well managed

companies and try to find the similarities and differences that exist between Japanese companies and other companies. In this study the former approach will be used.

The conceptual framework of the "true" Japanese management style in contrast to the Japanese management style practiced in Thailand is derived from *Theory Z* by Ouchi.³ The framework incorporates the following:

1. lifetime employment;
2. slow evaluation and promotion;
3. non-specialized career paths;
4. informal control;
5. collective decision making;
6. collective responsibility;
7. wholistic concern.

Research Questions. Specifically, the questions addressed by this study are:

- a) What is the Japanese management style as practised in Thailand?
- b) To what extent do Thai workers accept the Japanese management style and why (Japanese managers' views)

The Rationale of the Study. The study is intended to provide an in-depth investigation into changes in the Japanese management style as it is transferred overseas. In particular, it focuses on the Japanese management style as it is implemented in Japanese multinational corporations (JMNCs) in Thailand. The rationale for the study is twofold:

- a) *The increasing importance of Japanese management.* During the past decade, the topic of Japanese management has become the focus of attention among academics and practitioners alike. The successful performance of the JMNCs is undeniably the main reason. The success is attributed mainly to a unique style and system of operation, one that is based on a unique set of ideologies. Much research has been conducted on

the differences between Japanese and Western management styles as well as the adaptation of Japanese management to foreign environments.¹

b) *The increasing importance of Japanese management in Thailand.* The study will be useful in developing training programs in Thailand and improving management style, and shed light upon certain factors that the Thai government can exploit to attract more investment from Japan.

Assumptions and Limitations of the Research. In this research a Japanese respondent was asked to compare the management practices of his Thai company with those practised in his parent company in Japan. The underlying assumption on which the research was based is that the management practices in the parent either have not changed since the time the respondent was working there, or alternatively in cases where changes have been made, he is fully aware of those changes. The respondent making comparison is likely to base his judgment on his interpretation, knowledge, and experiences with these practices. The difference in the positions held by the respondent in the two organizations may imply a possible difference in the level of knowledge of management practices in the two organizations.

2. JAPANESE MANAGEMENT STYLE

Lifetime Employment (Shuhshin Koyoh). According to Ouchi, the most important characteristic of a Japanese business organization is lifetime employment.² It is the rubric under which many facets of Japanese life and work are integrated.

Lifetime employment means that right after leaving a school a person commits his career to the company he chooses. The company in turn agrees to provide him with work and income throughout his career.

Slow Evaluation and Promotion. This characteristic of Japanese management is also known as seniority-based wages/seniority-based promotion. The seniority system is the practice whereby wages increase and positions advance as the years of service increase. Wages are lowest at the time of entering a company after school, then increase slowly but steadily over time until retirement. This system guarantees that wages fit the life cycle of an employee. However, not everybody's salary increases at the same pace. Recently, in addition to schooling and seniority, skill and ability have come to be taken into consideration. Even if the length of service is long, wages are not increased at the former rate. But typically, pay is increased periodically, and if company performance is not extremely poor, wages are raised annually, usually in April. Besides the monthly wages, bonuses are paid two or three times a year to all full-time employees.

Non-Specialized Career Paths. Non-specialized career paths refer to the development of a career in the company through job rotation. Job rotation is the practice of changing work assignments periodically. It is not limited to the elite, but all levels of employees go through it.² It is geared toward developing all-around ability rather than specialized ability.

Implicit Control Mechanism. The Japanese rarely work according to a detailed manual. Instructions from the superior are mostly basic and general. In doing a job, the subordinate has to know clearly the policy of the company and to consider various conditions such as the superior's way of thinking, and the actions taken by related departments. In Japanese companies, many people work together in a large, unpartitioned office. The large room facilitates communication, and promotes information sharing among the workers. This large office room, shared by executives and ordinary workers, is one of the unique characteristics of a Japanese company.

Japanese companies emphasize harmony or *wa*. It is impor-

tant for promoting cooperation, trust, warmth, morale and hard work among the workers. Harmony entails ambiguity. The Japanese have a multitude of ways of saying "No". They employ ambiguity and indirect means instead of an outright refusal. Differences tend to be worked out through long discussions and attempts to understand the viewpoints of others.

Collective Decision Making (also called consensus or participatory decision making or the *ringi* system). The *ringi* system is unique to a Japanese corporation. According to Yoshino, *ringi* means "submitting a proposal to one's superior and receiving his approval", and *gi* means "deliberations and decisions".⁷ The written proposal itself is called the *ringisho*. This is a document describing a planned action that circulates in related sections so that each section head can note his approval with his name stamp. The responsibility for writing the proposal often falls on a younger member of the department directly involved. The young employee is not likely to know all there is to know about the subject, and so is forced to consult with others to be sure that a complete and acceptable proposal is prepared. Decision making by consensus (*ringi*) can be viewed as a process of depersonalization. No individual member of the organization can make decisions by himself and no decision can be reached until all the members involved agree. The *ringi* system is group-oriented and consensus-seeking in the sense that the various interest groups which may be affected by the decision, as well as those who must implement it, participate in making the decision.⁸

Collective Responsibility. Japanese management avoids individual accountability and credit in preference for collective or group responsibility and rewards.⁹ The system places heavy emphasis on teamwork and cooperation. Decisions are made collectively, and therefore consensus is a natural way of arriving at a collective sharing of responsibility.

Wholistic Concern. In Japan, since government social welfare is inadequate, the private sector has its own insurance schemes. Many companies have established company-housing loans, annuities, and mutual aid societies to maintain and improve the standards of living of their workers.

Ouchi pointed out that wholistic orientation emphasizes and fosters an egalitarian atmosphere.¹⁰ This atmosphere implies the presence of trust, under which employees can work autonomously without close supervision.

The objective of wholistic concern is to let employees know they count. This system stresses the importance of shaping and influencing employees' attitudes toward the job. Consensus decision making (which is a bottom-up process) also supports wholistic orientation by demonstrating that the company values the employees' contribution to decision making.

According to Kono, in the Japanese management system, employees are respected as partners of the organization.¹¹ Takeuchi also indicates that in Japan, a company president pays more attention to employees than to stockholders.¹² This is reflected in a poll in which the presidents of leading companies were asked for whom they were responsible as a chief executive. Eighty-five per cent of them answered that they were primarily responsible for their employees.

3. RESEARCH DESIGN

In order to answer the research problems set out in Section 1, questionnaires were sent to the managers of selected JMNCs. This was followed by personal interviews to seek the details and further explanation of some points in the questionnaire.

Population. The universe of this study consists of all JMNCs which:

- have been operating in Thailand no less than three years,
- have a staff of no less than 10 employees, and
- have at least one Japanese national in management.

In 1986, 215 JMNCs were members of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce in Thailand. The number of qualified JMNCs was 163 companies.

The JMNCs in Thailand can be divided into two main groups: 1. wholly-owned Japanese companies, and 2. joint venture companies between Japanese investors (corporate or individual) and Thai investors. The latter group forms the majority of JMNCs in Thailand.

For the purpose of this research, each JMNC was represented by one Japanese manager. In nominating him, each JMNC was asked to choose a Japanese who participates actively in management activities. This means that such a manager is not a technical advisor, simple advisor, a representative, or a non-managerial staff.

The scope of this research did not permit a survey of all the 163 JMNCs. A sample of 42 companies was therefore chosen.

Sample Selection. The 163 JMNCs were divided into six groups by the field of activity. These were manufacturing, trading, construction, banking, transportation, and services (including hotels, restaurants, department stores, travel agencies, advertising and printing companies). Only one company was chosen in transportation, while the remaining five industrial groups were given an equal weight.

Data Analysis. The information obtained from the questionnaires and personal interviews were combined. The data was then edited, grouped and coded prior to direct entry into a computer system from which straight tabulations and cross tabulations both in actual numbers and percentages were made.

In order to determine the extent of a relationship between the type or degree of Japanese management practice adopted by the JMNCs and their characteristics (the amount of capital, Japanese equity shares, size, etc.), all possible cross tabulations were made. Then the Chi-square test was applied to those cross tabulations that appear to show an association in order to test its significance. In cases where the Chi-square test could not be

applied because more than 20 per cent of the cells had an expected frequency of less than 5, the Fisher test was applied.

4. MAIN FINDINGS

As discussed in Section 2, the Japanese management style has seven fundamental characteristics. They are lifetime employment; slow evaluation and promotion; non-specialized career paths; informal control; collective decision making; collective responsibility; and wholistic concern. These characteristics were used as a framework for this research. Findings and their analysis are presented below.

Lifetime Employment. Lifetime employment is practised to a much lesser degree by the JMNCs in Thailand. Twenty-six per cent of the JMNCs reported no adoption and only 17% reported full adoption. 57% reported partial adoption.

The survey shows that manufacturing companies and trading companies are roughly similar in the degree of adoption of lifetime employment, while it is adopted less in the companies in the other industries.

The degree of adoption is also influenced by the level of Japanese equity holding. In the companies where Japanese equity is 50-100%, lifetime employment is adopted more often than those where Japanese equity is less than 50%. The degree of adoption is also influenced by the length of operation in Thailand. Most JMNCs operating in Thailand for over 10 years have adopted lifetime employment, while it is not adopted in most of the companies with the length of operation less than 10 years.

The JMNCs in Thailand are plagued by a higher incidence of job-hopping. Six out of the ten respondents found that job-hopping is more frequent in Thailand than in Japan. Newspaper advertisement is the most important method of recruitment for the JMNCs. The majority (91%) reported its use. In Japan new graduates are recruited by contacting schools. Almost all of them are fresh graduates.

Newly recruited employees in most of the JMNCs undergo a probation period of 6 months or in some cases 3 months. All of their parent companies require an equal or even longer probation period. Only 5% of the JMNCs require no probation period.

Action taken in times of difficulty could be an index of a company's commitment to employment stabilization. 74% of the JMNCs try not to lay off their workers, but they are more likely to cut down employment than their parent companies in Japan.

Slow Evaluation and Promotion. Slow evaluation and promotion, sometimes called seniority-based wages/seniority-based promotion, is retained by the JMNCs to a greater extent than lifetime employment. Only 10% of the companies surveyed do not adopt this management practice. About two out of ten JMNCs (21%) reported full adoption while seven out of ten (69%) reported partial adoption. All the JMNCs that adopt lifetime employment adopt seniority-based wages/seniority-based promotion.

Promotion is mostly based on a combination of seniority and merit. For about one third of the JMNCs, however, it is based on merit alone. Promotion based on merit alone is more common among the JMNCs than among the parent companies.

Promotion is the second most important incentive to motivate workers in the JMNCs (the first is money). In a parent company, promotion is the major incentive, and money is used as an incentive by only a small number of companies in Japan. Formal evaluation is not done in the JMNCs as frequently as in the parent companies. The frequency of formal evaluation in most JMNCs is once a year. The evaluation by superiors is used by all the JMNCs and their parent companies. However, the other methods of evaluation, such as self-evaluation and evaluation by a group of workers, are used by only 5% to 10% of the JMNCs, while 38% reported their use in the parent companies.

The amount of bonuses paid per year varies. The average

amount is 2.5 months' wages for managers and 2.1 months' for workers.

In the parent company in Japan, employees receive bonuses of no less than two months' salary. On average, they amount to 4.1 month's salary for managers and 3.9 months' for general workers.

Non-Specialized Career Paths. Non-specialized career paths or what is characterized as training by job rotation is the characteristic least adopted by JMNCs in Thailand.

About three fourths (76%) of the JMNCs reported no or little implementation of job rotation. The remaining 24% use job rotation to the extent of about half or more of what is used in their parent companies. No JMNCs use job rotation as much as their parent companies. There are differences in the degree of use of job rotation. More manufacturing companies use job rotation while most trading companies and other non-manufacturing companies do not.

There is some correlation between the degree of use of job rotation and the number of employees. The companies with 500 or more employees make more use of job rotation than those that employ less.

In most companies (76%), training does not receive more emphasis than in their parent companies. Training in both JMNCs and their parent companies is based on job-training. The second most popular method used by the JMNCs is overseas training (the training of their workers in the parent companies in Japan).

The training programs are not as successful in the JMNCs as in their parent companies. The major problems encountered in training in Thailand are the lack of enthusiasm and motivation on the part of employees, the lack of commitment on the part of employers and the language barrier between the Japanese and the Thais.

Implicit Control. Implicit control is fully adopted by 35% of JMNCs and partially by 51%. This Japanese management characteristic is adopted by the JMNCs more extensively than

any other Japanese management characteristics. In this, there is no significant difference in the degree of adoption between the JMNCs and their parent companies.

Those companies which adopt the seniority-based practice in their parent companies to the extent of 50% or more fully adopt informal control more often than those which rely less on the seniority-based system.

Job manuals are used by about half of the JMNCs (52%), and in job briefings more importance is attached to verbal rather than written communication. The majority of the companies (81%) feel that using verbal communication is at about the same level or even higher than in the parent companies. Language problems in communication, however, range from "not too serious" to "quite serious", with the former slightly outweighing the latter.

The office layout in JMNCs is like their parent companies in that executives have no separate offices – they share one large room with their subordinates. This arrangement offers as much opportunity for informal communication in the workplace as in Japan.

Collective Decision Making. Collective decision making or participatory management is not adopted at all by almost a third of the JMNCs (31%). 43% use it partially. The degree of adoption of collective decision making tends to vary by industry, number of employees, Japanese equity share and degree of Thai partner participation in management.

Full adoption of collective decision making is more common in trading than in manufacturing and other fields. Also, it is more likely to be adopted in the companies with less than 500 employees.

Full adoption of collective decision making is more common among the JMNCs with Japanese majority equity holding. And full adoption of collective decision making tends to be more common in the companies where there is no Thai partner or the Thai partner is not active in management.

For the majority of JMNCs (88%), decision making is top-

down. In most JMNCs, there is less employee participation in decision making than in their parent companies in Japan. In about seven out of ten JMNCs (69%) the consensus approach is used to the extent of less than 50%. It is slightly more difficult to promote group decision making in JMNCs since lower-ranking employees are less involved in decision making.

Collective Responsibility. One third of the JMNCs (33%) do not adopt collective responsibility and 38% adopt it partially, while 29% adopt it to the same extent as the parent companies. Full adoption of collective responsibility is more common among the wholly-owned Japanese companies or joint ventures with a non-active Thai partner. Individual responsibility is adopted more generally in the JMNCs than collective responsibility.

As for small group activities, there is less adoption in the JMNCs than in the parent companies. Only 43% of the JMNCs use suggestion schemes and only 40% set up QC circles in contrast with 76% and 67% respectively in the parent companies.

Wholistic Concern. Japanese managers participate in sports activities with general workers. However, employee participation in the JMNCs is not as high as in the parent companies.

Corporate welfare is less emphasized or about at the same level in the JMNCs as in the parent companies. The counseling of subordinates on private affairs is not practised to the extent as in the parent companies.

5. FACTORS RESTRICTING THE FULL ADOPTION OF JAPANESE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

The factors that work against full adoption of Japanese management practices can be grouped into three types: first, the

external factors including economic, social as well as political factors; second, the intrinsic nature of the companies studied, such as the type of business, size of company both in terms of the number of employees and the amount of registered capital, length of operation, amount of Japanese equity share, participation of Thai partners; and third, the interrelationship between principal management characteristics (e.g. a partial or non-adoption of one factor affects the adoption of another).

Lifetime Employment. The reasons for partial or non-adoption of lifetime employment are related to the Thai business environment.

Job hopping is prevalent in Thailand. Unlike in Japan, recruitment in Thailand is, as mentioned earlier, more likely to be through newspaper advertisement. This encourages job hopping. As a result, employment stability is low, and this restricts the application of lifetime employment.

Another reason given for not practising lifetime employment is the fact that the JMNC is a relatively new establishment. The companies with less than 11 years of operation tend not to use lifetime employment.

Other company attributes that influence the use of lifetime employment are the number of Japanese workers and the type of business.

Slow Evaluation and Promotion. In Japan, with lifetime employment, a company can afford to demand years of patient work before granting a significant increase in responsibility and wages. In Thailand where the stability of the work force is low, the adoption of this Japanese system is difficult. Differences in work experience are the major inhibiting factor. JMNCs often base wage increases and promotion on job evaluation.

Differences in education are another problem. Higher-level jobs require competent people, usually people with enough formal education. Therefore the seniority-based system is less

applicable in Thailand because the majority of Thai employees have limited, often only elementary education.

Among the less important factors given by the respondents is the encouragement of talented employees. These JMNCs use "fast" promotion to secure competent employees. Concerning the year of operation, those that have not operated long enough to develop higher-level personnel in-house tend to rely on recruitment from outside. Some respondents listed the influence of their Thai partners as a factor. One respondent, for example, maintained that the Thai partner does not allow the promotion of a non-family senior employee to a management position.

The seniority-based system is supported by lifetime employment. Among the companies in which lifetime employment is not much used, the seniority-based system is not used at all or if used, not to a significant extent.

Non-Specialized Career Paths. Lifetime employment and slow evaluation and promotion require employee commitment to the company. In turn the company is willing to invest time and money in employee training. Job rotation gives employees experience in various duties.

The survey shows that the majority of Japanese managers feel that employees are less committed to a company and about half of the JMNC managers believe that there is not much pride in working for the company among Thai employees. Japanese managers also feel that Thai employees are less loyal or less committed to the company and that unless this attitude changes, it is difficult to use such Japanese management techniques as the non-specialized career path. At present, they are not too willing to invest in employee education and training which in turn will eventually affect the transfer of technology to Thai workers.

Job rotation is the least adopted Japanese management practice. The companies that adopt job rotation rely on it to a lesser degree than the parent companies. If it is used,

employees in only certain positions get rotated or job rotation occurs less frequently.

Requirements based on job specialization are the major factor that inhibits job rotation. The need for the degree of job specialization varies by industry. A higher level of job rotation was found among manufacturing companies than trading companies and other non-manufacturing companies.

The size of company is also a relevant factor as small companies find it not too practical to put job rotation into practice. The companies with less than 500 employees and the registered capital of less than US\$2 million have a lower level of adoption than the companies with more employees and larger amounts of registered capital.

Another major reason given is related to the employees' attitude towards job rotation. Thai workers tend to prefer job specialization. The following are some of the comments by Japanese managers:

"Thai employees see job rotation as a punishment. A new job assignment is well accepted only if a higher position or better salary goes with it."

"Thai people are inclined to prefer a job related to a subject which they studied in school."

"Unlike Japanese, Thais are not used to learning through job rotation. They prefer to be specialists rather than generalists."

Other less important factors inhibiting job rotation are difference in the level of education, difference in the recruitment system, the negative attitude of Thai partners, and the terms of employment contracts.

Job rotation practice is also influenced by the seniority-based system. In companies where the seniority-based system is not adopted or adopted less than 50% of the level in the parent companies, non-adoption or a low degree of adoption of job rotation is common.

Informal Control. Informal control is the most com-

monly adopted Japanese management practice. It is the one that has no significant difference in adoption between the JMNCs and the parent companies, at the 95% confidence level.

In the 27 companies where the informal control is not fully adopted, three major reasons are cited. First, there is a lack of understanding of the system on the part of employees and therefore the practice has not been used by the employees. One manager explained that in Japan after working hours, managers and employees go for a drink or play mah-jong and work is discussed there. Thai employees do not consider it as a necessary part of work and when they participate, they do not want to talk about work.

The second reason relates to the difference in attitudes and life style between the Thais and the Japanese. Thai people tend to give more importance to private life than work and this restricts after-work-hour gatherings between managers and employees. Thai people do not seek close relations with colleagues and there is no strong sense of participation in the work they do.

The third reason concerns job specialization. When specialization is required, job manuals and job descriptions are often used. So when the work system is built on job specialization, informal control becomes less necessary. Other minor reasons are the language barrier between Japanese employees and Thai employees, and the negative attitude of a Thai partner.

The degree of informal control practice depends on the degree of adoption of the seniority-based system. In the companies where the seniority-based system is not used or not much used, informal control is also not much used.

Collective Decision Making. Collective decision making is a practice characterized by intensive communication, and requires a high degree of employee participation. Thai people are less work group oriented and they tend to accept status differentiation. These characteristics of the Thais are reflected in the responses of Japanese managers.

24% of the Japanese respondents rated their employees to be individualistic and not work team oriented. When they were asked what changes are required of Thai employees to fit them with Japanese management practices, this individualistic orientation was given as the most important one.

The tendency of Thai employees to be not very active in work participation and not much group-oriented was also cited as an inhibiting factor for the adoption of QC circles and suggestion schemes. JMNC managers feel that Thais are reluctant to participate in management and that they consider management is for managers. On the other hand, they argue that Japanese workers are more willing to participate in management.

Collective Responsibility. The reasons for partial or non-adoption of collective responsibility are related to unfamiliarity on the part of employees with group functioning and also requirements for job specialization. Differences in the sense of responsibility (individual rather than collective) and the feeling that collective responsibility is not necessary in a labor intensive country like Thailand are other reasons given.

The degree of adoption of collective responsibility is also influenced by the degree of Thai partner's involvement in management. It tends to be less used in the companies where a Thai partner is very much or substantially involved.

6. CONCLUSION

The JMNCs can only transfer part of the Japanese management system. The management system based on Japanese language, culture and social environment cannot be fully transferred to Thai subsidiaries. So, the best managers can do is adapt it to the Thai social environment to avoid the possibility of conflict with local employees, Thai partners, etc. It is understandable that being schooled in Japanese companies, Japanese managers

prefer to use Japanese management methods, but it cannot be fully accepted by Thai workers.

Modification of Japanese management in JMNCs is also influenced by the fact that they are mostly joint-ventures. With the rise of economic nationalism, 100% Japanese-owned subsidiaries have become rare: those which were such reduced Japanese equity, whereas new ventures have become impossible without Thai partners. Under the joint venture arrangement, Japanese managers are not completely free in choosing a management style.

Culture plays a major role in shaping a management style to be selected. Thais are individualistic. This tends to be a major constraint in implementing the Japanese management style since the system puts great emphasis on groupism. Thai employees do not prefer group functioning, and prefer not to be involved in decision making or to offer suggestions.

The German scholar, Dr. Neils Mulder, describes the Thai personality as follows:

In terms of the need for achievement, the Thais are social entrepreneurs who want to achieve satisfaction in the area of social relationships. Their personality achievement is tolerated as long as it has no consequences for the existing order. Achievement in the areas of matter and ideas is not appreciated. This contrasts with McClelland's achievement motive, in which it is argued that the need for achievement promotes personality development and will to master the material environment, leading to entrepreneurship and economic development. This drive is low among the ethnic Thais, although not among the Thais of Chinese descent, and can be understood in the configuration of Thai culture.¹³

The Thais place greater importance on "self" and family than the Japanese who sacrifice family life for the company. This attitude of the Thais certainly makes adoption of permanent employment difficult and this in turn lessens the degree of concern of the management for the employees.

Minimization of status difference is not appealing to the

Thai, who tend to have the attitude that management is for managers. Implicit control is not utilized to a great extent either.

The Thais prefer specialization while the Japanese management attaches importance to being a generalist. Job rotation tends not to work in Thailand because Thai employees see the transfer to another department or job as a demotion. This preference for specialization also limits management by consensus and dispersion of responsibility.

Language is one of the barriers to the transfer of Japanese management to Thailand. The Japanese management style relies greatly on developing a feeling of closeness and a sense of trust among workers. These are developed largely through communication. Therefore whatever language is used, be it English, Japanese or Thai, none of them is the mother tongue for both parties. As a result, the development of an affective relationship and trust between Japanese and Thai workers is restricted.

The education level plays an important role in making Japanese management feasible. Thai employees in general have a much lower level of education. This reduces the effectiveness of seniority-based promotion, job rotation, collective decision making and collective responsibility.

In conclusion, we can say that it is difficult to imagine that the Japanese management style could be fully applied to Thailand because Japanese management is based on the work ethic, culture and tradition in Japan that differ from those in Thailand. Some of the Japanese management practices which are embedded in cultural values, attitudes (such as individualism), group orientation, the level of education and life style are hard to transfer to Thailand.

However, the difficulties presented by the socio-cultural factors should not be over-stressed since there are some Japanese management practices which are used in Thailand, such as internal promotion, on-the-job training, bonuses, corporate welfare, and QC circles. Therefore, both business and

government agencies may want to consider seriously the possibility of improving their management methods by using Japanese management practices. For example, the practice of hiring managers from outside (or appointing civil servants) may have to be modified so that people within a given organization are given greater opportunity for promotion and advancement. This is in turn expected to result in a greater feeling of solidarity and team spirit within the organization.

Recommendations that evolve out of this research are as follows.

1. Training programs should be set up within the business community to enhance the theoretical understanding and practical implementation of Japanese management. This recommendation is based on Japanese managers' view that the Thai employees lack knowledge of Japanese management and the motivation to study it.

Such programs can be implemented at such government agencies such as the Export Promotion Training Center of the Department of Commercial Relations, Ministry of Commerce. A program could also be set up with the help and cooperation of Japanese organizations such as the Japanese Chamber of Commerce and the Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO).

2. The business curriculum at colleges and universities should be expanded to include a course on Japanese management designed specifically for Thai business majors.

3. Participation of the Thai managers in company affairs is less than adequate. This needs to be increased.

4. Foreign businesses in Thailand should be closely observed so that we could absorb their good management practices. They should also be monitored in the areas of equity ownership and management control in order to protect the sovereignty of Thailand. Especially, the outward remittances of royalties and technical fees should be closely monitored.

5. Research should be conducted in the future on the contribution of Japanese management to the social, organizational and economic growth of Thailand.

6. Psychological studies should be conducted on the behavior of Thai employees. The validity of the Japanese complaint concerning Thai individualism should be investigated empirically. Furthermore, exploratory studies need to be made on motivation factors and cross-cultural relationships. Such studies would benefit both the Thai and the Japanese management and promote harmony and closer cooperation between the two.

NOTES

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2. T. Kono, "Japanese Management Philosophy: Can It be Exported?", *Long Range Planning*, June 1982.
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4. For example, Ouchi, *ibid*; R.T. Pascale and Anthony Athos, *The Art of Japanese Management: Applications for American Executives*, New York, Warner Books, 1982; M. Takayama, *Japanese Multinationals in Europe: Internal Operations and Their Public Policy Implications*, Berlin, International Institute of Management, 1979; M. White and M. Trevor, *Under Japanese Management*, London, Heinemann, 1983; J.R.O. Lincoln and M. Hanada, "Cultural Effects on Organization Structure: The Case of Japanese Firms in the United States", *American Sociological Review*, 1978; and M.Y. Yoshino, *Marketing in Japan: A Management Guide*, New York, Praeger, 1975.
5. Ouchi, *op. cit*.
6. H. Okada, *How a Japanese Company Works*, Tokyo, Nihon Keizai Shinbun-sha, 1984.
7. M.Y. Yoshino, *Japan's Managerial System*, Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1968.
8. Yoshino (1968), *ibid*.
9. Ouchi, *op. cit*.
10. *Ibid*.
11. Kono, *op. cit*.

12. H. Takeuchi, "Motivation and Productivity in the Management Challenge: Japanese Views", in Lester C. Thurow, ed., *The Management Challenge: Japanese Views*, Cambridge, MIT Press, 1985.
13. Neils Mulder, *Everyday Life in Thailand: An Interpretation*, Bangkok, Duang Kamol, 1985, p. 129.

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Table I. *The Degree of Adoption of Japanese Management Techniques*

		Unit: per cent				
	Mean Weight	(1) not used	(2) use less than 50%	(3) use 50%	(4) use more than 50%	(5) use as much as in the parent company
Lifetime Employment	2.10	26	14	19	24	17
Slow Evaluation and Promotion	1.76	10	24	21	24	21
Non-Specialized Career Paths	3.05	40	36	12	12	0
Implicit Control	1.71	14	24	17	10	35
Collective Decision Making	2.12	31	17	12	14	26
Collective Responsibility	2.31	33	29	2	7	29

Base: All Companies (42)

Table 2. The Reasons for Partial or Non Adoption

	Unit: per cent					
	Lifetime Employment	Seniority Based System	Job Rotation	Informal Control	Collective Decision	Collective Responsibility
Thai practices are more appropriate	29					
Low stability of work force	20	6				
Differences in the recruitment system	17		5			
Relatively new establishment	14	9				
Promotion based on ment	6					
Differences in retirement age	6					
Differences in education level	3	18	7			7
Differences in work experience		30				
Encouragement of capable employees		9				

Table 2. (Continued)

	Unit: per cent					
	Lifetime Employment	Seniority Based System	Job Rotation	Informal Control	Collective Decision	Collective Responsibility
Non or partial adoption of life- time employment		9				
Negative attitudes of Thai partner		6	2	4	6	
Importance of job specialization			31	22		23
Small company size			26		39	
Thais prefer job specialization			19			
Terms of employment contract			2			
Lack of understand- ing on the part of employees				22	6	
Thais have a different life-style				11		
Language barrier				7		

Less rapport among Thai employees	7	
Thais have no sense of participation	4	
Applies only to some positions	4	
Collective decision making through formal meetings		26
Need for quick decision		6
Have not yet thought of using it		3
Not familiar with working as a member of the group		27
Differences in the sense of responsibility		10
Not necessary in a labor intensive country		10
Less attachment to work		7

The Japanese Economy According to Thai Economists

1. INTRODUCTION

Last year, on September 26 1987, Thailand and Japan celebrated the centenary of the signing of the Declaration of Amity and Trade between Siam and Japan, which formally established a modern relationship between the two countries. But to the students of Thai and Japanese history, relations between the two countries date back much earlier than this. Ishii and Yoshikawa presented several records on the trade between Ayudhya and the Ryukyu Islands over six hundred years ago.¹ The two peoples had known each other quite well over centuries, and today Japan is the largest trading partner of Thailand. It would seem natural to think that the trading relations of such importance, entailing extensive relations in other areas, would bring about an intimate knowledge and understanding of each other, especially among the scholars of each country.

As a Thai, I am not competent enough to say whether studies about Thailand in Japan are pervasive and deep enough to warrant serious investigation and research. But I can say with reasonable confidence that the studies about Japan in Thailand today are at best uneven and are not extensive and rigorous enough to match the length and breadth of Thailand-Japan relationships.² In this article, I want to examine what kinds of

interests Thai economists have in the Japanese economy, what aspects of the Japanese economy attract their attention most, how well they know about the Japanese economy, and what are their opinions on the strengths and weaknesses of Japanese economic development. Section 2 of this paper deals with the teaching of the Japanese economy or its economic history in the institutions of higher learning in Thailand. The existence of Japanese economy courses at universities (and to a lesser extent in secondary schools) reflects the basic and general interest of the Thai academic community in Japan and its economic development. Section 3 discusses the research interest of Thai economists as manifested in research reports and articles on the Japanese economy in recent years. In Section 4, the views of some Thai scholars who are considered most knowledgeable about the Japanese economy are presented and discussed. Finally, Section 5 reports the results of a small, experimental survey of about a dozen of Thai economists who received basic economic education at Japanese universities on their views on the nature, strengths, and weaknesses of the Japanese economy at present.³

2. THE TEACHING OF THE JAPANESE ECONOMY IN THAI UNIVERSITIES

The Japanese economy is briefly discussed in practically all courses on Japanese history which are offered in most universities in Thailand, and in most secondary schools as well. But, strangely, there are only three institutions of higher learning which offer a specific course on the Japanese economy. They are the Faculties of Economics at Thammasat University, Chulalongkorn University, and Ramkhamhaeng University.

At the Faculty of Economics at Thammasat, one course is offered every year (EC 365: the Economy of Japan). According

to the course outline, it teaches the evolution of the economic structure of Japan, including the development of institutions which influenced the growth of the Japanese economy, and the role of Japan in the economic development of Southeast Asia. There are three or four professors who take turns at teaching this course, but lately the faculty prefers the professors who were educated in Japan and know Japanese. The reading materials for this course, therefore, consist of special class notes (in Thai) prepared by the professors based on original Japanese sources, or some Thai textbooks written by Thai economists who studied in Japan.⁴ Note that most of these reading materials still draw heavily on original Japanese materials. None of these authors has reached the level to write a textbook with his or her own perspective.⁵

At the Faculty of Economics at Chulalongkorn University, a course about the Japanese economy is named "the Economies of Some Selected Countries (the Japanese Economy)". The textbook used in this course is *The Evolution of Japanese Capitalism* by Kongsak, and the main emphasis is on the economic history of modern Japan from the fall of the Tokugawa Shogunate to the 1980s.

The course at the Economics Faculty in Ramkhamhaeng University is named "the Economic History of Japan". The course outline states it is "... a study of the historical foundations of the Japanese economy with emphasis on the external influences from the opening of the country to the outside world in the mid-19th century to the present". This is the most history-oriented course among the three universities.

Recently, the University of the Thai Chamber of Commerce, a private university, is preparing a course on the Japanese economy. But even with this new addition, the current state of the teaching of the Japanese economy in Thailand is still much to be desired. The situation will, however, improve with the establishment of the Japanese Studies Center at Thammasat University, and the Thai-Japanese Study Program at Chulalongkorn University.

3. RESEARCHES AND PUBLICATIONS ON THE JAPANESE ECONOMY IN THAILAND

The status of teaching about the Japanese economy in Thai universities can be regarded as a reflection of the state of academic interest in the Japanese economy. Until the early 1970s there had been no serious economic study on Japan by Thai economists. Ironically, one of the earliest serious researches was conducted by a political scientist, not by an economist. This is a study of economic relations between Thailand and Japan by Khien Theeravit of the Faculty of Political Science at Chulalongkorn University in 1974.⁶

In this study, Khien first describes the structure of the Japanese economy (Japanese agriculture, industry, trade and services), and then the role of the state in the economy. There is similar discussion on Thailand. After this, emphasis is shifted to trade relations between Thailand and Japan and economic assistances from Japan to Thailand. The last part of the study concentrates upon the economic activities of the Japanese Government and Japanese firms in Thailand, which is the most important part of the study. It covers various Japanese activities in Thailand; in particular, Japanese economic assistance, direct investments, management practices, and trading activities. The coverage is very comprehensive and it is an excellent source of information about the Japanese economy and Japanese economic involvement in Thailand right after the Anti-Japanese Movement by Thai students in 1972.

Another earlier research on the Japanese economy is a study by Narongchai Akrasanee in cooperation with Seiji Naya.⁷ However, this study is not a study of the Japanese economy itself, but of the economic relations between Thailand and Japan in two specific areas: trade and investment. Data on trade and investment are presented and analyzed, with the conclusion that the export-oriented nature of Japanese investment in Thailand should be encouraged for mutual benefit.

After this, several more researches about Thai-Japanese

economic relations were undertaken, particularly at the Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University where a number of its staff returned with doctorates from the United States and began research.⁸ Since 1979, the Japan Foundation's Bangkok Office, in conjunction with the Faculties of Economics at Thammasat and Chulalongkorn Universities, has sponsored a Thai-Japanese economic seminar almost every year.⁹ The first three seminars were organized by Thammasat economists, and their proceedings were published.¹⁰ The seminars have provided a good opportunity for Thai economists to do research on the Japanese economy and present their findings. As a result, the number of researches on the Japanese economy has increased noticeably in the last few years.¹¹

It should be noticed, however, that most of those studies do not deal with the Japanese economy per se; they focus on the part of Japanese economic policy or activity that involves Thailand in such relations as trade and investment. This orientation does not require an intimate knowledge of the Japanese economy. A study of the Japanese economy itself requires the ability to read Japanese, which is not, up to date, a common property of Thai economists. However, with an increase in Thai students returning from Japan, "depth" studies on the Japanese economy will increase.

As mentioned earlier, the establishment of relevant research institutions such as the Japanese Studies Center (JSC) in the Institute of East Asian Studies at Thammasat University, or the Thai-Japanese Studies Program in the Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, is very useful in promoting Thai studies on the Japanese economy. To cite just one example, the JSC at Thammasat provides financial support to a group of economists at the Faculty of Economics also at Thammasat, led by Dr. Vatchareeya Tosanguan to carry out a major research on Japanese industrial policy and its impact on Thailand.

Various journals publish academic writings on Japan. The most prominent of those journals which emphasize Japanese

studies or Thai-Japanese comparative studies is the *Journal of Thai-Japanese Studies*. This journal was conceived and sponsored by the Japan Foundation in 1979, again attesting to the catalytic role of the Foundation in promoting academic studies on Japan and Thai-Japanese relations. The articles in this journal are not properly refereed, and some of them are not of good quality. In the future, however, interest in Japanese studies will increase, and the quality of the articles improve. It is heartening to see more and more articles on the Japanese economy in this and other journals (such as the *Journal of Asian Perspectives* of the Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, *Thammasat Economic Journal*, and *Thammasat University Journal*).

In closing this section, it should be mentioned that there is another category of studies on the Japanese economy and related topics. These are the Masters theses written by Thai students in various universities. With many Japanese-trained economists working as professors in various universities, it is expected that the number of theses on the Japanese economy will further increase in the future.

4. THE PROBLEMS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF THE JAPANESE ECONOMY

One of the most popular comparative topics is the reason why the economic developments of Thailand and Japan have differed despite the fact that both countries started their modernization more or less at the same time, that is, in the latter half of the nineteenth century: Thailand during King Chulalongkorn, and Japan during Emperor Meiji. This problem formulation attracted the interest of Thai scholars (economists as well as non-economists). Likhit Dhiravegin, a well-known Thai political scientist, for instance, compared the Meiji Modernization (1868-1912) with the Chakri Reformation (1868-1910).¹²

According to Likhit, there were several similarities between Japanese and Thai societies in the mid nineteenth century. First, foreign trade was forced on both countries by Western powers: Thailand by the British, Japan by the Americans. Second, both countries decided that the only way to escape colonialism was to modernize their countries and undertake necessary reforms. Third, both countries were independent, with a long history and strong sense of national identity. However, under these similarities lay crucial differences. Likhit argues that the political leadership of Japan was able to promote constructive changes in which people of all levels had an opportunity to participate under the guidance of the state, whereas the political leadership of Thailand in the same period still maintained the so-called patrimonial system which inhibited popular participation. Moreover, the preoccupation of Thai leaders in preserving national sovereignty resulted in modernization without qualitative change. Even more important were "environmental factors" which favored Japan such as the administrative system that existed in the premodern period; the high-quality and well-disciplined population; and the strong economic foundation that could be expanded easily. All these moved the Japanese economy forward very quickly. Infrastructure, such as roads, railways, telegraph and telephone services, was extensively constructed; the tax system was reformed; so was the monetary system; foreign experts were employed in large number in various fields; and the private sector was encouraged to undertake modern investments.

Thus, the prospect for Japan was much better at the beginning of modernization. This view is shared by most Thai scholars, including Likhit. Another Thai scholar, Dr. Khoontong Intarathai, may also accept it, but explains Japanese success differently. In his recent book, he lists seven reasons for Japanese modernization and development.¹³

1. Belief in Western technology and knowledge, and serious efforts to acquire them through overseas education and employment of foreign experts.

2. Early success in industrialization which was made possible by heavy taxes on the agricultural sector.

3. High saving rate which enabled Japan to finance investment internally without much foreign borrowing.

4. Democratization of Japanese society, especially after the war, which enabled high quality manpower to participate fully in economic development.

5. Effective land reform which helped liberate farmers and increase agricultural productivity.

6. Technological development and innovation by the private sector which contributed to the up-grading of production.

7. Working habits which value team work, cooperation, consensus, and creativity.

Of course, there are many more reasons for Japanese development, and Khoontong mention some of these in his other books. For example, in the popular book, *Knowing Japan*, he discusses at length the nationalism of Japanese government leaders who constantly try to protect Japanese interests; and serious attempts at technological development, to "catch up" with the West. Nevertheless, Japan is not without problems. Dr. Khoontong lists the following seven problems.

1. Heavy dependence on foreign trade owing to the lack of natural resources makes it necessary for Japan to export as much as possible. At the same time, it has created a protective system that discourages foreign competition inside Japan. As a result, the balance of trade tends to become favorable, but this becomes a point of friction with other countries. This also risks a world economic disruption, that may, in turn, adversely affect the economy of Japan.

2. The differences between big business and small business in Japan are such that the former enjoys a much more favorable economic position than the latter. Therefore, the majority of workers, many from top universities, try to enter big companies. The pressure of trying to go to good schools as a ticket for jobs in big companies has produced enormous social costs.

3. Women's role in the Japanese economy is quite limited. After high schools, many women work in companies as clerks and quit after marriage. Only a few remain, and their wage discrepancy with male workers widens as age advances (except in the government). It was discovered that the average monthly salary of a female worker is only about 58% of her male counterpart. Women doctors, university professors, politicians, and business women are difficult to find.

4. One of the most critical problems in Japanese life is housing. Japanese houses are small and expensive. Life at home is very restricted, which can cause emotional problems for children.

5. As Japanese economic activity expands outside the country, there is an increasing need for Japanese professionals who can work overseas. Due to difficulties in language and differences in life-style, for Japanese to work outside the country causes many social problems.

6. The old-aged population is increasing rapidly in Japan. As in the West, these old people are suffering from neglect and loneliness. They may live longer but are not necessarily happier.

7. Environmental disruption as a result of industrialization is well-known.

5. THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES OF THE JAPANESE ECONOMY

In Section 4, I discussed the problems and achievements of the Japanese economy, as seen from the writings of a few Thai scholars. In this section, the findings of a survey of Thai economists on their views on the nature, strengths and weaknesses of the Japanese economy are presented. They are not ordinary Thai economists but economists who studied economics in Japan either under Japanese Government scholarships

or scholarships from the State Service Commission of Thailand. The main reason for selecting this group is that as a group, they are most knowledgeable about the Japanese economy. Therefore, they should be able to provide us with a better insight into the Japanese economy. Twenty six of the Japanese universities graduates in economics were selected from the directory of the Japanese Alumni Association. This seems to cover most of the students who studied economics in Japan in the last 20 years. The total number of Japan-trained Thai economists is not certain but it is estimated to be no more than 40 or 50. So, if the views of these 26 returnees are known, we will get a fairly good picture of intelligent Thai views on the Japanese economy. Unfortunately, however, only 12 respondents returned a completed questionnaire after many rounds of telephone reminder. So, what is reported here is the views of this small group of Thai economists.¹⁴

Ten questions were asked in the questionnaire. Below, I list each question and then discuss the major themes of each answer roughly ranked by their frequency.

Question 1: What are important reasons for the rise of Japan as an economic superpower? The majority of the respondents gave the quality of the Japanese people as an important reason. It is manifested in discipline, hard-working habits, a high level of education, and thriftiness. Next, the solid economic foundation and organizational structure of Japan were mentioned as a major factor (to some extent, they were buttressed by such external factors as the Korean War and American support). Finally, the strong and caring government which allied itself with the business sector is considered to have helped push the economy in the right direction.

Question 2: What is the Japanese model of development? The majority of the answers pointed to export-led

development or export-oriented industrialization, which was made possible by technological advances and high-quality human capital. It was also helped by government's ties with the business sector. There were a couple of answers which refused to see Japanese development in terms of a model but to see it as an outcome of several composite factors with Japanese culture playing a crucial role.

Question 3: What is the most outstanding feature of the Japanese economy at present? The most frequent answer was the ability of the Japanese people to adjust to changing situations. This ability also included how to plan for the future. The strength of the industrial sector was also mentioned as another outstanding feature. Other answers included:

- Harmony between government and business
- Balanced development between industrial and agricultural sectors
- Stability in employment and the financial system
- Efficiency in production and management
- Large consumption expenditure with a high rate of saving

Question 4: What are the important economic, political, social and other problems faced by Japan at present? As economic problems, almost everyone mentioned the huge trade surplus and strong yen which have created trade frictions and triggered protective measures in other countries. Several answers also mentioned high land prices as a major economic problem.

Respondents were also asked to mention social and political problems. As to social problems, they pointed to the situation facing the younger generation; in particular, their indifference and stress coming from a competitive educational system. They also mentioned the growing old-aged population who suffer

from neglect and insufficient care. Most respondents did not see any major political problem. There might be in-fighting here and there, but most politicians in Japan are viewed to be performing their duties properly in the interest of people.

Question 5: What do you believe to be government policy in the following areas: agriculture, industry, and foreign trade?

(a) Agriculture. Subsidies to farmers and their protection from foreign agricultural imports were given as the major agricultural policies of the Japanese government, and these policies were thought to be maintained for national security and as a return to farmers' support of the ruling party.

(b) Industry. Most respondents believed that the Government closely guides and protects the private sector and that it encourages the development of high-technology industries. They also believed that the Government and business still maintains close relations.

(c) Foreign trade. The following was a typical view of the Government policy on foreign trade. The Government still provides trade news and other information to private companies; because of trade frictions with the United States and some other countries, the Government is now willing to dismantle protective measures and encourage imports of foreign products into Japan.

Question 6: What is the appropriate and feasible rate of growth of GDP in Japan at present? The average rate of growth suggested by the respondents was 4.3 per cent.

Question 7: What are the proportions of the Central Government budget that should be spent on the following items: social welfare, debt payments, subsidies to local governments, public works, national defense and others? The average proportions given by the respondents are shown in Table 1 below, together with actual proportions:

Table 1. *The Actual and Desired Proportions of the Central Government*

Expenditure Item	Actual Proportion (% of the total budget, 1987)	Desired Proportion (% of the total budget)
Social welfare	18.6	22.2
Public debt interest payments	20.9	10.8
Local government subsidies	18.8	18.0
Public works	11.2	13.7
National defense	6.5	4.5

Source: 1 The actual proportions are from Japan 1988. *An International Comparison*, Tokyo, Japan Institute for Social and Economic Affairs, October 1987. 2 The desired proportions are survey results.

Only six respondents answered this question fully. As can be seen from Table 1, the average desired proportions of government expenditure are close to the actual proportions. It shows that these respondents were familiar with Japanese public finance, otherwise the desired figures would be wide off the actual figures. However, there are interesting differences. This group of Thai economists would like the central government of Japan to spend about four per cent more on social welfare (22.2 per cent compared to 18.6 per cent), whereas they would like to cut actual interest payments on public borrowing by half (20.9 per cent compared to 10.8 per cent). There is practically no difference in local government subsidies. The Thai respondents would like to see about 2.5 per cent more spent on public works, but about 2.0 per cent less on national defense. It seems that these Thai economists were somewhat more liberal minded than those who run the government in Japan.

Question 8: In your opinion, what do Japanese people want from the Government? In answer to this question, respondents gave social welfare, aid for the old-aged,

and assistance in housing. A few gave the protection of Japanese interests from the outside world, but not to the extent of risking peace in the world. There was one answer that said that Japanese people never ask anything from the Government, and that they believe the Government does its best for them.

Question 9: Are there any points that you would like to mention as regards the strengths and weaknesses of the Japanese economic system? Among the few who answered this question, national unity, the management system, and the work ethic were mentioned as the strengths, whereas the weaknesses included the self-protection syndrome and poor housing. One answer even accused the typical Japanese as narrow-minded and who does not offer help unless he sees benefits in return.

Question 10: What are your opinions on Thai-Japan relations in the following areas: trade, investment, aid, borrowing, and other ties with Japan which affect Thailand?

(a) On Thai-Japanese trade, concerns were expressed on the existing trade deficits with Japan, but the suggested ways to solve this problem ranged from taking a firm stand against Japan to the acceptance of the fact that there was nothing one can do about it since Japan cannot increase its purchases from Thailand very much. It was pointed out that if the quality of Thai exports gets better, the situation will improve.

(b) On Japanese investment in Thailand, transfer of technology was frequently mentioned as the condition Thailand should impose. But Thailand must also know what it wanted from Japanese investment and set up an effective investment monitoring system.

(c) On Japanese assistance to Thailand, it was pointed out that Thailand should make sure it will really benefit from it. It was also suggested that assistance should be given with no strings attached and not forced upon Thailand.

(d) On Thai borrowing from Japan, it was generally agreed that although borrowing is still necessary, the terms and conditions of borrowing should be improved. For example, loans need not be denominated in yen; no or few pre-conditions need be attached to loans. In particular, such stipulations as the use of Japanese construction firms for a Japanese financed project were found objectionable.

(e) On other ties with Japan, it was felt necessary to protect Thailand from Japanese cultural influence. On the other hand, it was suggested that Thai scholars should be given more opportunities to understand Japan through research and visits to Japan. One answer stated very bluntly that Thai people have little knowledge and understanding of the Japanese people. It was also suggested that instead of letting Japan introduce itself more and more to Thailand on its own terms, Thai people ought to study Japan seriously themselves, with Thai money and Thai initiative.

6. SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

This paper attempted to assess the state of knowledge of the Japanese economy among Thai economists. It was found out that although knowledge of Japanese history, language, and culture is fairly widespread, few Thais know the Japanese economy well. Few economic courses on the Japanese economy are offered in Thai universities and there are not many researches on the Japanese economy done by Thai scholars. There are many journalistic writings on the Japanese economy, but there are a few serious and well-prepared articles. However, serious interest in the Japanese economy has been developing in recent years. It is hoped that interest in Japan which has been cultivated through long historical associations and the economic significance of Japan in Thailand will further stimulate studies on the Japanese economy.

On the whole, most Thai economists who studied Japan

appreciate the economic development of Japan. They believe that the average quality of Japanese people is high and are certain that they will be able to cope with changing situations so that Japan will remain as an economic leader of the world. This is the strength of the Japanese economy and society. But there are also weaknesses: the stress of life from competition that cuts across all segments of society (the elderly, the working men and women, and the young people), the congested living condition and the constant threat of world disruption that could affect the lifeline of Japan. But these are not reasons for stopping development. Problems arise, but they can be solved or alleviated. Environmental disruption which used to be a major criticism of Japanese development today no longer poses a threat of the same magnitude as before.

In conclusion, we can say that Thai economists look at the Japanese economy with awe. The development of the Japanese economy is so special and so outstanding that it is ridiculous to claim that Thailand and Japan began their respective modernization journey more or less at the same time over 100 years ago. Most Thai economists believe that Thai people could learn from such qualities of Japanese people as discipline, hard-working habits, and thriftiness for developing the country. They could also recommend one more characteristic of the Japanese people, economic nationalism, as another formula for Thai development.

NOTES

1. Ishii Yoneo and Yoshikawa Toshiharu, *Six Hundred Years of Thai-Japanese Relations* (in Thai), Bangkok, the Foundation for the Promotion of Social Sciences and Humanities Textbooks, 1987.
2. In the last few years, the Japanese Studies Program of Thammasat University's Institute of East Asian Studies has

conducted several surveys on Japanese studies in Thailand. One of its recent publications entitled *Development of Japanese Studies in Thailand* by Banyat Surakanvit and others, published in 1987 (in Thai), is considered the most comprehensive and up-to-date account on the state of Japanese studies in five areas: economics, politics, sociology and culture, history, and language and literature. Interested readers should consult this publication for details. There is a shorter summary of the above report in English by Banyat Surakanvit and Piyakamol Sindhvananda (Monograph No. 9 of the Japanese Studies Center entitled *The History and Contemporary Situation of Japanese Studies in Thailand*). This report also appears as a chapter in the book published by the Japan Foundation in 1987, entitled *Japanese Studies in Southeast Asia: Directory Series XI*.

3. Before proceeding further, it should be mentioned that this paper does not claim to present anything new or definitive. It simply addresses the simple question of how Thai economists look at the Japanese economy without putting too much emphasis on a proper methodology for finding an answer. The whole effort is experimental. It is hoped that it will arouse further interest in the subject and lead to a more serious study in the future.
4. For example, Suvinaï Pornavalai, *The Structure of the Japanese Economy*, Bangkok, Thammasat University Press, 1980; Kongsak Sonteperksawong, *The Evolution of Japanese Capitalism*, Bangkok, Foundation for the Promotion of Social Sciences and Humanities Textbooks, 1985. There are, of course, textbooks written by non-Japanese trained Thai economists such as Rasdara Khantikul, *The Japanese Economy*, Bangkok, Thammasat University Press, 1977; Watchana Sangrasmi, *The Japanese Economic History*, Bangkok, Ramkhamhaeng University Press, 1978; and Chitra Tuwitcharanont, *The Japanese Economic History*, Bangkok, Ramkhamhaeng University Press, 1983. The last textbook is noted for comprehensiveness and good presentation.

5. There is a Thai economist, Dr. Khoontong Intarathai, who is teaching economics at a Japanese University. He wrote several original works on the Japanese economy, such as *Knowing Japan: Its Economy and Society*, Bangkok, Sangsan Press, 1983.
6. Khien Theeravit, *Economic Relations Between Thailand and Japan*, Bangkok, Institute of Social Research, Chulalongkorn University, 1974.
7. Narongchai Akrasanee and Seiji Naya, *Thai-Japanese Economic Relations: Trade and Investment*, Bangkok, The Economic Cooperation Center for the Asian and Pacific Region, December 1974. Probably because of its pioneering nature and its comprehensiveness in treating trade and investment issues between Thailand and Japan, it was judged the best economic research in 1975 by the National Research Council of Thailand.
8. Examples of these researches are Supote Chunanuntathum, "The Development of Selected Thai Commodity Exports to Japan", in Medhi Krongkaew, ed., *Current Development in Thai-Japanese Relations: Trade and Investment*, Bangkok, Thammasat University Press, 1980; Supote Chunanuntathum and Sukrita Sachchamarge, "The Foreign Exchange Rate as a Determinant of Direct Foreign Investment: The Case of Japanese Investment in Thailand", Faculty of Economics, Thammasat University, 1982; and Somsak Tambunlertchai, *Japanese and American Investments in Thailand's Manufacturing Industries*, Tokyo, Institute of Developing Economics, 1977.
9. From 1982 onward, this series of seminars is held in alternate years by Thammasat and Chulalongkorn Universities.
10. Medhi Krongkaew, ed., *Current Development in Thai-Japanese Economic Relations: Trade and Investment*, Bangkok, Thammasat University Press, 1980; and Chira Hongladarom and Medhi Krongkaew, eds., *Comparative Development: Japan and Thailand*, Thammasat University Press, 1981.

11. For example, in the 1984 seminar organized by Thammasat University, two new researchers, Sukanya Nitungkorn and Lily Kosiyanon, presented their study on the role of the government in manpower training in Japan. In the 1982 seminar organized by Chulalongkorn University, Pairoj Vongvipanond presented his paper on the government and financial sector in Japan. A year later, in 1983, all papers presented at the seminar were written by Thai economists, with new names such as Waranya Panchareon presenting a paper on Japanese TNCs in the textile industry, and Vatchareeya Thosanguan writing on sogo shosha.
12. Likhit Dhiravegin, "The Meiji Restoration (1868-1912) and the Chakri Restoration (1868-1910): A Comparative Perspective", A Research Report Submitted to the Japan Foundation Bangkok Office, 1980 and "Modernization of Japan". Research Document No. 29, Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University, 1986.
13. Khoontong Intarathai, *The Directions of the Development of Thailand*, Bangkok, Pittayakarn, 1987.
14. Although the questionnaire is of an open-ended type, it should not be too difficult to answer if one keeps up an interest in the Japanese economy. A small number of returned questionnaire seem to reflect a low level of knowledge and interest in the Japanese economy. It should be mentioned also that as the questionnaire does not ask the respondent to write down his name, he or she could answer each question freely without fear of exposing his or her true feeling, belief, or ignorance.

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- The White Paper on the Adjustment of the Economic Relations between Thailand and Japan* (in Thai), Bangkok, Subcommittee on the Adjustment of the Structure of Economic Relations between Thailand and Japan, 1985.

Appendix 1 ■ Seminar Program

Date: March 25 and 26, 1988

Place: Hiezan Hotel, Kyoto, Japan

March 25

8:30–8:50 Opening Ceremony

Professor Yoneo Ishii, Director, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

Professor Likhit Dhiravegin, Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University

9:00–10:30 Religions and Institutions

Topic: Religions and Japanese Modernization

Reporter: Professor Pensri Kanchanomai, Faculty of Social Science, Kasetsart University

Commentator: Professor Tetsuo Yamaori, National Museum of Japanese History

10:40–12:10 Social Organization

Topic: Continuities and Discontinuities in Japanese Social Structure: A Thai View

Reporter: Associate Professor Surichai Wun' Gaeo, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Chulalongkorn University

Commentator: Professor Yoshihiro Tsubouchi, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

14:00–15:30 Education

Topic: Thai Perceptions of Japanese Modernization: Education

Reporter: Associate Professor Paitoon Sinlarat, Faculty of Education, Chulalongkorn University

Commentator: Professor Tsuneyoshi Takeuchi, Faculty of Economics, Hiroshima University

15:40-17:10 *Politics*

Topic: Political Behavior in Japan and Thailand: A Comparative View

Reporter: Professor Likhit Dhiravegin, Faculty of Political Science, Thammasat University

Commentator: Professor Toru Yano, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

March 26

8:30- 10:00 *Japanese Management*

Topic: Japanese Management in Thailand

Reporter: Associate Professor Chuta Thianthai, Faculty of Business Administration, Ramkhamhaeng University

Commentator: Associate Professor Nobuo Kawabe, Faculty of Integrated Arts and Sciences, Hiroshima University

10:10-11:40 *Economic Development*

Topic: The Strengths and Weaknesses of Japanese Economic Development: Views from Thai Economic Scholars

Reporter: Associate Professor Medhi Krongkaew, Thai Khadi Research Institute, Thammasat University

Commentator: Professor Kunio Yoshihara, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

11:45-12 *Closing Ceremony*

Professor Yoneo Ishii, Director, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

Professor Khunying Nongyao Chaiseri, Rector, Thammasat University

Appendix 2 ■ List of Participants

I. THAILAND (OFFICIAL)

Khunying Nongyao Chaiseri

Rector and Professor, Thammasat University

Likhit Dhiravegin

Professor, Thammasat University

Medhi Krongkaew

Associate Professor, Thammasat University

Pichai Charmsupharindr

Assistant Professor, Thammasat University

Vibulpong Poonprasit

Assistant Professor, Thammasat University

Paitoon Sinlarat

Associate Professor, Chulalongkorn University

Surichai Wun' Gaeo

Associate Professor, Chulalongkorn University

Pensri Kanchanomai

Professor, Kasetsart University

Tang-on Munjaiton

Lecturer, National Institute of Development Administration

Chuta Thianthai

Associate Professor, Ramkhamhaeng University

Pensri Kiriwan

Section Chief, National Research Council of Thailand

II. JAPAN (OFFICIAL)

Yoneo Ishii

Director and Professor, Kyoto University

Toru Yano

Professor, Kyoto University

Narifumi Maeda

Professor, Kyoto University

Yoshihiro Tsubouchi

Professor, Kyoto University

Kunio Yoshihara

Professor, Kyoto University

Tsuyoshi Kato

Associate Professor, Kyoto University

Kenjiro Ichikawa

Professor, Tokyo University of Fisheries

Tetsuo Yamaori

Professor, National Museum of Japanese History

Tsuneyoshi Takeuchi

Professor, Hiroshima University

Nobuo Kawabe

Associate Professor, Hiroshima University

III. OTHERS

Francisco S. Jose

Visiting Research Scholar, Kyoto University

Ongkhokham

Visiting Research Scholar, Kyoto University

Azizah Kassim

Visiting Research Scholar, Kyoto University

Luu Ngoc Trinh

Visiting Research Scholar, Kyoto University

Prasert Chittiwatanapong

Associate Professor, Thammasat University

Mohamed Yusoff Ismail

Lecturer, National University of Malaysia

Masaru Sakato

Head, Japanese Studies Division, Japan Foundation

Ryozo Taniguchi

Head of Administration, The Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University

Noriko Hirai

Official, International Science Division, Ministry of Education, Science and Culture

