

# **Asia Leadership Fellow Program**

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**2014 PROGRAM REPORT**

## **The Future of Asia, the World and Humanity after Development and Growth**

International House of Japan  
Japan Foundation

The Future of Asia, the World and Humanity after Development and Growth

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5-11-16 Roppongi, Minato-ku,

Tokyo 106-0032, Japan

Telephone: +81-3-3470-3211

Fax: +81-3-3470-3170

Email: [alfp\\_info@i-house.or.jp](mailto:alfp_info@i-house.or.jp)

URL: [alfpnetwork.net/en/](http://alfpnetwork.net/en/)

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## Preface

In 1996, the International House of Japan and the Japan Foundation jointly created the Asia Leadership Fellow Program (ALFP). The ALFP provides selected public intellectuals in the Asian region with the opportunity to reside for two months in Tokyo and to engage in collaborative exchange activities on common subjects pertinent to the region. Through such intellectual dialogue, the program seeks to create a close, personal, and professional network of public intellectuals in Asia who are deeply rooted in and committed to civil society beyond their own cultural, disciplinary, and geopolitical backgrounds.

Since its inception in 1996, the program has had over one hundred fellows, who have come from diverse professional backgrounds, including academia, journalism, publishing, law, education, the arts, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and nonprofit organizations (NPOs).

The general theme for the 2014 program was “The Future of Asia, the World and Humanity after Development and Growth.” From September 8 through October 31, 2014, seven fellows resided mainly at the International House of Japan in Roppongi, Tokyo, and participated in workshops, resource seminars, and field trips with scholars, journalists, and NGO/NPO leaders based in Japan. At the end of the program, on October 29, a public seminar entitled “Asia and the World after Development and Growth” was held. At the seminar, the fellows presented their thoughts on the current situation of their countries and the issues they had been working on, along with what they had learned from their exchanges. This program report includes a summary of the presentations the fellows gave at the beginning of the program, as well as of the resource seminars and other activities in which the fellows participated.

The ALFP organizers firmly believe that the critical voices of its fellows, which challenge the status quo, as well as their proposals for alternative solutions, will lead to the development of new norms and value orientations in the region.

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### **Vishalache Balakrishnan (Malaysia)**

Senior Lecturer, Department of Educational Foundation and Humanities, University of Malaya



Dr. Balakrishnan was a secondary school teacher for fourteen years before becoming a lecturer in 2002 at the University of Malaya, Malaysia. During her late teens, Dr. Balakrishnan worked with several international NGOs and was active in social work. Coming from Indian and Chinese backgrounds, Dr. Balakrishnan is multicultural, multi-religious, and multilingual. This background led her to pursue her career in moral education, and she is actively involved in teaching and the training of future and current educators. Her vision is to develop educators who are creative in cultivating moral values in students in the global arena and have self-regulated learning skills. She writes academic books, journal articles and chapters in books for moral education, civics and citizenship, and lately about multicultural education. She obtained her B.Ed. and MEd. at the University of Malaya and completed her doctoral studies at Victoria University, New Zealand. Dr. Balakrishnan is also an office bearer of the Asia Pacific Network for Moral Education and a member of the Association for Moral Education.

### **Lee Wonjae (Korea)**

Vice President, The Hope Institute



Mr. Lee is a writer and educator for social innovation. He is currently vice president of the Hope Institute, a civic think tank based in Korea. Prior to his current position, he was CEO of the Social Fiction Lab, a social venture to provide workshop programs to help social entrepreneurs develop their imagination and to make a difference in society. He was a policy director to Dr. Ahn Cheol-Soo, a prominent candidate in the 2012 Korean presidential election. Earlier, Mr. Lee founded and led HERI (Hankyoreh Economic Research Institute), and worked as a researcher at Samsung Economic Research Institute and as an economic journalist at *Hankyoreh Newspaper*. His interests are corporate social responsibility (CSR), social entrepreneurship, and public policies for social innovation. He has been involved in various CSR projects including “East Asia 30,” a research project to establish a CSR evaluation model for leading Chinese, Japanese and Korean corporations. He also designed “MBA for Social Entrepreneurs,” a management educational program for social entrepreneurs in Korea. He earned an MBA at MIT Sloan School of Management and a B.A. in Economics at Yonsei University.

## **Mera Akiko (Japan)**

Executive Director, Oxfam Japan



Ms. Mera is the executive director of Oxfam Japan, an international NGO working in over ninety countries. She also serves as a vice chair for JANIC (Japan NGO Center for International Cooperation), an umbrella organization for ninety-six organizations. Prior to working in the nonprofit sector, she worked in the private sector as a merchandizer and sales with extensive work in Southeast Asia. She was one of the founding members of FM YY, the first multi-lingual radio station in Japan based in Kobe, which was established after the Great Hanshin-Awaji Earthquake in 1995. After studying sustainable international development at Brandeis University, Ms. Mera worked in Cambodia to develop the educational television series, such as *Sesame Street* and public service announcements in Khmer language. She has been with Oxfam Japan since 2005.

## **Sikder Monoare Murshed (Bangladesh)**

Professor, Department of Linguistics, University of Dhaka



Dr. Murshed (also known as Shourav Sikder) is the director of the Scandinavian Study Center at the University of Dhaka, which is one of the initiatives on Scandinavian Studies in the South Asian region. As an educator and a social and human rights activist, he is active in working for human rights and the development of his country. He earned his Ph.D. in Linguistics and completed his post doctorate at Aalborg University, Denmark. His main research interests include the Bengali language, language and culture, indigenous languages and education. As a prominent Bangladeshi linguist, he has published more than twenty books on issues of linguistics and the indigenous languages of Bangladesh. Over the last two decades, he has been working as the point person for indigenous-language culture education and protection of minority rights in Bangladesh. His writings on these issues in national dailies are bringing concern to the mass level. His affiliations with organizations for social work are aimed at creating “communal peace and harmony.”

## **Nguyen Viet Khoi (Vietnam)**

Professor, University of Economics and Business, Vietnam National University, Hanoi



Dr. Khoi joined Vietnam National University, Hanoi in 2000 and has been the deputy head of Department of International Business since 2011. He has also been providing key advices on export strategies to the Assembly of Vietnam. His research interests are global value chains, supply chains, and the global strategies of multinational corporations. Dr. Khoi has been teaching and doing research at institutions, such as University of Wisconsin and University of Southern New Hampshire. In 2012 and 2013, Dr. Khoi joined Columbia Business School, Columbia University as a post-doctorate researcher under the Fulbright Scholarship. Dr. Khoi has published books including *Global Value Chains of Transnational Corporations: A Practical Approach from China's Current Situation* (VNU Publishing House, 2013), *International Economics* (co-author; VNU Publishing House, 2010), and *Transnational Corporations: Theories and Practices* (co-author; VNU Publishing House, 2007).

### **Ambeth R. Ocampo (Philippines)**

Associate Professor, Department of History, Ateneo de Manila University



Dr. Ocampo is a leading public historian in the Philippines whose research covers the late 19th century Philippines: its art, culture, and the people who figure in the birth of the nation. Dr. Ocampo is also professorial lecturer in the Department of Filipino and Philippine Literature, University of the Philippines (Diliman). He has previously held appointments in Kyoto University, Chulalongkorn University, and recently Sophia University. He served as Chairman, National Commission for Culture and the Arts (2005–2007) and Chairman, National Historical Commission of the Philippines (2002–2011). His work on history and culture has been recognized through awards including decorations from France, Spain, and the Philippines. Dr. Ocampo has published twenty-one books, writes a widely read Editorial Page column for the *Philippines Daily Inquirer*, and moderates a growing Facebook fan page. His books include *Rizal Without the Overcoat* (National Book Award for Essay; Anvil Publishing, 1990) and *Prehistoric Philippines: Looking Back 6* (Anvil Publishing, 2012).

### **Mallika Shakya (Nepal)**

Assistant Professor, Department of Sociology, South Asian University



Dr. Shakya is an economic anthropologist working on labor movements, trader communities, and development. She examined the rise and fall of readymade garment industry in Nepal, and then followed the trajectories of Marwari trader diaspora in South Asia and South Africa. Gradually, she became interested in concepts of pan-nationalism especially in the postcolonial context. She has taught in University of Pretoria and University of Oxford, and currently she teaches at South Asian University. Prior to joining academia, she worked for the United Nations and the World Bank where she initiated and led an Export Competitiveness Thematic Group (EC-TG) which brought on board leading economic sociologists, business scholars, and macroeconomists to jointly build an interdisciplinary framework for industrial development. Her handbook on export competitiveness has now been applied in several of the World Bank country operations in Asia, Africa, and Latin America. She has also advised governments in Asia and Africa on their policies for industrial development.

\*Affiliation and titles are those at the time of participation in the program.



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## ALFP 2014 Schedule

- Sep 8 Orientation/Welcoming Reception
- Sep 9 Introduction Session
- Sep 9 Country Reports 1: Nguyen Viet Khoi, Sikder Monoare Murshed, and Lee Wonjae
- Sep 10 Country Reports 2: Vishalache Balakrishnan and Ambeth R. Ocampo
- Sep 11 Country Reports 3: Mallika Shakya and Mera Akiko
- Sep 11 DVD Screening of *Words on Water* & Workshop by Mallika Shakya
- Sep 12 Seminar “The Exclusive Nationalism of Burma (Myanmar) Represented by Its Nationality Law” by Nemoto Kei (Professor, Sophia University)
- Sep 12 Discussion-Paper Presentations on Southeast Asia
- Sep 16 Discussion-Paper Presentations on South and Northeast Asia
- Sep 17 Workshop by Sikder Monoare Murshed
- Sep 18 Seminar “Ethical Trade as a Tool for Inclusive Development” by Sato Hiroshi (Chief Senior Researcher, Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO)
- Sep 18 Workshop by Vishalache Balakrishnan
- Sep 19 Seminar “Delivering Simple, Life-changing Technology in the Last Mile” by Nakamura Toshihiro (Co-founder/CEO, Kopernik)
- Sep 22 Seminar “The Development of Japan-China Relations in the Period of Stability in Cross-Strait Relations” by Takahara Akio (Professor, University of Tokyo)
- Sep 23-Sep 26 Field Trip to Nagasaki and Fukuoka
- Sep 29 Seminar “Structural Transformation in Globalizing South Asia: An Agenda for Sustainable, Inclusive and Peaceful Development” by Tanabe Akio (Professor, Kyoto University)
- Sep 30 Seminar “Japan’s Public Diplomacy” by Watanabe Yasushi (Professor, Keio University) & Visit to NHK World
- Oct 1 Workshop by Lee Wonjae
- Oct 2 Seminar “Revealed Future: A Sociological Analysis of the Tsunami-hit Areas in Japan” by Oguma Eiji (Professor, Keio University)
- Oct 3 Seminars “The *Hiroshima Panels*—An Introduction” by Okamura Yukinori (Curator, Maruki Gallery for the Hiroshima Panels) and “Peace and Culture: Socially-engaged Art” by Ashiwa Yoshiko (Professor, Hitotsubashi University) & Visit to Maruki Gallery for the Hiroshima Panels

- Oct 4-Oct 13 Individual Activities Period
- Oct 15 Film Screening of *Hafu* & Seminar “Multiculturalism in Japan” by Edward Sumoto (Representative, Mixed Roots Japan) and Hyoue Okamura (Kobe University)
- Oct 16 Workshops by Ambeth R. Ocampo and Nguyen Viet Khoi
- Oct 17 Seminar “Japanese Tea Ceremony and Peace” by Sen Genshitsu (15th Grand Master, Urasenke school)
- Oct 18 Discussion with Nitobe Kokusai Juku Participants and the Maureen and Mike Mansfield Foundation Fellows
- Oct 20 Workshop by Mera Akiko at Oxfam shop in Kichijoji
- Oct 21 Workshop “Towards (Urban) Sustainability: What Can We Do?” by Marco Kusumawijaya (Director, Rujak Center for Urban Studies / ALFP 2009 Fellow)
- Oct 29 Public Seminar
- Oct 31 Evaluation Session

# **ALFP 2014 ACTIVITIES**

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***Country Reports by the Fellows***

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## To Know Malaysia is to Understand Unity in Diversity

VISHALACHE BALAKRISHNAN

In her report, Vishalache Balakrishnan focused on the uncommon and dynamic aspects of Malaysia. Malaysia consists of two regions separated by the South China Sea into Peninsular Malaysia with 11 states and East Malaysia with 2 states. The multiculturalism in Malaysia dates back to the first and second centuries when the unique position of Malaysia between East and West attracted many traders from faraway lands.

When the Indians arrived in Malaysia, they gave it the name “Swarnabhumi” or the “Land of Gold.” In olden times, the local Malaya sultanate wielded absolute power. Later on, colonization started with the arrival of the Portuguese, the Dutch, the British, and finally the Japanese. When the Japanese surrendered after World War II, the British came back until Malaysia got its independence in 1957. Hence, Malaysia has a rich history of colonization. The Dutch stayed for a very brief period because of an understanding with the British where Indonesia was controlled by the Dutch while Malaysia was given to the British. Interestingly, the seeds of patriotism in the Malaysian people were started by the Japanese with their slogan “Asia for Asians.” In fact, one group that went to seek independence from the British consisted of two Malays, an Indian, and a Chinese. As a result, Malaysia attained freedom more through dialogue than bloodshed, unlike other colonized countries.

In the last 50 years, the Malaysian landscape has changed with the old wooden houses giving rise to high-rise buildings covering the skyline. However, at present it is making an effort to strike a balance between old and new. A good example is the historic city of Penang, a UNESCO heritage site. Religion is deeply embedded in the cultural and traditional practices of the Malaysians. Being a multicultural society, the country has Muslims, Hindus, Christians, Buddhists, and Sikhs with a small population of natives both in East and West Malaysia who hold on to animistic beliefs.

The indigenous people in Malaysia are the Orang Asli or the “original people.” They prefer to live in forests and hills, but are slowly accepting the modern lifestyle. However, they have been given a choice to stay in their original areas by practicing sustainable living.

Historically, the different ethnic communities conducted their own education since the colonizers were not interested in educating the local communities. Thus today there are several strands of elementary schools focused on teaching the mother tongue together with the Malay language as the national language and English language as the second language to be learned in all schools. The different communities have been coexisting for a long time, still holding strongly onto their tradition and culture. Hence, their lifestyle is more authentic than their counterparts in other nations.

Politics has caused a lot of unrest in Malaysia recently. The ethnicity-based parties in early politics seem to be challenged by current political debates. Presently, there is also a religion-based party

whose primary agenda is to promote their religion. Another party, the reform-based party, has its roots in the progressive ideas of people who want development and growth based on individuals and community needs and not on ethnicity or religion. There are several multiethnic political parties in the country; however, their philosophies are rooted in the ethnicity-based parties.

Then, Balakrishnan spoke about current issues and challenges facing the country. First, although diversity in Malaysia is a strong selling point, it is also a cause of communal conflict. Small extremist groups instigate anger in different communities by their hostile actions. Such acts could be for religious or political gains. Second is the issue of ethnic supremacy. The biggest ethnic community represents almost 60% of the population. It shows its supremacy by reminding others that they are the settlers. Third is the historical influence of the British policy of divide and rule, which can also be seen in the present government's initiatives where there have been issues of inequality in education, economy, and social mobility.

The fourth issue is the effect of technology and globalization. Although Malaysia is fast becoming globalized and technologically advanced, there are also negative repercussions. Social media has become a playground for spreading rumors and falsifying facts. Additionally, youngsters returning from foreign countries want to alter the country without giving a second thought to its long history and rich heritage. A fifth issue arises from the judiciary system. In Malaysia, Sharia courts dealing exclusively with Islamic issues fall under the civil court system. Whenever these two courts are in conflict with each other, it causes a huge problem. In Malaysia, a non-Muslim has to convert to Sunni Islam to legally marry a Malaysian Muslim. This also has given rise to a plethora of problems for couples wanting to legalize their marriage, especially if one partner refuses to convert to Islam.

The sixth challenge facing the country is the school system. The constitution permits parents to send their students to study in a vernacular, public, or private school. Vernacular schools are from preschool until 12 years of age, where the students learn in their mother tongue. However, after the Razak Report in 1956, a single school system has been implemented and students from the different strands of schools meet under the same roof in secondary school. This is not the case for students enrolled in religious and private schools and the challenge to bring together different scholars from different background of education to discuss the development of the nation can be complex.

Finally, economic inequality poses a big challenge in Malaysia. Going back in history, the Chinese stayed in the cities while the Indians and the Malays worked on the plantations or were restricted to the villages. As a result, the Chinese settlers are better off economically than the Malays and the Indians. Many policies have been created over the years to close the economic gap between the different ethnic groups and also the gap between rural and city residents.

In conclusion, Balakrishnan said that her vision was to educate young people from her heart. Such education then will perhaps help in overcoming some of the challenges facing the country today. Additionally, she believes that Malaysians need to think in a global context; however, they should not ignore their rich historical and cultural background and so need to act locally.

She also suggested that students of different ethnic and different religious groups should come together to perform community service. Such activities would enable them to understand the diversity of their nation and develop a mutual respect which seems to be lacking when differences are prioritized. Only then can Malaysians proudly declare that they are a nation living within the “Unity in Diversity” philosophy.

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## Korea: A Country of Irony

LEE WONJAE

In his report, Lee Wonjae focused on some tragic ironies that Korea is experiencing presently. Korea got independence from Japanese occupation in 1945, but got divided into Soviet-occupied north and US-occupied south. Then, in 1948 South Korea declared its independence.

The political history of Korea represents a picture of contrast. There was a civil revolution (4/19) in 1960 followed a year later by a military coup when President Park Jung-Hee, a military general, came to power and pursued an export-driven economy and closer ties with the United States. After the second civil revolution in 1987 (June Uprising), Korea became a democratic country. Until the June Uprising the Korean economic environment was the best with “three lows”—low interest, low Won, and low oil price. The first democratic president, President Roh Tae-Woo, was a friend of the dictator, President Chun Doo-Hwan. He also ironically pursued diplomacy with China and the Soviet Union. Then later on President Kim Young-Sam made globalization the national agenda.

During the Asian finance crisis, President Kim Dae-Jung had to weaken the labor laws when Korea entered an IMF bailout program. He also reformed the Chaebol system. Chaebol is a South Korean form of business conglomerate where a few families cross-own 100% shares of companies, thereby having a strong influence over the economy. The president also started the Sunshine Policy, its foreign policy with North Korea, for which he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Korean economic history can be divided into three important periods: industrialization in the 1960s during the dictatorship of President Park, then democratization, and finally marketization. Before that, Korea was an agricultural country with most employment in agriculture. In fact, Lee reminisced about his childhood years in Seoul in the 1970s when many houses in the village lacked basic amenities. Economically, the Korean GDP growth rate has fallen from almost 10% in the 1970s to around 2-3% at present. This has led to Korea becoming an advanced country, but with low economic growth.

Next, Lee turned to some depressing issues that Korea faces presently. The suicide death rate in Korea is one of the highest in the world. More shocking is the fact that this death rate has tripled from the mid-1990s to 2009. Another appalling fact is the decreasing fertility rate of Koreans from the 1970s to present. As a result, the population will go down drastically in the future. He feels that while the suicide rate indicates people’s perspective of the present economic situation, the fertility rate indicates people’s perspective of their future.

He also feels that the country’s income and cost factor could provide an explanation of the above situation. In Korea, the gap between GDP and overall household income has been steadily rising from the mid-1990s and is now the highest among the OECD countries. Analyzing this gap further for 2000–2010 shows that labor income contributed 41% to this gap. This means that although corporate income has risen

considerably after marketization, this income is not getting distributed to the public. Some of the reasons are capital flight of corporate income, companies acquiring more assets or parking their income in the bank. Further, starting from the end of the 1990s, the increase in productivity was not followed by an increase in wages. Hence, if the corporations do not hire more people or do not distribute their increased income from higher productivity, then wages will become stagnant. However, Lee accepts that the high rates of suicide may have other causes apart from the gap between GDP and household income and the marketization of the economy.

Likewise the household income gap goes back to economic growth in terms of the stagnant service sector in Korea. Because households do not have enough income growth, domestic consumption is stagnant. Korean newspapers always talk about the domestic economic crisis, and people like these stories because their life is still hard economically. This leads to household debt, which many feel is the most serious economic problem facing Korea presently. Household debt correlates strongly with the household income gap. This is because people have to take on debt to act like a higher GDP country or just live a poor, frustrated life, which perhaps relates to a higher suicide rate. Household debt also highly correlates with housing costs. When housing costs go up, people borrow more money to buy houses resulting in household debt going up.

Another cost factor is the rising share of household spending on education. More spending on education looks good as it means more people care about education, but it is creating a stress on the public as their income is not rising. Furthermore, when corporate growth is not leading to employment growth, then having more college graduates only means more unsatisfied unemployment in the economy.

In conclusion, Lee states that there is a vicious cycle operating in Korea that started from stagnant wages leading to stagnant household income, to higher household debt, stagnant domestic consumption, leading back to stagnant growth and stagnant wages. The income problem in Korea can be explained by lack of permanent and secure jobs. Hence, traditional economic policy measures are becoming ineffective in tackling these problems.

Lee feels that such problems need structural changes in the economy. He proposes a two-tier economic strategy where global companies should be required to have minimum corporate social responsibility and the domestic economy should be restructured as a social economy. Another alternative solution is social innovation where new businesses are started with a different mission of creating and maintaining jobs. This is because social innovation relates to all three sectors—the private sector, the government sector, and the nonprofit sector. Policies will have to be reorganized to support such businesses. This is the time for the government to work with other sectors to solve social problems. Lastly, the nonprofit sector should enlarge their traditional role of political advocacy or just being agents of delivering government services, to become more innovative and performance-driven.



In her report, Mera Akiko gave a brief overview of Japan followed by the challenges facing the country today. Historically, Japan is significant for being the only country where the atom bomb was dropped, in 1945. After World War II, the allied countries repatriated Japanese from different Asian colonies resulting in the independence of many Asian countries.

The Japanese are not very religious, although Buddhists are high in numbers along with Christians and a growing Muslim population. Over 90% of the people live in cities, namely, Tokyo, Osaka, and Kobe, and mountainous parts of the country remain almost uninhabited. It has an aging society with a high life expectancy of 85 years. Since many people remain single or do not have many children, this population is expected to drop dramatically by 2050, giving rise to many societal problems.

Instead of a serving army, Japan has a self-defense force. However, the present government is beginning to beef up its military power. Of the many political parties, the two important ones are the Democratic Party of Japan (DPJ) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP). Disillusioned with the policies of the political parties, young voters do not take much part in the election process. Economically, Japan has higher expenditures (\$2.149 trillion) than revenues (\$1.739 trillion) resulting in debt. Therefore, taxes have been raised to cover this debt. The country is deficit in natural resources and hence is the largest importer of coal and natural gas and second largest importer of oil.

Japan enacted the Gender Equality Law in the 1990s after which companies were “forced” to hire more women on an equal basis. Yet Japan fares poorly in gender-related indexes. In the Gender Related Development Index, Japan’s position is 79 while in the Gender Gap Index it is at 105. However, even after so many years, women have not been able to break through the glass ceiling. Mera believes with a higher percentage of women in the cabinet presently, these index rankings should improve in the future.

Next, Mera focused on issues that presently occupy the people’s psyche. The March 11 tsunami and earthquake and the Fukushima-Daiichi nuclear power plant disaster is the biggest disaster that Japan has faced in recent times. Many agree that it was not only a natural disaster, but also a man-made one. Since tsunamis were common in these areas in the past, on March 11 people did not take the tsunami warnings seriously, resulting in the massive scale of the disaster.

Disaster impacts people differently depending on age, gender, and social status. In the aftermath, supply chains were cut resulting in empty shelves in convenience stores. The Fukushima incident resulted in heavy power cuts in the surrounding areas. Government also switched from normal advertising to propaganda commercials urging people to help the victims. A few days after the disaster, rumors started

spreading of fishery and agricultural products from Tohoku being contaminated and unfit for consumption. These fears affected everyone, including people living in Tokyo.

Even today, many affected families have not come to terms with the tragedy. The case has been made worse by the government's indecision on how cities should be designed to prevent future disasters. Socially, alcoholism and domestic violence have increased, especially amongst people living in temporary shelters. The tsunami also damaged a lot of industries that were in and around the Tohoku area. Additionally, the way cities and economy are designed in Japan made the country more vulnerable.

During the disaster, evacuation centers did not run smoothly. People running these centers were not well trained. They failed to prepare for things that were missing in their disaster manual. For example, these centers lacked privacy for women and nursing mothers. Hence, many survivors went back to their broken homes and missed the relief goods and information that were solely distributed through the evacuation centers.

The second issue Mera talked about was the growing inequality in Japan. According to the OECD, the real income of Japanese at the bottom of the income ladder has fallen since the mid-1980s. This means the economic boom of the 1980s and 1990s did not trickle down to these people at the bottom of the pyramid. She believes that education holds the key to reverse this inequality, but many students are already in debt by the time they finish school since in Japan college education is still very expensive.

The third issue is the growing anti-Korean demonstrations and hate speech in Japan. Demonstrations in Japan are very mild, but these anti-Korean demonstrations and hate speech marches have raised concerns within and outside Japan. The United Nations Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination has urged the Japanese government to impose legal restrictions on this as it provokes specific races and ethnic groups. Mera believes there could be several reasons for hate speech. Many Japanese have not lived through tough times such as the war period. High unemployment and a closed society with the feeling that government policies are ineffective have left people dissatisfied. Hence, hate speech is one way to vent frustration.

The last issue that Mera focused on was the role and challenges of civil society in Japan. NPOs are comparatively young in Japan, mainly becoming active after the 1995 Kobe Earthquake. With the new NPO law in 1995, NPO activities and finances began to be reported to local municipalities, and only recently has the government put in a tax incentive for organizations donating to the NPOs. However, this process is very tedious, and therefore only 200 out of approximately 50,000 organizations have registered for this tax cut.

The dilemma that NPOs face is with regards to role and activities. Mera feels that as an international NPO, her organization has the added responsibility of bringing an international agenda into Japanese civil society. However, this is a competitive sector because more and more ODA is being given to the private sector. That is why there is a constant debate and dilemma for NPOs on their role and functions.

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# Beautiful Bangladesh: The Amazing Convergence of Diversity and Unity

SIKDER MONOARE MURSHED

Bangladesh has a parliamentary government and a multi-party system. The country has high population density with 160 million people, mostly Muslim, living in 147,570 square kilometers. The country's GDP stands at US\$1,100 per capita, which has doubled in the last 5 years.

Bangladesh was East Pakistan before gaining independence in 1971. A unique movement, the Language Movement, occurred in former East Pakistan advocating the recognition of "Bangla" as an official language, where several students laid down their lives on February 21, 1952. During the 9-month-long war for Bangladesh independence from March 26 to December 16, 3 million people were killed by the Pakistani military. This event, known as the 1971 Bangladesh Genocide, came to an end with the liberation of the new nation of Bangladesh.

Next, Sikder Monoare Murshed provided a brief outline of national symbols of the country, emphasizing that such symbols were a trend in the subcontinent. An amazing fact about the national anthem of Bangladesh is that it was composed by Rabindranath Tagore, who also wrote the national anthems for India and Sri Lanka.

Bangladesh is a land of natural beauty. The rural landscape matches what is found in neighboring countries. However, Sundarbans, the world's largest mangrove forest, is unique. The country also has the world's longest sea beach, which is not used for tourism purposes. Saint Martin, a coral island, is famous for turtles that come to lay their eggs. The country is also adorned with a number of significant heritage structures such as the Lalbag Fort and the Paharpur Vihara, a remnant of the Buddhist religion that once prevailed in the region. Contemporary architecture of Bangladesh includes Jatiyo Smriti Soudha or the National Martyrs' Memorial and the 6-kilometer-long Jamuna River Bridge.

Agriculture is the main economic activity in Bangladesh with more than 60% of the population engaged in farming. However, in the last two decades, the garment industry and foreign remittance has changed the country's economy. Today, Bangladesh is the 4th largest exporter of apparel in the world with 5 million workers, mostly young women, employed in this sector. The second biggest source of money is foreign remittance sent by the 10 million Bangladeshis working abroad. Other important cash-generating industries are tea (9th position), jute (1st position), and leather.

Interestingly, although banks in Bangladesh pay high interest rates at 8-11%, people still choose to invest their money elsewhere. Unfortunately, black money due to rampant corruption is common, and the government's "whitening" schemes have not made much impact. On the bright side, foreign and domestic investors have shown interest in investing in the country due to its large population, big market, and cheap labor. However, political unrest is a major dampener for them. The government's Vision 2021

of Digital Bangladesh and developing into a middle-income country has given hope for the future. Digital Bangladesh is the government's dream of providing information technology to the doorsteps of the poor.

The saree is traditional wear, which is being quickly replaced by salwar-kameez and jeans and t-shirts. Likewise Poila Baisakh, Eid, and Durga Puja are important festivals. Nobel laureate Rabindranath Tagore and National Poet Nazrul Islam hold a special place in the hearts of the people. Rice is the staple food while fish and sweets made of milk products are popular. Of special mention is Dr. Muhammad Yunus and Grameen Bank. He was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 2006 for developing innovative microfinancing for social and economic development of the poorest section of society. Additionally, Bangladesh loves cricket, which is a very popular game in the subcontinent.

Bangladesh has diversity of culture, religion, and language. More than 45-50 ethnic minorities live in Bangladesh, representing 2% of the population. Topographically, the country is divided into the Chittagong Hill Tracts (CHT) and the flat delta land. Indigenous people called *adibashi* or *upajati* in Bengali live in both these areas. The 11 indigenous communities of CHT have mongoloid features while their language is derived from the Tibeto-Burman language family except for the Chakmas community. Garo and Santals are the indigenous people of the plains with their language derived from the Austro-Asiatic language group.

After the formation of Bangladesh, a group in CHT fought for their independence, but later on settled for a local government setup by signing a peace treaty in 1997 called the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord. However, even 15 years after the signing of the accord, out of five conditions, only three conditions of the accord have been fulfilled by the government.

The Bangladesh government has taken initiatives to improve the lives of the indigenous people. A recent government initiative has been a new educational policy through which primary education is provided in the mother tongue. Regrettably, many minority rights violations are being committed in Bangladesh, especially by political parties. This happens with all minority groups including religious, cultural, and linguistic minorities. During election times, minorities tend to get repressed due to poor voter turnout as well as to appease the majority. The challenge lies in efficiently handling political people, the local musclemen, and some religious factors. The tendency has been that minority groups flee the country after such mistreatment. This has greatly impeded Bangladesh's economic development. Murshed states that a possible solution to the problem is to involve civil society organizations to raise their voice against such violence and to help NGOs and government in their efforts to improve their lives.

Women's empowerment is a big challenge in Bangladesh because of the conservative Muslim society. However, Bangladeshi women are more than ever contributing economically by working outside the home. In fact, indigenous community women have traditionally done that by working in the fields, which is a good lesson for the rest of society.

In conclusion, although Bangladesh has developed a lot in the last 40 years, the country still has a long way to go to grow into a peaceful society.

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# The Vietnamese Economy in a Nutshell

NGUYEN VIET KHOI

Nguyen Viet Khoi began his report by placing Vietnam in the context of Asia and the ASEAN region. Vietnam is ranked 6th in ASEAN and shares borders with China, Cambodia, and Laos. During the last 20 years of the renovation period called Doi Moi, Vietnam changed from a subsidized economy to a market and socialist-oriented economy with the government still controlling key sectors and key companies. The country is expected to grow at 9% in 2012–2016, doubling its economy in about 5 years. However, Vietnam is in danger of falling into the middle-income trap. Also, it needs to move to sea for more development, but presently has sea disputes with China.

The real estate sector has grown rapidly in Vietnam with skyscrapers covering major cities although there are still some old houses in the old quarter areas. Street vendors often come from neighboring villages to sell their agricultural produce. The government did try to remove them, but without any alternative income source, their lives would be difficult.

Vietnam is a long and narrow country with the three biggest cities being the capital city: Hanoi, Ho Chi Minh City, and Da Nang. Before 1975, South Vietnam was under US influence. In the past, Saigon, the present Ho Chi Minh City, was a popular city comparable to Singapore or Korea. Vietnam has a very young population and hence is labor-abundant. That is why it is one of the biggest exporters of labor to many countries. Vietnam has good rail, water, and road connections from north to south. East to west can be traveled by road. Motorbikes remain a popular form of road transport, and Japanese brands such as Honda and Yamaha are quite popular. Japanese companies have not only invested a lot in Vietnam, they have improved their products to suit the country's climatic conditions. Cars are still very expensive in Vietnam with the government levying around a 200% import tax. The country also is well connected by air with 22 airports having a serving capacity of 13 million passengers. Unlike other neighboring countries, the country has four seasons instead of two. There are also rare snowfalls in the mountain areas.

Khoi termed the Vietnamese economic transition as “from dusk to dawn.” Before the 1980s, Vietnam had a centrally planned economy, then it became a modified planned economy in the 1980s, and then in the 1990s a market-oriented economy. But from 2000 onwards, the Vietnamese economy is more open, especially with the implementation of VN-US BTA, AFTA, ASEAN + 1, and FTAs. Additionally, Vietnam became a WTO member at the end of 2006. The country's GDP has shown a constant rise since the 1990s, while its GDP per capita has tripled in just a decade from 1995 to 2008. However, the country is facing inflation issues due to large foreign investment, which are being slowly brought under control in recent years.

The government earns income from exporting natural resources and not from collecting taxes, and this is a big challenge for Vietnam in the future. Hence, the country is trying to move up the value

chain from exporting resources to manufacturing, sales and marketing, and even R&D. Vietnam is the world's second largest exporter of coffee after Brazil, with the focus on producing Robusta beans. Some items being exported from Vietnam are crude oil, apparel, shoes, seafood, rice, rubber, coffee, and tea. While crude oil is exported, a lot of refined petroleum gets imported. Hence, while Vietnam sells petroleum cheaply, it has to buy it expensively. Vietnam also imports chemicals, fertilizers, and cement, as well as automobiles.

Foreign investment in Vietnam has increased from 1988 to 2012, except in the last 3 years when it has declined due to the global recession. The market scenario has also changed with shopping malls and department stores opening up in the cities, but small markets like farmer's markets and the very popular floating markets are still present.

Vietnam is still a cash-based economy. As a result, the chance of using counterfeit money, which is usually smuggled from China, is higher. A \$100 USD is equivalent to 2.2 million Vietnamese Dong. The interest rate is high in Vietnam at 5-6% a year compared to the United States or Japan, so keeping money in the bank gives a good return. This is because the government needs a lot of money which it is investing in real estate. The Vietnamese people do not use coins much as their value is too small. The largest currency note is 500,000 which is equal to \$25. Above 10,000, the banknotes are made of polymer.

The nation is divided into four minimum-wage regions: Region I includes the big cities, Region II includes the provinces, Region III the countryside, and Region IV the mountainous areas. The minimum wage in Vietnam in the private sector has recently been increased. There are also many big companies in Vietnam, and the details of the top 500 companies can be found on the website, [www.vnr500.com.vn](http://www.vnr500.com.vn).

Khoi then moved on to the last part of his report, challenges faced by Vietnam. Vietnamese farmers engage in terrace farming due to the country's narrow shape. People mostly use personal transportation, especially motorbikes, since the public transport system is not good. To overcome this, the government is building a metro system in Ho Chi Minh and Hanoi which will be completed by 2020. There is also lack of skilled labor as well as management skills, and work force productivity is also low. As a result, many foreign companies do better in Vietnam due to better management skills. Agricultural products from Vietnam are difficult to export due to a lack of testing facilities. However, the country is trying to build a better system to overcome this barrier. Vietnam's economy is natural resource-based. There is also rampant corruption in state-owned enterprises. The country also needs an efficient banking system and good economic policies. Finally, Khoi closed his report by showing a film showcasing Vietnamese ancient history and tradition.

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# The Philippines: Nation of Contrasts

**AMBETH R. OCAMPO**

In his country report, Ambeth R. Ocampo presented a contrasting view of the Philippines. The picturesque Philippines showcased to entice foreign tourists totally contrasts with the reality on the ground. The beautiful Pinatubo Mountain hides much pain of the thousands whose lives were destroyed during its 1991 eruption. Similarly the stunning Banaue Rice Terraces are fast disappearing due to a modern lifestyle while the high-rises of the cities hide an underbelly densely populated with slums where people live in makeshift houses with garbage-choked sewers. Additionally, commuting in the Philippines is difficult and frustrating for the public.

Historically, ASEAN countries have their origins in the colonization period from the 16th to 19th century. Ironically, it was colonialism that consolidated the archipelago into a single geographic unit. The name “Philippines” is derived from Philip II of Spain. Officially, the country is comprised of 7,107 islands as sourced from a 1945 U.S. Army Survey; however, this fact has not been verified in recent times.

The Philippines is usually described as a country that spent 300 years in a convent and 50 years in Hollywood, referring to the long Spanish occupation and the half century under the United States. It was also occupied briefly by the British and the Japanese before becoming an independent nation in 1946. The Spanish colonizers came from the Kingdoms of Castilla and Leon, which explains the castle and lion in the official insignia. Later, in the coat of arms given to Manila the lion was replaced by the merlion. However, since 1972 the merlion is popular as a symbol of Singapore and not Manila or the Philippines. Many left-wing academics dislike the colonial past of the country, but Ocampo argues it is an indelible part of history and therefore should be accepted.

Pope Alexander in 1493 divided the world into two halves and gave one half to the Portugal and the other to Spain. Since the Philippines fell into the Portuguese side, the dividing line was then moved further until the county fell into the Spanish part. To compensate Portugal, Spain gave it Brazil in 1750.

Next, Ocampo argued that Filipinos are separated from their past because of a biased presentation of the country’s history as well as its language. The history of the Philippines begins with Ferdinand Magellan supposedly “discovering” it in 1521. Historian Gregorian Zaide in 1970 changed the word “discovered” to “re-discovered.” However, Zaide’s rival Agoncillo disagreed as he stated it implied that the archipelago was hidden under the sea and was re-discovered again. To rest the case, Ocampo feels that the words “discovered” or “re-discovered” should be replaced by “arrived,” which would radically alter people’s understanding of the same event.

Also, while most of the country’s history is written in Spanish, very few Filipinos understand Spanish today. The country is densely populated with over 100 million people belonging to different

ethnolinguistic groups with 19 out of 175 regional languages recognized. There is no national language outside of English, and this is a point of contention with ethnic groups.

An 18th century map of the symbolic Hispanic world shows the mindset of the Spanish rulers. The colonization of the Philippines came with the cross representing the Catholic religion as well as the sword. As a result, 86.6% of the people today are Catholic, 8% non-Catholic Christian, and 4.6% Muslim confined to a single region. Most Filipinos live in Manila, making it congested and polluted, because of the lack of opportunity in other cities. Not surprisingly, 12% of the population lives abroad, and their remittances, which are higher than foreign investment, keep the country's economy afloat. However, many of these people never return home.

The church has a great influence over the masses. The contribution of the Filipinos to modern history is that they gave the world "people power," when people en masse demonstrated and revolted against the regime peacefully. As a result, President Ferdinand Marcos was toppled peacefully in 1986 and replaced with the first woman president, Corazon Aquino. Oddly, this was repeated again in 2001 when the then President Joseph Estrada, was toppled to be replaced by another women president, Gloria Arroyo. However, it has to be realized that such demonstrations by 2% of the population do not necessarily represent the sentiments of the remaining 98%.

Unfortunately, the country's political system has been dominated by family dynasties such as the Binays, the Estradas, the Angaras, and the Marcoses, since the voters can easily recollect their names. A study by the Asian Institute of Management reveals that 7 out of 10 members of the lower house belonged to a political dynasty. As a result, not many reforms can be pushed through because these families have controlling interests in many issues. Ocampo, however, believes that real revolt can only happen through elections, and therefore the voters have to be educated to make choices based on competence rather than name recognition.

Women in the Philippines tend to go abroad for work leaving children with the father, who never takes care of them. Consequently, the children grow up in displaced or broken families. Furthermore, the remittances are not used to build businesses but instead go into dead investments such as a house, land, and consumer durables. Also, the gains in the national economy do not percolate through to the people, as shown by the Misery Index.

In conclusion, Ocampo noted that most countries represented in the ALFP program have been faced with similar challenges, so sharing such experiences provides a sense of solidarity and a novel perspective in finding solutions instead of being overwhelmed by them. He said that the solution to these problems lay in education and not in economics as most people felt. Moreover, history needs to be taught in the Philippines for people to see their past relative to their present so that they can ultimately change their future.



In her report, Mallika Shakya focused on the ongoing political crisis in Nepal. Nepal is a land-locked, mountainous country sandwiched between two giants, India and China. With many rivers, it has a high potential for hydroelectricity. Trekking is very popular since seven out of ten of the world's highest mountains are in Nepal.

Nepal has several ethnic and regional communities living together but the ruling group of the Hindu Bahun-Chhetris have disproportional access to state resources and opportunities. The rest of the population is marginalized and consists of the lower castes within the Hindu verna system, Janajatis from the hills and valleys who do not subscribe to the Hindu verna system, and the Madheshi population on the Nepal-India border towns in the South who are summarily dismissed as "Indians." The issue of ethnicity and caste—not to mention gender—has emerged to be especially contentious in Nepal in the past few decades.

A UNESCO heritage site in Kathmandu is Swayambhu situated on a small hillock. Legend goes that the Kathmandu Valley was a big lake with the hillock as a small island before the lake was drained by Manjushri, the Tibetan god, and then civilization started in the valley.

The modern history of Nepal dates back to the mid-18th century when Prithvi Narayan Shah put together the present-day Nepal. However, in 1846 the regime changed hands with the Kot massacre giving rise to the Rana families choosing the title of Prime Minister. After the Sepoy Mutiny in India in 1857, there was a strong alliance between the British and the Ranas. The Ranas enjoyed this British patronage until 1947 when the British left India. Soon afterward, the Shah King took this opportunity and sided with the people and signed an agreement with the Nepali Congress. As a result, there was an anti-Rana uprising resulting in the Ranas being ousted from the Royal Palace giving birth to multi-party democracy in Nepal. This democracy, however, was short-lived. When King Tribhuvan died a decade later, his son banned political parties and started one-party rule called the Panchayat Kingdom. Interestingly, it was in his time that planned development in Nepal started, and the king also promised protection to local industry.

Once again, in 1990, dissatisfied political parties joined hands to rebel against the monarchy. This was, however, a peaceful uprising that led to the then king, King Birendra, agreeing to be a constitutional monarch. This constitutional setup lasted a decade but fell apart with the Royal Massacre in 2001, when almost all the members of the Royal family were killed in the palace. King Birendra's brother King Gyanendra then became the accidental king but ruled with an iron fist. He mobilized the army against the Maoist insurgents and sidelined all the political parties. This led to the formation of SPA, a seven-party alliance of the major political parties, which agitated against the King. Eventually, in 2006, the SPA joined hands with the Maoists and signed a historic 12-point agreement that the parties would

agree to get rid of the king and in return the Maoists would stop their armed rebellion and join peaceful politics.

Finally, the King was deposed and a fresh election was called in the country. Subsequently, in 2008, the country became a secular republic and the political parties annulled the previous constitution and wrote an interim one with the understanding that a real constitution would be written in due course—a task that finally got accomplished in 2015.<sup>1</sup> An important event after the Maoists came into mainstream politics was the Madhes uprising when the Terai people rejected the interim constitution and asked for bureaucratic autonomy. Madheshis continue to contest the newly promulgated constitution including materializing Indian support by blockading the Nepal-India border such that the country essentially ran out of cooking gas and fuel for automobiles.

In regard to the rise of Maoism in Nepal, Shakya stated that Nepal has had a long history of communism. The founding leader of Nepali Congress, B.P. Koirala, was initially a communist before leaning to socialism. Hence, the roots of the Nepali Congress can be traced back to communism. Additionally, King Mahendra is said to have supported the communist movement to counteract the rise of the Nepali Congress.

Some explain they were inspired by the Naxalbari armed movement of Bengal in the 1960s, which led them to take up arms. However, later, a revisionist trend emerged as they sought to reconcile communist ideology within the post-cold-war situation through a popular vision called *Jabaja (Janata Ko Bahudaliya Janabad)* which talked about the communist movement within the democratic polity and market economic system. The Maoists, who became popular during the 1990s, were skeptical about *Jabaja*. They questioned the idea of accommodating the communist party within a neo-liberal system. As a result, the Maoist party underwent a split into two factions, one group supporting multi-party democratic politics (under Prachanda and Baburam Bhattarai) and another smaller group embracing radical politics (led by Mohan Baidya). However, Shakya said that the main point of contention between the liberal communists and the Maoists is ethnicity and class.

Shakya then traced the history of the famed Gurkha soldiers of Nepal. Gorkha is a small hamlet in Nepal where the Shah Kings originally came from. However, Gurkha soldiers represent the Nepalese soldiers that fought during the Anglo-Nepalese war. The war was fought when the British were expanding their base in the subcontinent. This resulted in the Treaty of Sugauli in 1816. Impressed by the valor of the Gurkha soldiers, the British asked them to join their army to fight against the Indians and got into friendly negotiation with the then Nepali ruling class, the Ranas. That was the beginning of the British employment of the Nepali army.

During the Indian Rebellion of 1857, Gurkhas fought on the British side. Some of them became part of the British Army while others became the Indian Army following the end of British colonization of India. Since then, Gurkha soldiers have earned international fame for their fierceness and courage. Many Gurkha soldiers have received the Victoria Cross, a British military decoration for gallantry. In conclusion,

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<sup>1</sup> This country report was originally presented by Mallika Shakya in September 2014, but the summary was written and compiled for the *ALFP 2014 Program Report* in the following year.

Shakya talked about the recent controversy around the treatment of Gurkhas and their families by the British Government.

## ***Seminars by Resource Persons***

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## The Exclusive Nationalism of Burma (Myanmar) Represented by Its Nationality Law

**NEMOTO KEI**

*Professor, Sophia University*

Professor Nemoto Kei introduced himself as a history professor of modern Southeast Asia teaching at Sophia University. He specializes in the historical background of nationalism in Myanmar with comparative study with other Southeast Asian countries. He stated that his talk would be about the exclusive nationalism of Burma focusing on the recent conflicts between the Buddhist majority group and the Muslim minority group.

The second half of 2011 saw rapid development in Burma aimed at liberalization and democratization of the country. However, these top-down changes have also led to some serious problems such as interreligious conflicts among the Buddhists and the Muslims.

The Burmese government since its struggle for independence from Britain and later on from Japanese occupation has been emphasizing Burmese Nationalism which is characterized by Theravada Buddhism, Burmese language, and the historical homeland of the central plains. This is regarded as the core Burmese culture. This self-image of the country has also been stressed by the government in the post-independence era as a common thread for national integration. As a result, the rest of the population not fitting with this image has been marginalized, which has become a cause of religious and ethnic discontent. Economic inequality between the capital and the province and an attitude to contain religious minorities have only worsened the problem.

Next, Professor Nemoto explained who are considered indigenous in Burma. Indigenous people in Burma have been defined by the revised Nationality Law enforced in 1982. According to this law, people living in Burma before 1823 are regarded as indigenous and the rest as non-indigenous. Additionally, citizens are classified into three types: formal citizens, quasi-citizens, and naturalized citizens. The quasi and the naturalized citizens have generally been discriminated against by the government. Even people who are approved as citizens are not allowed to write “Bamar” in the registration certificate if they are Muslims or look like Indians or Chinese.

However, Professor Nemoto argues that the criterion of nationality law demarcating “indigenouness” in Burma is an illusion. He proclaims that historically since the Konbaung Dynasty (1772–1885), different religious and ethnic groups have been living in harmony with the Theravada Buddhists in the Imperial City under royal patronage. At that time, the groups were differentiated on the basis of reach of the royal authority and the idea of ethnicity was not in existence. This ethnic classification was a product of colonial powers, and it became commonplace in the 20th century, particularly among the educated. Later on, the Bamars, who realized their historical majority, shaped the

ideology of Burmese Nationalism placing great importance on Theravada Buddhism and the Burmese language as the cultural core of the Burmese people.

Professor Nemoto then delved into the origins of how Muslims began to be perceived as “others” in Burma. Although Muslims had settled in Burma since the 18th century; the Bamars “memorized” them as non-indigenous people from India who migrated to Burma after 1824 and hence were marginalized. There were several factors that led to this memorization of Muslims as “others.” There was an influx of Indian immigrants to Burma during British rule, which resulted in a large increase in population, especially in Rangoon. Additionally, Chettiars were engaged in lending to Burmese farmers and seized land on non-payment, which generated anti-Indian feeling among the Burmese people. This culminated in large-scale anti-Indian riots in 1930 and 1938, which were targeted more towards Indian Muslims than Indian Hindus. As an aftermath, the government of Burma attempted to restrict Indian immigration and proposed various restrictions.

However, careful examination of the evidence show that most of the Indian immigrants were in fact “expat” workers and the Chettiars were not in reality loan sharks with a desire to own lands in Burma as they followed a proper interest system for loans. But these facts got lost during the 1920s when anti-Indian sentiments increased giving rise to the idea of Burmese Nationalism.

Professor Nemoto states that nevertheless the two communities, Theravada Buddhism and Muslims, had been living peacefully after the Burmese independence especially because the Burmese Muslims were able to Burmanize themselves through adapting their language and attire.

Then during the 1990s, the Wahhabism movement in the Middle East started affecting Burma resulting in more Burmese Muslims emphasizing their Islamicness. This heightened the fear of Burmese Muslims among Theravada Buddhists. Post-2011, the liberalized atmosphere in Burma gave an opportunity to Buddhist monks to openly criticize Islam, thus agitating the Muslims as well as increasing anti-Muslim sentiment among the general public. Although the new Constitution disallows political use of religion, the recent anti-Rohingya and Muslim riot in Rakhine State in 2012 as well as in Meiktila in 2013 where police remained on the sidelines show the discriminatory attitude of the government towards them.

Rohingya are a Muslim group living in the northwest of Rakhine in Western Burma since the Kingdom of Mrauk-U (1429–1785). However, many Muslims moved to Burma from the present Bangladesh during British rule in the 19th century as well as the confusing time of Bangladesh’s independence. After World War II, some of these Muslims claimed the identity of Rohingya, an independent ethnic group. However, most Burmese today regard Rohingya as illegal immigrants while many Rakhine people call them Bengalese. These people are religiously and racially discriminated against due to their more conservative thought.

In view of the large-scale violence, Aung San Suu Kyi proposed re-examination of the Nationality Law of 1982, especially reviewing the illogical definition and classification of citizens. Unfortunately, she was heavily criticized even by her supporters as well as by overseas Burmese communities as she was seen to have taken the Rohingya’s side.

In conclusion, Professor Nemoto felt that reconsideration of the extreme exclusivity of Burmese Nationalism would be an important step to avert religious and ethnic conflict in Burma. However, the present volatile climate did raise doubts about how such a change could take place in Burma soon.

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## Ethical Trade as a Tool for Inclusive Development

**SATO HIROSHI**

*Chief Senior Researcher, Institute of Developing Economies, JETRO*

Mr. Sato Hiroshi's presentation focused on how business and development can collaborate and reduce poverty through consumption. Since the 1990s, these two sectors have felt the need to work in a synergistic manner to fulfill their respective goals. Through collaboration, development can get funds and be more efficient while private sectors can gain consumer acceptance by being socially responsible. Hence, in recent times, many development organizations such as UNDP, UN, and DFID have come out with schemes to attract the business sector.

Multinational companies today have long supply chains involving developed and underdeveloped countries. There is a risk of product boycotts from socially aware consumers if information on suppressed and discriminated people in any step of the value chain is exposed. Each stage of the value chain exposes the company to many risks. At the production phase, use of chemicals affects the environment as well as the health and safety of employees. Child labor is also a big issue at this stage. At the procurement phase, the middlemen exploit producers by paying unsustainable rates to them, while in the manufacturing facilities, low wage and inadequate safety could result in tragedies such as the collapse of the Rana Plaza garment factory in Bangladesh. Therefore, companies are eager to commit to ethical trading.

Mr. Sato then presented three viable strategies for more inclusive growth: Bottom of the Pyramid (BOP) business, cause-related marketing, and social business. CK Prahalad's 2004 book *The Fortune at the Bottom of the Pyramid* was the trigger for BOP business; it argued that the world's poorest people are an untapped market and companies that serve them can make money and help alleviate poverty too. There are two versions of BOP: the first one assuming BOP as consumers, while the second one goes a step further to assume them as producers and distributors in the global value chain. Moving further, wrong assumptions about BOP exist such as they do not have specific needs or are not willing to spend. However, the truth is these BOPs conduct business in the informal market not captured by statistics and a lot of them have remittance which is left out from GDP calculations.

Mr. Sato argued that these wrong assumptions emerge from the fact that these poorest have to pay a "BOP penalty" to become a mainstream consumer. Generally, BOPs are excluded from the normal market and distribution network. As a result, they are left with fewer choices and inferior goods. This is where BOP innovation by private companies can reach out to the poor and dissolve this BOP penalty leading to the awakening of their purchasing power. While traditional poverty alleviation methods try to increase the income of the BOP, making quality products cheaper and easily accessible can help in easing



their poverty and benefiting economic growth. This is a concept of poverty alleviation through consumption.

Mr. Sato then informed us that since 2009, METI has been encouraging Japanese small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) to venture into developing countries for BOP business. He also enumerated BOP business examples cutting across health, electricity, communication, nutrition, and transportation sectors. Olyset Net developed by Sumitomo Chemical is helping prevent malaria in Tanzania. Sanyo/Panasonic is distributing a solar lantern free of charge in Uganda expecting payoff in the form of brand recollection. Another interesting innovation is the prepaid telephone cards in Uganda which have revolutionized the market. In fact, M-Pesa, a money transfer system in Kenya, is a big success story of serving customers at the BOP. People can transfer cash instantly to their remote families through M-Pesa without the involvement of long journeys. Another example comes from Senegal where Yamaha has cooperated with a Belgian NGO to introduce drip irrigation by pumping water using Yamaha motors. Through this innovative idea, people are realizing the value of buying real Yamaha products instead of imitations.

Since poverty and development are popular topics in marketing, Mr. Sato explained cause-related marketing (CRM), which involves cooperation between for-profit businesses and local organizations. An example is the Fairtrade movement, which started in the United States and benefits producers who are mostly in developing countries by promoting sustainability. The Fairtrade (FT) mark has a huge impact because it is easy to notice. If supermarkets use this mark, it becomes easy for the consumer to recognize Fairtrade in their products. Environmental certification is also becoming popular amongst companies. Mr. Sato then cited some cause-related marketing examples. Choco Revo founded by a Japanese NGO tries to reduce child labor in West Africa by producing organic and child labor-free cocoa to make their chocolates.

A key concept of social business is plowing profits back to the enterprise. Fairtrade International (FLO) guarantees Fairtrade through three components: first, a minimum price fixed to purchase from producers; second, part of the price is prepaid for avoiding high-risk borrowing by the producers from moneylenders; and third, around 10% of the price is used as feedback of the premium to the producers. Fairtrade also leads to competition between companies for goodwill. Hence, getting involved in FT means being able to decrease the number of weaker players from the market. For instance, Cadbury declared that it will use 100% FT ingredients for Dairy Milk in the United Kingdom which Nestle followed with KitKat making it also 100% FT.

There are many Japanese SMEs with good technology which they want to use for social cause in developing countries. For instance, some Japanese women are encouraging Rwanda war widows by importing their craftworks to Japan. Similarly, during the recent World Cup, Sony in collaboration with USAID arranged public viewing of the matches in South Africa where they provided HIV/AIDS related information before the match.

In conclusion, Mr. Sato stated that business and development are giving rise to social business, BOP business, and CRM, and there was a huge scope for collaboration in this sector. However, this

opportunity also comes with challenges, and the next part of the challenge lies in making these collaborations smooth, rewriting the activities of business, and convincing the stakeholders of the results.

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## Delivering Simple, Life-changing Technology in the Last Mile

**NAKAMURA TOSHIHIRO**  
*Co-Founder and CEO, Kopernik*

Mr. Nakamura Toshihiro, co-founder and CEO of Kopernik, talked about his organization, which focuses on distribution of simple, life-changing technology to poor people. It has its biggest presence in Indonesia and Timor-Leste, but has worked in 19 countries. The staff of the organization has grown to about 60 people, and most of them are based in Indonesia. His passion for making a difference in the lives of poor communities has also won the organization much international recognition. The organization works by connecting companies producing these technologies with the people in the “last mile,” microfunding their execution along the way via local partners such as small NGOs, community-based organizations, cooperatives, and women’s groups. This is a dynamic area to be in as many such simple technologies are being developed presently all over the world. However, since many of these companies are at an early stage, they are constrained by their budget in expanding their market.

Mr. Nakamura explains that these technologies are simple to use and positively impact the quality of life of the communities. For example, solar-powered lights are much brighter than the kerosene lamps that people in off-grid areas use. It also reduces expenditure on fuel as well as exposure to harmful smoke. Additionally, families can focus on productive activities at nighttime such as studying and weaving baskets. A second example is fuel-efficient stoves that consume less firewood thereby reducing the time taken to collect firewood for women and children and reducing exposure to harmful smoke. Indoor air pollution kills about 1.3 million every year, and the use of such simple technology can drastically reduce this number.

Crowdfunding through their website is a crucial part of Kopernik’s operations. The website details specific project activities such as the recent Philippines Typhoon Emergency Response requesting specific types of products. Anybody can donate funds, and once the required amount is reached, the project is then kick-started and the funding is used to purchase the technology and to ship it to their local partners.

Before cofounding Kopernik, Mr. Nakamura spent many years with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in countries like Timor-Leste, Indonesia, Sierra Leone, and the United States. He became dissatisfied with the working of the UN which he felt was a closed community comprising the UN, the donor government, and the developing country governments. Their approach was always the same and detached from reality with very unclear results. As a result, he along with his wife began to think about alternative systems which would incorporate ideas from outside to solve the big challenges facing poor countries. This is when they hit upon the idea of Kopernik. Using their vacation time, the two cofounders chalked out a business plan and pilot tested some technologies in the Timor-

Leste area, which was a success. This was phase 1 of their operation. They then invested time and money and launched a working website and gradually were able to spread the word out, which gave them early exposure in the United States.

When the idea got some traction, the duo left the UN and moved to Indonesia and launched phase 2 of the operation. During the initial days, the husband and wife worked out of their home office, and their projects started to grow. However, the donor base was still limited, although they were able to get some funding to finance these projects. Since their website was an important element of their organization, they revamped it into a more agile one.

Mr. Nakamura was then faced with a moral dilemma when the March 11 tsunami disaster struck Japan. Since Kopernik focuses its activities in less-developed countries, they decided not to do anything in Japan. However, with constant requests flooding from volunteers from Tohoku for solar lights and hearing aids, they ended up sending 2,000 solar lights and many solar-powered hearing aids to the tsunami victims. He recounts these products helped in reestablishing communication among the victims, especially during nighttime.

Then, Kopernik reached phase 3 when the team, encouraged by the traction and funding, moved to a proper office. Their activities in Indonesia as well as interaction with partners started to deepen during this phase. One such activity is the tech fair where these simple technologies are brought to the communities to get direct feedback from them. Such a tech fair helps in identifying technologies that are in demand in the community. Mr. Nakamura also stated they got engaged in training people when they realized that people who sell these technologies need to understand the specifications and the benefits of the technology. Since these people collect money, they also need to have basic financial management knowledge and a confidence in public speaking. Kopernik has now partnered with many *Warung* or rural kiosks in Indonesia to sell these simple technologies, and this number has already reached 80.

With many ongoing projects, Mr. Nakamura became interested in collecting data for impact measurement to show the impact before and after adoption of the technologies by the community. The feedback loop for Kopernik initially consisted of surveys and social media to rate the technologies. While solar light usually got a 5-star rating, surprisingly a cooking stove got mediocre ratings. A deeper inspection revealed the reasons for this average rating. While cooking is considered women's job, chopping the wood was a male job, so there was a clash of gender roles. Since then, the stove has been redesigned by taking such feedback into account. They have also started using sensors to get the feedback since human feedback sometimes is not trustworthy. They have also started using open-source data collection apps to eliminate the process of handwritten notes.

In fact, the organization got funding from the Rockefeller Foundation to do research on data collection. There are different types of data collection apps, social media, geospatial mapping, and remote sensors used as impact tracker technologies that can help small organizations serious about collecting data. Lately, Kopernik saw the opportunity to start consultancy when many companies approached it to get feedback on their products as well as get ideas on marketing them and to test them in the field.

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## The Development of Japan-China Relations in the Period of Stability in Cross-Strait Relations

**TAKAHARA AKIO**

*Professor, University of Tokyo*

Professor Takahara Akio stated that to understand the most recent developments in China, one needs to understand China during the Jiang Zemin and Hu Jintao years. These two leaders approached international affairs contrastingly. While Jiang Zemin compared international politics to a jungle fight, his successor Hu Jintao's slogan was of building "harmonious society" within China. However, when Hu proclaimed his idea of a harmonious world in his 2005 UN speech very few people in China believed in him as Jiang Zemin still had a powerful influence in China.

In 2006, Hu was able to consolidate his power and called for a rare Central Foreign Affairs Work Conference. Then two months thereafter, he invited the Japanese prime minister to China. The invitation symbolically coincided with the plenary meeting of the Central Committee of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) sending out a strong message that Hu was in command now. A year later in 2007, a distressing change took place when in the 17th National Congress meeting Xi Jinping was arranged to succeed Hu Jintao in 2012 instead of Li Keqiang, a Hu Jintao loyalist.

In recent years, due to these power struggles, many serious disagreements have emerged in China. Many Chinese leaders saw the 2008 world financial crisis as the shattering of the American Model and the advent of the China Model. However, others wisely cautioned against selling the China Model, as without privatization, liberalization, and distributive reforms China would be in trouble.

Another serious disagreement involved Chinese reforms. In the Third Plenum in November 2013, Xi Jinping is said to have performed well with a far-reaching reform agenda. However, certain intelligentsia doubt the effectiveness of this agenda as it misses out on political reforms. Deng Xiaoping had stated a long time back that without political reforms economic reform cannot be thoroughly implemented.

Universal value is also a point of separation for the Chinese leaders. Since Deng's days, the CCP's position has been that human rights have universality, but since China is a developing country, all human rights cannot be implemented. This argument changed in 2008 when the party indicated that universal values are Western values disguised as universal. However, Hu Jintao took the conventional position when he signed a joint statement with the Japanese prime minister as well as during his visit to the United States in January 2011, when he stated human rights had universality.

Foreign policy is another area highlighting serious disagreement within the party. In the past, Deng had asked younger leaders to follow a low profile in a conciliatory diplomacy; however, the present

leaders are indicating that this policy is outdated. But the moderates within the party are trying to calm things down. Surprisingly, the Chinese media has also become aggressive in its reporting since 2008.

Societal dissatisfaction has reached new highs in China. Nepotism has taken deep root as without good connections students cannot hope to get good jobs. This is serious because it shatters the Chinese Dream. In contrast, Xi Jinping seems to be advocating a Chinese Dream emphasizing individuals to identify with the nation. This is a disappointing development since this means the rise of nationalism, which is linked to conservative thinking. In such a situation, ordinary people tend to lean towards neo-Maoism, the hardliners, while others prefer to immigrate. Still others turn to religion as a solace. As a result, an increasing number of people are turning believers. The party has been handling this issue poorly as was shown when in April 2014 Wenzhou authorities brought down a church on the pretext of not following building principles.

Moving to Japan-China relations, two sets of thinking dominate Chinese politics: first, the reformists, internationalists, or moderates, and second, the conservatives, chauvinists, or the hardliners. China is going through a period of identity crisis in the midst of modernization, and many Chinese are still very anti-West. The CCP's conventional method to unite the party and the nation has been to set an enemy as a target, and Professor Takahara notes that from 2012 this enemy has been Japan when the Senkaku Islands issue emerged.

Fortunately, this tension between the two countries has been thawing, especially since the July 2014 meeting between former Prime Minister Fukuda and Xi Jinping in Beijing. Professor Takahara speculates several reasons for this amelioration: firstly, domestically Xi Jinping has succeeded in consolidating his power base; secondly, China's economy has slowed down and people are getting worried; and thirdly, internationally China is trying to rebalance its position with Japan as the hard-line policy against neighbors is not benefiting China in any way.

The Abe-Xi Summit at APEC to be held in November 2014 is important as this will signal the beginning of a new era. However, for this to take place China must not provoke Japan with the Senkaku Islands issue and Japan should discuss a future vision of East Asia while both sides should aim for order in East Asia based on international norms.

Then, Professor Takahara gave three explanations as to why China does not always walk its talk. First, there is lack of coordination between different departments in China with some departments being more conciliatory than others. His second hypothesis is that the Chinese do not see any discrepancy in their words and their deeds, which Professor Takahara termed "Big Power Syndrome." He enumerated many examples to show that this discrepancy existed. The CCP in October 2013 called the neighborhood diplomacy meeting a "Peripheral Diplomacy Workshop," indicating that the Chinese consider themselves to be at the center. Also, Xi Jinping has said on several occasions that the Chinese historically have never invaded other countries, which is false. The third hypothesis is that the Chinese have mixed targets and so their priorities keep changing.

In addition, the Chinese public is manipulated by the CCP and kept away from the truth as the CCP is not confident about its rule in China and is aware of its unpopularity. Hence, in conclusion, Professor Takahara feels it is imperative to find ways to reach out to the ordinary Chinese.

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# **Structural Transformation in Globalizing South Asia: An Agenda for Sustainable, Inclusive and Peaceful Development**

**TANABE AKIO**

*Professor, Kyoto University*

Professor Tanabe Akio, a cultural anthropologist, believes the root of transformation in Asia is related to its people. In post-colonial Asian nations, English has been the language of the elite, but presently there is an increase in a “vernacular public” where issues are being discussed in vernacular languages. As a result, three related issues have emerged: the Agenda of Sustainability with increasing demand for resources leading to resource war; the Agenda of Inclusiveness dealing with issues of the vernacular public seeking better life chances; and the Agenda of Peacefulness, which relates to ways to contain diversity of opinion in the public sphere.

If we take the issue of water conflict to explain the Agenda of Sustainability, those countries that can control water sources can also control water resources. For example, China has built dams on the Mekong River adversely affecting the fishery and agriculture sector in Southeast Asia. The affected countries established the Mekong River Commission (MRC), but China refused full membership. India is attempting to build 300 dams on major northern Indian rivers leading to disputes with its neighbors. This means smaller neighboring countries such as Nepal and Bangladesh have to negotiate to get their water resources. In 2013, Nepal, India, and Bangladesh forged an important agreement to jointly exploit hydropower, while a water-sharing agreement in 2011 between Bangladesh and India over the Teesta River was almost destroyed when the Chief Minister of West Bengal pulled out of the treaty-making process.

Moving to the Agenda of Inclusiveness, there is a rise of Asian economic powers in the recent decade. This is not surprising since India and China dominated the world GDP until the 16th century. In recent times, India’s GDP growth has been increasing. Unlike in the past, its population is considered to be an asset rather than a hurdle, the only problem being how to cope with the demands of this population. India’s literacy rate has been steadily increasing. Experts have predicted that beyond 50% literacy, the people’s voice cannot be ignored in politics. Three distinct events in Indian politics can be attributed to this phenomenon: first in 1971 when Indira Gandhi’s authority was challenged; second in 1991 when Hindu nationalist politics rose in India, and third in 2001 when the feminist movement gained momentum.

The Gini coefficient, which measures the degree of societal inequality, has remained stable in India, unlike China or Brazil. Usually, with economic development, this coefficient tends to rise for a country. Professor Tanabe attributes this anomaly to the development of the service sector and the informal sector in India. The service sector’s share in GDP was 63.1% in 2010. A breakdown of this sector shows the largest share is of trade, hotels, and restaurants (16.3%). In fact, the Indian economy has a



bipolar structure with smaller elite-led IT industry, but a stronger base coming from the subsistence-based people's economy. Interestingly, 92.4% of Indians are working in the unorganized sector, including 80% of the middle class in India.

Because of rising economic opportunities, their aspirations are growing leading to political demands to provide better life chances. A direct consequence of this has been the various reforms introduced in India such as local administrative reform (1992) in which there was devolution of power to local governments. Others include the National Rural Employment Guarantee Act (2006), the Rights to Education Act (2009), and the National Food Security Act (2013). These are basic institutions catering to people's aspiration to be healthier and better educated. Unfortunately, this is not working well at the moment as marginalized populations are seen as hurdles to development and are being ousted from their original living areas.

The final issue, the Agenda of Peacefulness, has two elements: participation of vernacular publics in politics and developmental democracy. In India, political representation has reflected social diversity to a certain extent. As a result, caste people and regional parties are represented today more than in the past. Vernacular media has also developed greatly in recent years. Many social movements are taking place in India such as the anti-corruption movement and the anti-rape movement, and NGOs are increasingly voicing their issues. Participation of this diverse population in economic activities and in the political process has been the key to a mutual strengthening of democracy and economic development. Therefore, developmental democracy forces one to rethink not only the balance between the state and the market, but also the balance with society.

Congress has traditionally been a strong party in India, but in the recent election BJP, a Hindu nationalist party, won by a huge majority. If things were going well in India during the Congress period, the question arises as to why people voted against it. Professor Tanabe argues this was due to an accumulation of the negative aspects of developmental democracy. The country has too many political parties and stakeholders and a tendency towards patronage democracy and resource sharing. In recent times, vernacular publics have realized that India is lagging behind in East Asia. Narendra Modi's track record and his strong leadership skills were seen as an answer to this problem. However, there are positive and negative aspects of the new political scenery. The Modi government with stronger leadership will perhaps not listen to minority populations.

The Modi wave has bigger implications as the assertion of non-elite classes in Asia has become stronger. There is a strong structural transformation taking place from an Atlantic-centered world order to an Asia-Pacific centered one. Hence, there is a rise of strong Asian leaders with their own way of doing politics. Therefore, transition is inevitable in the world, but how to bring about a peaceful transition of power and wealth is the question. In this context, Modi talks about connectivity with neighboring countries; however, many South Asian countries see this as a threat. There are also attempts being made for regional cooperation in Asia. Cooperation is a cumbersome process involving dialogue and discussion, and a balance between participation of people in different nations and efficiency in both the domestic and international scene is the main agenda for the next decade.

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## Japan's Public Diplomacy

**WATANABE YASUSHI**

*Professor, Keio University*

According to Professor Watanabe Yasushi, public diplomacy is the diplomatic efforts of a nation to wield soft power in order to shape realities and win the hearts and minds of public or elite opinion in a foreign country. There are two layers of public diplomacy: one, securing optimal sociocultural environments and two, achieving policy goals. Indeed, if an optimal sociocultural environment is secured, the total collapse of bilateral relations can be avoided even during times of conflict.

Professor Watanabe stated that fast and slow information tools are the two types of public diplomacy tools. Fast information tools deal with dispensing quick information. This includes policy advocacy such as official publications and press conferences and international broadcasting such as BBC World and NHK World. On the contrary, slow information tools take time to accumulate and include exchange diplomacy relating to policy or intellectual dialogue and cultural diplomacy such as language education, art exhibitions, and so forth.

A typical example of public diplomacy was US diplomacy in Japan right after World War II in the form of establishing American libraries. These libraries were established in more than 30 cities in Japan. The library included not only books, but also conducted exchange diplomacy. The effect was that the initial resentment among the Japanese against the United States was slowly replaced by trust, which smoothed Japan's transition to a democratic country. However, in the present age of globalization and the Internet, it is extremely difficult for the state to control the flow of information. The state's capacity and ability to criticize itself, called "meta-soft power," is even more important. A good example of this is an international broadcaster criticizing its own government.

Japanese public diplomacy can be traced back to 1867 when it accepted the invitation to participate in the Paris Expo where many artisan products were exhibited under the "Nippon" banner. Six years later at the Vienna Expo, the Meiji government allocated 1% of its annual budget to participate in the expo. Unfortunately, Japan's cultural engagement turned into propaganda during World War II, and for 10–15 years, public diplomacy remained inactive because of its experience in colonizing Asian countries. Subsequently, the country was faced with a challenge of transforming its reputation from a militaristic aggressor into a democratic, peace-loving nation.

During the 1960s due to rapid economic growth, Japan got into economic conflict with Southeast Asia and the United States. As a result, Japan started asserting its uniqueness, but during the Gulf War in the 1990s, it was heavily criticized for failing to contribute to international society. Since then, Japan's public diplomacy has undergone a paradigm shift. It has become more proactive. In more recent years, this shift has been toward an approach of shared experience and cooperative efforts with other countries. For

instance, in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake and tsunami in Japan, the Japan Foundation and other related agencies launched a project inviting young people from around the world to deepen their understanding of Japan by sharing their experience of disaster, reconstruction, and disaster prevention.

The actors of this public diplomacy in Japan include both state/public actors and nonstate/private actors. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Japan Tourism Agency are state actors while the Japan Foundation and NHK World are independent public actors. Although NHK and the Japan Foundation are publicly funded, they have maintained their independent standing. Even conservative politicians understand the dangers of being too direct or too close with the governmental position. In fact, Japan has been recently invited to join GD5, an association of directors (dealing with international broadcasting) among five<sup>1</sup> democratic countries with free media, which implies that NHK World has acquired credibility as a free media. Additionally, the nonstate and private actors include foundations, think tanks, and universities.

Japan has focused recently on changing its image to “Cool Japan,” which deals with manga, anime, and video. This serves as an important gateway for the younger generation to get interested in Japan, who then gradually become experts on Japan. Nurturing such experts serves the country’s national interest in the broader context. Japan is also keen to export “life infrastructure” such as the postal system, the police system or *koban*, and the sewage system; today Japan is increasingly emphasizing its contribution to peace and human security.

However, the country is faced with many challenges in its public diplomacy mission. Historical problems with China and South Korea plague the country. South Korea’s “discount Japan” campaign, a new movement to undermine Japan's position in the international community such as by building memorials of comfort women, is very damaging. The conservatives in Japan want to retaliate and offset such public diplomacy, but Professor Watanabe argues this could ignite a negative spiral between the two countries. Other challenges for Japan include rumor control in the aftermath of the 2011 earthquake, English language proficiency in higher education, an aging population and low birthrate, budget cuts, and accountability. In Japan, many stakeholders need to be convinced of a decision which requires a certain amount of time.

Global competition is getting increasingly fierce, and foreign cultural policy has become one of the major challenges in foreign policy. Many countries are increasingly projecting their worldviews and shaping realities and winning hearts and minds. There are many areas of competition, and this competition can lead to power politics between nations. Nonetheless, soft power can be a positive-sum game for countries engaged in it. Hence, while countries are in competition with each other, they must direct more attention towards cooperation. Therefore, innovative public diplomacy is the need of the hour to achieve the broader goal of enhancing cooperation and engagement. There is also political manipulation of media taking place. Professor Watanabe concluded by noting that in order to understand the nuance of other societies, a bottom-up view is important and useful to public diplomacy.

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<sup>1</sup> The five countries include the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, and Netherland. After Japan joined, GD5 became GD6.

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## Revealed Future: A Sociological Analysis of the Tsunami-hit Areas in Japan

**OGUMA EIJI**

*Professor, Keio University*

In his presentation, Professor Oguma Eiji examined post-tsunami reconstruction efforts in Japan from a sociological perspective. Even 3 years after the earthquake and tsunami, thousands have not been able to go back to their homes and are living in temporary residences.

The tsunami-hit Sanriku coastal area lying in the northeastern part of Honshu spreads over 600 kilometers. It has a unique topographical structure consisting of many inlets and headlands, and along each inlet is a fishing village. The town offices and industries are located in middle-sized inlets and prefectural or city offices and factories are located in big inlets. Each small village has its own community association ruled by a gerontocracy. The main local industries are fishing, marine foods, paper manufacturing, and public works.

Professor Oguma then talked about the socioeconomic conditions prevalent at the time of the disaster. Local industry had declined because of industrialization and globalization. This resulted in a population drain of the young people to cities. Local public works were carried out to stop this migration, which proved ineffective. Consequently, mostly old people were left behind in the villages. Community associations then degenerated into gerontocracy. Countermeasures against disasters were connected with public works. The reconstruction system provided financial support for communities or local governments but not for each survivor.

The 2011 tsunami and earthquake provided a fantastic excuse to revive public works construction on a large scale. The reconstruction plans for Sanriku made by the Japanese government consisted of evacuating residents to higher ground and providing temporary residences, converting lowlands into parks and industries, and building high seawalls. However, marginalized people in the local communities were isolated from receiving aid while women and young people were kept away from decision making. The community associations agreed with public work-oriented reconstruction plans in the form of construction of seawalls without any proper assessment. The planned seawall would occupy 39% of the land of an inlet, and survivors were asked to wait in temporary residences on hillsides until the completion of the wall. Each temporary residence would cost approximately 8 million yen, and the seawall was planned to cover all the Sanriku coast including Fukushima, Miyagi, and Iwate Prefectures.

Next, Professor Oguma stated that such irrational plans can be attributed to problems existing at the three levels of the government. While the central government has become path dependent due to lack of local information and an inflexible legal system and bureaucracy, the local government has become overdependent on the central government due to lack of knowledge, experience, and human resources.

They depend on over 90% of budget support from the central government. Subsequently, at the local community level problems are due to overdependence on administration, drain of the younger generation, and addiction to public works. The central government declared in 2013 the total budget for reconstruction will cost \$250 billion over a 5-year period, which will include construction of seawalls, cleaning up of radioactive contamination, and so on. The construction of seawalls for Sanriku alone would cost \$8 billion.

However, the reality on the ground is that there has been delay in purchasing land and getting consent from survivors, because they fear about their future and do not easily agree with selling land voluntarily to local governments. Additionally, local industries have declined because of the evacuation order until completion of the seawall, and this has forced the remaining young people to migrate to cities where they are mostly working as contingent workers. In the community, public works have given rise to a construction bubble economy resulting in unsustainable income polarization, poverty, dependence, and moral hazard.

Professor Oguma then revealed two problems that lie at the heart of such inadequate reconstruction projects. First is the mismatch between policy concept and social reality. The legal system mainly focused on public facility building to prevent natural disasters is based on a 1960s framework. Such legal systems for disaster reconstruction do not suit contemporary Japanese local society. The second problem is lack of bottom-up democracy. The local community structure is comprised of communities ruled by a gerontocracy which are supported by the local administrations, which are in turn supported by the central government. Such a hierarchical system easily causes moral hazard and path dependency because of lack of a bottom-up feedback system to adapt to change.

According to Karl Polanyi, a Hungarian-American political economist, society consists of three elemental functions: redistribution (power or government), transaction (market), and reciprocity (community mutual assistance). The social capital of a community would increase if these three elements were well harmonized. In harmonized society, government and market could provide resources for mutual assistance in the community. However, excessive redistribution would cause dependence, excessive transaction would cause atomization, and excessive reciprocity would lead to exclusiveness. Hence, Professor Oguma argues that the disaster reveals hidden problems in society and may accelerate pre-existing social trends. The disaster also provides a chance to analyze society and forecast its future.

In looking towards a better future, Professor Oguma states democracy and efficiency are not contradictory because democracy is one of the ways to make people's capability more effective and efficient and to liberate them from dependence, and social scientists should try to find such a way to improve the people's future.

In conclusion, Professor Oguma stated Japan is known to be a calm society partly due to social and economic stability. However, such large-scale disasters and decades of stagnant economy have resulted in social inequality and social dysfunction. As a result, people are voicing their anger, which can be seen in the increasing number of demonstrations, whether it be anti-nuclear or racist movements targeted toward minorities.

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## Visit to Maruki Gallery for the Hiroshima Panels

### The *Hiroshima Panels*—An Introduction

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**OKAMURA YUKINORI**

*Curator, Maruki Gallery for the Hiroshima Panels*

The *Hiroshima Panels* are a series of 15 paintings made by the husband and wife team of Maruki Iri and Toshi over a period of more than 30 years. Their horrifying experience in Hiroshima led them to create the panels. The drawings and the short prose-like poems work together as a set to inform people about what happened in Hiroshima. The common theme that flows throughout their joint work is that violence hurts people and thinking about other's suffering will save many lives. The Maruki Gallery which houses the murals was established in Saitama in 1967 as Maruki Iri found the surrounding landscape overlooking the Tokigawa River similar to his home.

Maruki Iri, a Hiroshima native, arrived there from Tokyo on August 10, 1945, and Toshi followed him a week later. Hiroshima looked like hell. The pair helped families and people and tried rebuilding the houses. This is depicted in their number 8 panel titled "Rescue," which shows the dying and injured. The Marukis were exposed to radiation and fell ill after returning to Tokyo.

Japan had lost the war and was occupied by the coalition forces. The Occupation policies included a press code that provided for strict censorship of print and broadcast reporting, especially about the A-bomb. However, the couple resolved to depict their Hiroshima experience in paintings as they feared the suffering of the Hiroshima victims would otherwise be forgotten by the world. These works when initially publicized were not named *Hiroshima Panels* due to the censorship but were instead titled *August 6*. The duo resolved to focus on victims rather than the mushroom cloud and the wasted landscapes. This portrayal of physical suffering of human beings at life size is the most important characteristic of the panels.

"Ghosts" became their first panel publicized in 1950. The Korean War had just erupted and the danger of the A-bomb lurked in the background. In this, the *Hiroshima Panels* express not only the damage from the A-bomb in Hiroshima and Nagasaki, but also what may happen in the future. This "Ghosts" panel has people with hands halfway up implying people walking in a ghostly manner but actually protecting their burnt skin from peeling off. This work when publicized in Tokyo shocked the viewers. While some criticized it as an exaggeration of the event, the people who had experienced the bombs related strongly to the murals.

The times were such that one could only inform through drawings. So, the Marukis planned to exhibit the panels throughout Japan to convey the suffering of the victims. These panels became widely known as they were the first works to inform about the A-bombings. The couple treated these panels as a

vessel for memories by continuing to draw them for more than 30 years in 15 different panels to memorialize not only their own experience, but also those of the many other victims who shared their experiences with them during their exhibitions.

While Maruki Iri was trained in traditional Japanese brush painting, his wife Toshi was trained in Western-style oil painting. The *Hiroshima Panels* converge these two styles by using paper and calligraphy ink. Human figures were done by Toshi while Iri would add calligraphy ink, and as the ink dried, the figures reemerged making the couple realize the effectiveness of such a fusion. They repeated that process and that is how the Hiroshima paintings were created. The very individualistic artists were in conflict with one another over their style in order to bring about the paintings. This struggle between the two also led them to continue working on the panels for more than 30 years.

Work number 2 titled “Fire,” clearly shows this convergence of oriental and Western art. In this painting, the human figures are depicted in a very Western manner prompting Europeans to compare them with Michelangelo’s painting when they showcased the panel in Europe. However, the flames are depicted in the oriental style of portraying hell. In those times, the two styles of painting were treated differently, but this panel created a new way of art in Japan.

The number 4 work is titled “Rainbow.” The Marukis have portrayed the fact that the bomb also killed American POWs held in Hiroshima. In 1970, they first exhibited panels number 1 to number 8 in the United States. The reaction of the American viewers surprised them. The Americans remarked that the dropping of the A-bomb was a right retaliation to the Pearl Harbor bombing. After their return to Japan, the duo researched the circumstances in which American POWs had died and found that the American POWs had been lynched by the Japanese after the A-bomb. The couple consequently decided to draw this in panel number 13 titled “Death of American Prisoners of War.”

Another shocking experience for the pair during their US exhibition was when the Americans who helped them with the exhibition asked the couple what their reaction would be if Chinese drew the Nanjing Massacre and exhibited them in Japan. The Marukis till then had only thought about Japanese being victimized by war. They realized that people remember themselves being victimized, but tend to forget about other people’s suffering. This is when they publicized panel number 14 titled “Crows” that depicted the Korean victims of the A-bomb, and immediately afterwards drew “Nanjing Massacre,” “Auschwitz,” and “Minamata.” These paintings showed victimization and infliction on both sides during war. Additionally, they realized that only by imagining other people’s suffering can one start to think about bringing peace to the world.

The final thought that they arrived at was that life could not be separated by any borders. Iri passed away in 1995 and Toshi in 2000. Nevertheless, the gallery continues to receive many visitors today, and every year on August 6, lanterns are floated near the Tokigawa River as a symbol of mourning for the victims of the A-bomb.

**ASHIWA YOSHIKO**

*Professor, Hitotsubashi University*

Professor Ashiwa Yoshiko focused on anti-war or socially engaged art and artists. She started with the unique contribution of the Maruki husband and wife whose works have been evaluated from different perspectives in the anti-war context. She felt the two artists combined their style in a unique expression which needs to be explored further. The works of the Marukis are exquisite and different. The couple was involved for over 40 years in their paintings. They started their paintings from Hiroshima, but then extended their theme and included works like “Nanjing Massacre,” “Auschwitz,” and “Minamata.”

Their early works are more realistic and traced their memories, while the later ones show fantasy such as the painting “Battle of Okinawa.” Through their personal experiences and lifelong commitment, the Marukis deepened their understanding of the human experience, which is reflected in their paintings. Another interesting aspect about the couple is that their individual paintings, such as the colorful children’s book illustrations by Toshi, show a very different life as an artist. The paintings by the Marukis can be considered as historical paintings from a civilian perspective. The Marukis traveled a lot within Japan and the world to showcase their paintings. They rolled up the murals in a traditional Japanese style, which allowed them to be flexible. This is similar to the technique employed by the traveling monks of medieval Japan. These monks carried Buddhist Sutras by rolling them up and taught people about Buddhism through Jataka stories and paintings. There were others who used musical instruments like *pipa* to tell battle stories to people.

A strong symbol of anti-war art is “Guernica,” by Pablo Picasso, which represents the bombing of Guernica by Germany in 1937. When Picasso heard about the air bombing of civilians in Guernica, it caught his imagination. This painting was brought to MoMA in New York for safekeeping. Later, it was taken back to Spain in 1981, first to the Museo del Prado then to the Reina Sofía Museum in 1992. Unfortunately, Picasso did not continue doing this kind of anti-war painting.

Similarly, another anti-war painting, “Myth of Tomorrow” by Okamoto Taro, depicts the moment of an A-bomb explosion. This painting was commissioned in Mexico in 1968 by a hotel owner. The mural was stolen for decades. When it was found, it was brought back to Japan. This is now housed in Shibuya Station. The central part of “Myth of Tomorrow” is a skeleton, which in a Mexican context symbolizes life and death. The left side resembles a fish, which symbolizes the Bikini Island A-bomb testing and the subsequent heavy radiation exposure of tuna.

Next, Professor Ashiwa moved to young artists who are committed to socially relevant art. After the Fukushima nuclear accident in 2011, a group of unschooled artists attached a painting of the smoldering Fukushima plant to the anti-nuclear mural “Myth of Tomorrow” and left it for a day and then disappeared. This became controversial. However, Okamoto’s adopted daughter, Toshiko Okamoto, stated that Okamoto would have been happy about it. In this way, it can be said that Okamoto’s “Myth of Tomorrow” is alive.



Next was a painting by Kazuki Yasuo, a rare artist who continued painting about his war experiences. Kazuki was captured in Siberia for 2 years. He captured his bitter experience in the “Siberia Series” which he produced for many decades mostly using charcoal and sometimes adding colors. His dark-themed paintings contrast particularly with the colorful flowers that he started painting after the birth of his grandchild.

Ikeda Tatsuo is another Japanese painter who started the genre of reportage painting. He made paintings of the unfolding military and political events that he witnessed. Nakamura Hiroshi is also a “reportage painter” who considered himself as a reporter at the frontlines. His famous painting, “Protest” depicts protests by the farmers in Sunagawa against confiscation of their ancestral land by the U.S. army. However, after this painting, he changed his style and got into a type of pop art. Professor Ashiwa then showed a poster by a young Japanese woman whose theme resembled the 1950s Godzilla movie but with a more contemporary setup. The poster included the Ikebukuro Sunshine Building, which was the location of the Sugamo war crimes prison, and also the colonial Manchurian railway built by Japan.

Professor Ashiwa remarked that recent events, such as the September 11 terrorist attack in the United States and the March 11 tsunami in Japan, have given rise to young artists committing to social issues. These contemporary artists are a minority, but their art is being sold in auction at huge prices. Their art may represent theatrical or ironical themes or comical interpretations.

In the context of protest art, Professor Ashiwa especially mentioned a contemporary Tibetan art show that took place in Beijing in 2010 titled Scorching Sun of Tibet. This exhibition presented contemporary art works that reflected multiple interpretations, one being criticism of the government. Professor Ashiwa found it difficult to understand how they exhibited such an anti-government show in China. The exhibition poster had people wearing sunglasses looking at the sun hidden behind a cloud. This sun has been interpreted as Mao or the center of the communist party. In general, the different works depicted the dilemma of Tibetans living under Chinese power in the face of rapid development. One piece hinted at destruction of real Buddhism and people paying attention to money, while another work suggested modernization of Tibet. However, all works could be interpreted in multiple ways.

Likewise the Vietnamese artist Dinh Q Lê raises public awareness about the effects of Agent Orange in Vietnam through his “Damaged Gene” project using Siamese twin figurines. According to him, Siamese twins are not discriminated against in the villages and are revered as local gods after their death. He used a very clever way to culturalize the experience using indigenous images.

Lastly, Professor Ashiwa talked about Noh theater and how even traditional arts could include war as a memory in a very traditional way. One Noh player wrote plays on Okinawa, Nagasaki, and Hiroshima—Noh has a structure where dead spirits come to the stage and share stories of their life events.

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## Multiculturalism in Japan

**EDWARD SUMOTO**

*Representative, Mixed Roots Japan*

**HYOUE OKAMURA**

*Kobe University*

Mr. Edward Sumoto and Mr. Hyoue Okamura talked about their documentary *Hafu: The Mixed-Race Experience in Japan* and their own personal experience of being *hafu* in Japan. *Hafu* (“half”) is a term used by Japanese for people who are ethnically half-Japanese and the film explores the experiences of five half-Japanese searching for their identities in Japan. In the larger context, the documentary opens a discussion of a social culture that can take advantage of diversity and of community building.

Mr. Sumoto is a Venezuelan-Japanese leading a network called Mixed Roots Japan. He states that the outward flow of Japanese to other countries is over 100 years old. This is not only economically motivated, but also because mixed race people experience a lack of belonging in Japan. In the movie, Alex Oi, a 9-year-old mixed race boy, increasingly showing stress due to the teasing by his friends for being *hafu*. Thus, when *hafu* do not feel a strong connection with the country, they end up grouping together with similar people and alienating themselves from society. He also talked about phenotype, an idea of how Japanese should look.

The issue of refugees and nationality was also raised. Japan does not allow dual citizenship. Recently, this was an issue with Nobel Prize Winner Shuji Nakamura, a professor at University of California, Santa Barbara who has gained American citizenship. Mr. Sumoto then pondered the question of what it means to be Japanese and how one learns a culture or becomes part of a society. One cannot immerse in a culture without overcoming certain barriers, which, for Sophia Fukunishi, the Australian-Japanese *hafu* in the movie, was language, which is related to a sense of confidence.

Mr. Sumoto is active in Mixed Roots, a global social network promoting social dialogue through family events, art and music, radio shows, and also academic discourse in partnership with national universities and international universities. The group supports diverse people that encompass not only *hafus* but also refugees and others. This social networking group has grown organically. The discussion then led to community building and what defines a livable city in the context of group diversity. According to Mr. Sumoto, a livable city should not only meet basic needs, but also meet the cultural and social needs of its residents. There often is a generational gap in the *hafu* family: the first generation of *hafus* barely make by because of economic reasons but beyond the second generation, with the right opportunities, they are able to achieve many things. However, the lack of right opportunities will lead *hafu* to end up in limbo.

Mr. Okamura is a German-Japanese who maintains the website *Die Kreuzungsstelle* and is engaged in *hafu* research led by people who are not *hafu* themselves. The website is a forum aimed at individuals who are labeled multiracial, multiethnic, and who were born and live in Japan. He said that

since his father was German, English was not regarded as important and so he finds difficulty in expressing himself in English. In contrast, Mr. Sumoto grew up with his mother who put him in an international school because she shared the sentiment that speaking English was key to being *hafu* and also getting ahead in life.

Mr. Okamura has researched the image of *hafu* women in contemporary Japan. He talked about the image of *hafu*, giving historical perspective on the subject. Japan seems to be going through a phase in which mixed race people are being popularized by the media. Since the late 2000s, “*hafu gao* make-up” has become a fashion trend amongst young women in Japan. *Hafu gao* refers to a distinctive make-up style which supposedly looks part-white. Although *hafu* has been glamorized in show business, the society does not accept them fully.

Mr. Sumoto adds that even without conducting any gender studies, one can notice the commodification and sexualization of *hafu* women. In contrast, while the image of *hafu* women is a saleable image, this creates an increasingly difficult and unsaleable image for *hafu* men. The two presenters then talked about the ambiguous racial lines being drawn for *hafu* by society and the popular media and how it affects *hafu*.

Answering a question on whether the movie works as a policy advocacy for the government, Mr. Sumoto said that while the government might come out with educational support for *hafu*, from the advocacy perspective, the movie is geared toward the general public so they can know and appreciate the kind of changes going on in society.

Replying to another question on immigration in Japan and the Japanese dream, Mr. Sumoto states that immigration is far more taxing on the children than people imagine. The children bear the brunt of stress. Generally, the parents and their *hafu* children do not connect with each other, because their problems are quite different. This also relates to the English language, which is a privileged language in Japan. *Hafu* themselves are good at English while the common Japanese is not. The government’s stance is not only to teach Japanese, but that heritage language education is also important, so there are more programs being offered in schools at present. Hence, the Japanese dream for Mr. Sumoto means to increase the chances of success and also to be able to feel at home in Japan.

In closing, Mr. Okamura stated Japan has long been regarded as a homogenous culture. Hence, to become Japanese is to look Japanese and to speak the language. However, the good news is that Japan is changing rapidly. During his childhood days, the keyword in Japan was integration and assimilation. However, in the last decade or two, multiculturalism has become increasingly important in Japan. This shift can also be seen in people’s names. While in the past people used to prefer pure Japanese names, many in the present generation use ethnic names having katakana script, which would have undoubtedly raised a red flag in the past.

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## Japanese Tea Ceremony and Peace

**SEN GENSHITSU**

*15th Grand Master, Urasenke school*

Dr. Sen Genshitsu, the 15th Grand Master of Urasenke, a Japanese tea ceremony school, started his presentation by offering *matcha* to the fellows. He claimed that to truly appreciate the authentic way of tea requires probably a whole day. Just like a 200-year-old pine tree needs to be taken care of daily, the green tea powder of *matcha* also needs to be taken care of. Similarly, human beings need to properly nourish and take care of themselves to reach old age. He, however, feels the current generations are not able to fully appreciate this simple fact.

Dr. Sen feels that people have increasingly become future-oriented but wonders if there is actually a future. The current generation needs to respect the “present day” and learn its importance. Looking back at his long life, Dr. Sen recalls the myriads of experiences he accumulated. However, every single day he appreciates the fact that he is alive. Hence, for him, “now” is more important as there might not be a tomorrow.

For Dr. Sen, thinking about peace requires thinking about the present. He appreciates the word “nen” of *nen-ju* which in kanji reads as “now” and “heart.” If the younger generation share this thought, it would truly create a bright future for them. Drinking tea together allows for relaxed communication between two souls. While serving *bancha*—tea popularly served during mealtimes—to the fellows, he answered many questions posed to him.

Dr. Sen recalled his days in the kamikaze suicide corps during World War II and how lucky he was to have survived on May 25, 1945, as part of the Okinawa attack fleet. He shared that he prepared tea for his colleagues before they took off for their final flight. It was these painful experiences of such turbulent times that made him dedicate himself to world peace and harmony through the “Way of Tea.” Everybody experiences frustrations and struggles in their lives, but one has to have the strength to overcome those difficulties. He feels such a shift in personality is possible through one’s heart. His belief that tea has the power to help people understand each other is the reason why he offers tea as a way of peace to everybody without any discrimination.

Dr. Sen divides his life into two parts, before and after World War II. He states that young people do not have first-hand experience of war like himself who saw the devastation caused by the atomic bomb as well as the Korean and Vietnam wars. Seeing such destruction, he realized that it was important to unite with neighboring countries and stand together. Although there are no open wars going on in Southeast Asia, discrimination and divisions abound in the minds of the people as well as a widening gap between the haves and the have-nots. He believes that everybody is equal irrespective of their wealth and so deserves to be happy. That is why he promotes peace to the heads of state and other dignitaries

through the tea ceremony in countries he visits. In this context, next year during the 70th anniversary of the United Nations, he will have another tea gathering at the UN, and during this gathering he wants the representative countries to have a single purpose in mind, that is, to save all people in despair.

Next, Dr. Sen delved deeply into the difference between the techniques of Vipassana meditation practiced in countries like Nepal and Zen Buddhism. He states there is a clear difference between teachings of Buddhism in Nepal and Zen. The philosophy in the oriental world is to start from *mu*, from nothingness. The student should look within oneself by closing the eyes and then have this cycle where *mu* has a certain form and then again moving back to *mu*. However, in Zen meditation, the abbots when asking one to appreciate the temple garden have two purposes in mind: one is to appreciate the garden itself and the second is asking the people to become *mu* or zero. However, calming oneself by looking at an object is much harder to practice. Dr. Sen explained that a temple garden should be enjoyed while in a sitting position at the level of the garden, never standing up and looking down at the garden. Hence, the monk is also teaching the student to take all of nature within him. That is the teaching of Zen.

Next, Dr. Sen then explained why the Filipino Lusong jar was considered precious in 16th century Japan. During the old times, ships that came to Japan stopped by at ports in the Philippines—called Lusong in those days—and would take on the dry and solid Lusong jar, which was considered good for keeping goods. In the mid-16th century, when the Christian priest Francis Xavier arrived in Japan to preach Christianity, Juan Rodriguez, his secretary, kept a diary of important activities to be carried out in Japan. In this diary, Rodriguez wrote that Francis Xavier asked him to visit the warlord Toyotomi Hideyoshi and talk to him about the benefits of Christianity, but before that to meet Sen no Rikyu, who was, in fact, the ancestor of Dr. Sen Genshitsu. The diary mentions that Francisco Xavier brought a Lusong jar as a gift to Rikyu, who felt that it was perfect for storing tea leaves. After Rikyu started using it, the price went up. In fact, Rikyu also used many potteries from China and Korea, and generally after he used them, the potteries would be considered valuable. Additionally, these items which were considered valuable were small enough to be carried personally during difficult times.

In conclusion, Dr. Sen stated that tea has helped and contributed to the world of economics and also of peace. The Way of Tea is a way of meditating and through it one learns to deepen the relationship between people as well as between countries.

***Seminars during the Field Trip  
to Nagasaki and Fukuoka***

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## How to Teach Nagasaki: The Challenge of Peace Education

**FUNAKOE KOUICHI**

*Professor Emeritus, Nagasaki University*

In the beginning of his teaching career, Professor Funakoe Kouichi struggled with how to teach Japanese and Korean students about the A-bomb and even consulted an anti-nuclear activist in this regard. That is when he realized that one needs to look at the other side of the story in order to share the lessons of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and spread a true anti-nuclear spirit.

Professor Funakoe states the central tenet of his presentation is that Japanese should uphold the spirit of article 9 of the Japanese Constitution, a clause that outlaws war as a means to settle international disputes. According to him, generally peace discussions in Japan have myopically focused on the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the aftermath. However, to fully understand the history of the bombing, one needs to focus on events preceding August 6 and 9, 1945, the dates for the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings. It has been very difficult for Japanese to understand these preceding events, and Professor Funakoe concludes this is because Japanese national identity was completely denied after World War II and people have failed to deal with the issue of nationalism for over 60 years after the war. The symbol for nationalism for many Japanese is exclusively represented by the controversial Yasukuni Shrine. However, Yasukuni is not the only source of national identity, and Professor Funakoe himself feels guilty of not having been able to find better ways to talk about Japanese pride. After the war, Japanese went on to deny their own past, including their traditions and pride in their nation. Additionally, Professor Funakoe explained how the idea of constitutional patriotism proposed by German Philosopher Jurgen Habermas in the mid-1980s does not work in Japan; from the beginning, society has been divided over the constitution drafted during the Occupation, and the Japanese government has never really celebrated constitutional day.

Talking about Nagasaki, Professor Funakoe remarks that present visitors to Nagasaki consider it as a “City of Healing” because of its peaceful and relaxing atmosphere. However, beneath this peaceful atmosphere lies a dark history filled with pain and suffering. Historically, in the 16th century, the port of Nagasaki was developed. In fact, the city was colonized by Portuguese for 10 years when it was donated by a Japanese feudal lord to the Jesuit society. Because Nagasaki was a prosperous port with modern influences, people from all over Japan in those days desired to live in the city. Nagasaki was praised as an exotic and romantic city. Christianity was brought to Nagasaki from Europe, but along with it also came science and modernization including nuclear weapon. Within 50 years, the Christian population in Nagasaki swelled to 50,000. Ironically, the A-bomb dropped in the Urakami District in Nagasaki had a large concentration of Catholic population. Out of the 12,000 Catholic population in Urakami, more than 8,500 people died. Historically, the Urakami Christians had been suppressed by the government, especially during the Meiji Period. Tragically again about 140 years later, the same village was destroyed

completely by the A-bomb. Hence, coming to Nagasaki and talking to its citizens, one appreciates the fact that the human spirit is very resilient and people are able to live peacefully without letting their past interfere with their present. That is why Nagasaki is called the City of Healing.

Next, Professor Funakoe talked about Oe Kenzaburo's famous book *Hiroshima Notes* which tells the story of a young man who later dies of leukemia due to radiation exposure as a 3-year-old child. The book basically sums up how because of the actions of the government, all its citizens had to endure such a tragic event. As is historically known, during World War II, Japan invaded many Asian countries. This decision to invade those nations was taken at the highest level of the military and government and had nothing to do with civilians or children and women. Unfortunately, these innocent souls were the ones who suffered during the retaliation by the Americans.

Going further in the discussion, Professor Funakoe remarked that after the Meiji Restoration, Nagasaki was modernized and many manufacturing plants were developed including steel and shipbuilding. Eventually the influence of militarism converted the city into a weapon production center under Mitsubishi. The battleships Yamato and Musashi, the two largest Japanese battleships, were manufactured in the Nagasaki Mitsubishi shipyard. In fact, in those days, the Urakami people used their residences for fabricating small items for Mitsubishi. Professor Funakoe argues that this also contributed to the decision of the Americans to choose Nagasaki as one target for the nuclear bomb.

This fact is further corroborated by a story written by the then Mitsubishi plant director on why Nagasaki was chosen. Many people are aware that Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor is considered to be the preemptive attack for the A-bomb. The Americans never believed that Pearl Harbor could be attacked by Japanese torpedoes as these torpedoes sank to 60 meters while the water depth in Pearl Harbor was only 20 meters. They feared a German attack more than a Japanese attack. However, during the Pearl Harbor attack in 1941, Japan used a new kind of torpedo built by Mitsubishi engineers. These engineers were ordered by the Japanese military to build a new kind of torpedo that would work in shallow waters. The engineers came out with an innovative wing-designed torpedo which allowed them to work in low water depths. Unfortunately, these new torpedoes had the Chinese characters "Nagasaki" engraved on them as they were manufactured in the Mitsubishi factory in Nagasaki. The atomic bombing of Nagasaki is, therefore, considered as a consequence to this attack on Pearl Harbor. The Professor feels that this story is not really well-told in contemporary Japan, although it is quite a popular one.

Therefore, Professor Funakoe concludes that the nuclear story should not just end with the A-bomb, but the Japanese should also make an effort to understand the preceding events that led to the cataclysmic destruction.



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# Japanese Modernization Seen from Nagasaki: The Influence of Foreign Settlement and Christianity

**BRIAN BURKE-GUFFNEY**

*Professor, Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science*

Professor Brian Burke-Guffney stated that prior to the arrival of Portuguese ships in the 16th century, Nagasaki was a small fishing village with a calm natural harbor, and that Japan for more than two centuries adopted a policy of isolation (*sakoku*). However, the Opium War and other factors forced Japan to open its doors to the world in the 1850s. At that time, Nagasaki was designated as one site of foreign settlement, and foreigners from the treaty countries of Britain, the United States, France, Germany, and Russia established businesses in Nagasaki. Dejima, a small island in Nagasaki Harbor, also became part of the foreign settlement. This resulted in the introduction of various aspects of Western culture in Japan.

Soon thereafter, buildings of distinct Western style with Japanese influence appeared in Nagasaki. These buildings were examples of technical exchange between Japanese carpenters using traditional Japanese architectural techniques at the requests of the Western residents. Glover Garden has preserved three such original houses on their original sites: Alt House, Ringer House, and Glover House. Originally Thomas Glover built the Glover House in an L-shape with a pine tree beside the house. He nicknamed the house *Ipponmatsu*, single pine. This building is now a World Heritage site, because it remains as the oldest Western-style building in Japan. The Alt House, built by William Alt, is a Western-Japanese fusion featuring Tuscan pillars and walls of sandstone with a Japanese-styled roof. The house also has the oldest Western-style fountain in Japan. The Ringer House was also built using sandstone with a Japanese tipped roof.

Further, the owners of these houses made a tremendous contribution to Japan. William Alt, an Englishman, came to Nagasaki in 1859 and founded Alt & Company. He was a close associate of Iwasaki Yataro, the founder of the Mitsubishi Company. Fredrick Ringer founded Holme, Ringer & Co., which made tremendous contributions to commercial enterprises in Nagasaki. He introduced troll fishing and modern whaling techniques. He also established the Nagasaki Hotel, the first hotel in Japan to have telephones in each room and an electric generator. Unfortunately, this hotel was closed after the Russo-Japanese War and the building torn down around 1925. The Hotel was a symbol of Frederick Ringer's love of Nagasaki.

Thomas Glover came to Japan in 1859 at the age of 21. He established the Glover Trading Co. (Guraba Shokai) and went on to make various contributions. He was a man of action and won the trust of young samurai in Japan, and because of that he established various industrial facilities that became the basis of modern industrial development in Japan. He imported steam engines and rails from Scotland and brought experts from Britain to install and to supervise them. He also established the country's first

modern coal mine in Takashima. Unfortunately, his company, Glover Trading Co., went bankrupt in 1870, because he had gone into debt. This was around the Meiji Restoration period, and the Japanese were unable to pay his debt. However, he continued to stay in Japan and make great contributions to Japanese business and industry.

Professor Burke-Guffney then explained how Christianity was introduced in Nagasaki. He stated that the foreigners living in Nagasaki served as the first touchstone for Christianity. Thomas Glover and William Alt were the trustees of the first protestant church in Japan. In fact, this church was the first Christian church built in Japan after the opening of the doors in 1859. Not much is remembered about this church possibly because the Japanese Christians thought it was a different religion since the ministers were married unlike the Catholic priests they remembered.

The first Catholic church, Oura Catholic Church, was founded in 1864 by Bernard Petitjean, a French missionary. The church was built in a traditional Gothic style. The church reached completion in December 1864 and only few months later Petitjean found Japanese Christians from the Urakami area kneeling around the entrance of the church. He reported the discovery, which caused a sensation in Europe. Professor Burke-Guffney states that probably there is no other example in the history of Christianity of the faithful maintaining their faith without any contact with the Church for more than 200 years.

However, during this period, Christianity was still strictly banned in Japan, and so when Japanese authorities came to know about the Urakami Christians, they took the radical measure of deporting them from Urakami village to other parts of Japan. Filomena Braga, the publisher of the English-language newspaper *Nagasaki Express*, condemned the arrest of Urakami Christians as well as the custom of *Fumi-e*, which required the residents to step on the image of Mary or a cross to prove they were non-Christians. In 1873 finally the ban on Christianity was lifted and religious freedom was granted in Japan.

Next, Professor Burke-Guffney explained about Urakami Cathedral, which was the dream of the Urakami people suppressed during the Edo period when they were unable to profess their religion openly. The project started in 1895, and took 30 years to complete. At the time, it was the grandest Catholic Church in East Asia on the site where Urakami Christians were formerly hiding. Unfortunately, 20 years after its construction, it was destroyed by the atomic bomb. The airplane carrying the atom bomb missed its original target and continued to fly to the northern part of the city over Urakami. The crew members on the airplane were mostly Italian-American Catholics, and ironically, the atomic bombing was a case of Catholics dropping a bomb over the heads of the largest Catholic population in Japan.

Due to the diverse cultural presence, in Nagasaki interracial marriage tended to be something usual and accepted and drawing fences would not have worked in Nagasaki since trade was common between its people.

In conclusion, Professor Burke-Guffney commented that while Nagasaki usually gets associated with the atomic bomb, there exists within 50 meters in Nagasaki the Oura Catholic Church, the Myogyoji Temple, and a Shinto shrine. This symbolizes the peaceful coexistence of different cultures in Nagasaki due to their common goal of trade.

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# Nuclear Energy Policy Issues in Japan after the March 11 Fukushima Nuclear Accident

**SUZUKI TATSUJIRO**

*Professor, RECNA, Nagasaki University*

Professor Suzuki Tatsujiro of RECNA (Research Center for Nuclear Weapons Abolition) focused on the current situation of the Fukushima nuclear disaster and its implications for nuclear energy, concluding with remarks about the Pugwash Conference.

Presently, a major concern in the Fukushima power plant is containment of contaminated underground water. Last September, some leakage was found in the tanks which store this contaminated water. This is serious if the leaked water reaches the open sea. One solution being employed is to pump up the clean water before it reaches the reactor area and release it to the sea. However, fishermen are against this solution as then the public will refrain from buying fish from the area. Thus, a permanent solution being examined is to build a huge frozen wall to freeze the groundwater. Additionally, the Tokyo Electric Power Company (TEPCO) and the government are investigating various alternative methods.

Another daunting task is to remove spent fuel from the pool and decommission the plant. Typically, spent fuel removal in normal nuclear plants is computer controlled and takes 2 months to remove. Once that is complete, dismantling the equipment and decommissioning takes 5–6 years. The Fukushima case being unique, the government has estimated 40 years till the completion of decommissioning of the plant since the whole process is unprecedented. Additionally, the decommissioning cost is estimated at US\$10 billion while the total compensation cost is US\$100 billion.

After March 11, the Japanese government ordered immediate evacuation of the fallout zone, but now bringing the population back to the area is proving an arduous task. Initially, the government had decided on an exposure of 20 mSv per year as the evacuation criteria, but there was public opposition as this is 20 times higher than the regular standard. Since 5 mSv per year is the criterion measure used for radiation controlled areas (where one would have to wear protective clothing with an exposure level above 5 mSv) under normal circumstances, Professor Suzuki feels that 5 mSv may be a good criterion to decide whether people could go back home. However, with 1 mSv per year having been the typical standard up until then, people refused to accept 5 mSv, and the government decided to set 1 mSv as the long-term goal, which means that it will take many years before the locals will be able to return to their houses. Professor Suzuki also briefly talked about how this situation has resulted in social consequences. For instance, the younger generations do not want to return to the affected area while the older generations are eager to go back and regain their previous life. Family conflicts are also leading to divorces, suicides, and accident-related deaths.

The impact of the accident on global nuclear energy development has been damaging as well. Many countries have cancelled their plans to build more nuclear plants. The present 435 nuclear reactors in the world will reach their 40-year lifetime in the next 10–20 years, so unless new plants are built, global nuclear power capacity will drastically decrease in the coming years. Before March 11, Japan had planned to add 14 nuclear plants by 2030 to increase its nuclear power capacity from 26% to 50%. This plan now is cancelled.

Due to the way the Japanese government handled the accident, people have lost their trust in government institutions. One poll shows 80% of the public wants to phase out nuclear power, and this percentage has remained constant from the time of the accident. There are several reasons for this such as loss of faith in the government, ongoing problems such as Fukushima underground water contamination, and surprisingly, no power shortage even in the absence of nuclear power generation since last summer. For Japan, this prevention of power shortage has come at a steep price. It has increased its fossil fuel usage to 92%, paying 3 trillion yen per year for buying extra fossil fuel. Consequently, carbon emissions have increased by 5.8% in just one year. Professor Suzuki wonders perhaps if there were a steep rise in electricity rates, the public may feel the pinch and change their opinion on nuclear plants.

The Japanese government introduced the Energy Basic Plan (EBP) in April 2014 where it has agreed to reduce dependence on nuclear energy, but concurrently has said it will continue to use nuclear energy as a base-load energy source. However, this EBP is confusing and lacking in detail. The plan also outlines establishment of an independent third-party organization to disseminate information and enhance mutual communication among stakeholders by establishing local institutions. Through this, the government hopes to regain public trust.

Furthermore, Japan still faces many unresolved issues with regard to nuclear power, and a subcommittee on nuclear energy at the METI Advisory Council is deliberating on these issues. These issues range from a compensation scheme for nuclear power accidents to nuclear waste management and loss of personnel due to the uncertainty of nuclear power in the future.

Before March 11, the country was committed to a closed fuel cycle, but a closed fuel cycle is no longer viable for Japan if it decides to phase out nuclear power. Hence, spent fuel management has become crucial in Japan. The Japan Atomic Energy Commission (JAEC)'s message on fuel cycle has been to be flexible. Therefore, priority should be given to reducing plutonium stockpiles regardless of fuel cycle choices, but this is not happening in Japan so far. Another concern is to reduce the quantities and attractiveness of weapons-usable nuclear material. As a result, at the Hague Summit Japan decided to return some plutonium and highly enriched uranium (HEU) to the United States.

In conclusion, Professor Suzuki talked about the Pugwash Conference of which he is a member and whose final goal is to eliminate nuclear weapons and ultimately war. Dr. Joseph Rotblat, one of the founding members, was the only scientist to resign from the Manhattan Project. He signed the Russell-Einstein Manifesto which highlighted the dangers posed by nuclear weapons. The Manifesto was triggered by the 1954 Bikini test bomb and its fallout on the Lucky Dragon ship. The signatories of the Manifesto then gathered in Pugwash, Canada, for a conference, which was the beginning of the Pugwash

Conference. The goal of the Pugwash Conference is very close to the Japanese Peace Constitution, which is that any conflict should be resolved without military action.

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## Constructing New Communities in a Shrinking Society

**OGAWA TAKEO**

*Professor, Yamaguchi Prefectural University*

Professor Ogawa Takeo started his presentation by looking at economic growth and the rise of aging societies in the Asia Pacific region. Once the death rate falls and the population rises sharply, a society moves towards low fertility and high education for rapid economic growth. The Japanese demographic transition shows a change from a pyramid structure in the 1930s to presently a mushroom shape with a declining younger population; Japanese society has already reached its historical peak in population and since 2005 the population has been decreasing. Therefore, the ratio of dependent to working population had a downward trend until 1995, which was the period of “demographic bonus.” Since then, this ratio has started increasing, which means the nation has entered into a “demographic onus,” which is an increase in the burden upon the working population.

By 2035, the first and the so-called junior baby boomers of Japan will reach a late stage of life and retirement age respectively while the young population will be much smaller. So, the country is confronted with the challenge of reconstructing communities in urban areas to deal with the problems of an aging society. These problems range from dying alone to unoccupied housing to weak ties to others and so on, and the present social system and traditional organizations will not be able to cope. Hence, new systems will have to be developed if these problems are to be resolved.

Professor Ogawa explained he has carried out experimentation to develop a Functional Integrated Community in a super-aged society. Normally, societal individuals have their own values, and lack power to solve problems on their own. The Functional Integrated Community would have collaborations among residents, private corporations, and government to come up with a better system to resolve issues. For this, however, a social support system needs to be developed, and there are various stages involved in the development process. This moves from pluralistic ignorance where individuals guess wrongly about the group’s values to a stage of social inclusion when all stakeholders are engaged in solving social problems. Supportive tools need to be developed and various community intermediaries are needed to reinforce social experience in the community. For this to take place, a paradigm shift is needed in thinking about the aged society. Characteristics such as collaboration, volunteerism, group thinking, corporate citizenship, and programs to engage all generations need to be developed.

The experiment for developing a Functional Integrated Community was conducted in three different communities of Fukuoka Prefecture: Kanayama, which has a naturally occurring retirement community staying in apartment houses; Miwadai, a richer community with high economic growth with families having their own houses; and Island City, a new developed town. Assessing the aging community in these towns reveals many different issues. Kanayama has many “dying alone” cases and high migration,

but there is a weak community social work (CSW) structure and grass-root autonomy. The programs assisting senior people in health centers are not providing good results and it is hard to involve private corporations as well as the academic community in Kanayama. To move from such a situation, which is moving from basically pluralistic ignorance to a more aware stage, some motivation is needed. Neighbors need to come together in “community cafes”—public areas with easy access. The Social Welfare Council should be interested in building CSW in the form of outreach programs.

Furthermore, the grass-root community should make announcements of grass-root movements to every resident while the health centers develop programs for community support. Private corporations then can use CSR and open innovation to focus on such movements. For example, exchange book stores can be a motivation for people to come to community cafes. Professor Ogawa mentioned that one dental university wishes to participate in this community cafe activity. This kind of community cafe is the first stage. The next stage is to make some kind of new community projection through a snowballing of collaboration.

Through such collaborative programs, Professor Ogawa stated they wished to create a good experience for residents, corporations, and administrators. He wished to print manuals and distribute them to other communities in order to create a new community situation. For this, community coordinators and community intermediaries are needed. Every community faces new issues and problems, and visualizing, networking, and planning for such issues will need human capital in the form of community coordinators. As Japan lacks such people, training programs need to be provided to develop such coordinators. To support these community coordinators, community intermediaries are needed who are trained and knowledgeable personnel. These intermediaries will collaborate with corporations, municipalities, and professionals for information sharing and support of the coordinators.

Then, Professor Ogawa showed the Fukuoka City model of a neighborhood community with traditional organizations. He stated that nonprofit organizations occur in every community, but they do not have much power while the Social Welfare Council has resources to think about societal problems. In the near future, he hoped to establish “living labs” using private corporations, government departments, NPOs, and CSW, as well as an Area Comprehensive Support Center for the Elderly. In such a model community, corporations will get business opportunities, and municipalities will also find ways to resolve issues by actively involving the public.

Professor Ogawa noted that during the rapid economic growth period in the 1960s and 1970s, the Japanese government decided that social welfare is for everyone, and it was during this time that the universal national pension and health insurance programs were started. However, this is a very expensive system, and the national government is presently trying to reform this to a more affordable system. Traditionally, children took care of their elders. After industrialization, this traditional framework could not be maintained, and a new social care system was established. But this was more of a complementary system than a replacement of the traditional framework. Now, in this aging society, the Japanese are realizing the value of the traditional framework.

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## Local Support for the Aged and Agriculture by the Tachiarai Local Administration

**MURATA MAMI**  
*Tachiarai Town Office*

According to Ms. Murata Mami of the Tachiarai town office in Fukuoka Prefecture, Japanese country folk have lost pride in their locality and feel they lead an inferior life compared to city dwellers. This is also the situation with Tachiarai Town. Tachiarai Town is an agricultural town producing rice and vegetables with a population of about 150,000. Previously, residents of the town did not like the town and did not feel it had anything attractive for visitors. Tachiarai means “sword-washing,” and the town gets its name from a legend of a powerful feudal lord who once washed his sword after winning a fierce battle. Therefore, the town needed a program that would rejuvenate its residents and instill a sense of pride and belonging in them.

In present-day Japan, there are an increasing number of people who work for their own profit and own wealth. In response to this trend, the government started a project to revitalize communities by bringing in a new concept named “new public.” However, while this project was conducted to revitalize communities in urban areas, Ms. Murata pointed out that a certain sense of public commonality still remains in the countryside, and the problem in a place like Tachiarai is that residents are not so aware of that. This is where the Tachiarai town office came in and created opportunities for the residents to meet and talk about their town and town creation. And three rules were set up for such meetings: first, the meeting venue should be called a “future conference room” and the participants are to talk about their future instead of their past; second, participants should praise others instead of blaming them; and third, participants should not prejudge any idea or make blind assumptions. Under these three rules, the residents would be able to break the common habit of Japanese (where people rarely voice their opinions during a meeting) and speak up about their concerns and share ideas more freely.

Furthermore, at these meetings, dialogue would be given more importance than debate. For instance, when a forum was organized under the theme of “new public,” 180 people of different ages and occupations across Tachiarai participated, and they sat together and casually conversed with one another while jotting down the ideas they came up with and sharing thoughts under the common theme of the forum. Through this kind of dialogue, a proactive discussion would take place among the participants instilling a sense of courage and pride to think for themselves and to take definitive action. Participants are also encouraged to form groups among themselves to work together. Besides promoting active dialogue among residents, what the local government of Tachiarai does is to support socially vulnerable people, such as women and senior citizens.



Ms. Murata stated that such collaboration between the residents and the local government has proved very successful and fostered positive change in people's lives, especially women's. For instance, women who used to stay at home were encouraged to be more active and realize their dreams. They were asked to form groups and brand their products and sell them through a website. Information was disseminated through social media like twitter and blogs. This simple effort had a life-changing effect on these women, who became more confident and independent and started coming up with new ideas, such as organizing events like digging peanuts to attract visitors to the town. In the past, these women hardly seemed interested in promoting the local government's activities, but now they are brimming with ideas and have become much more active. Some women even presented action plans to involve other residents of the town, and local administrators supported their plans.

This community revitalization program has resulted in getting a lot of media attention. Ms. Murata showed a news clip that showed how the town was trying to have better public relations to promote their local produce. Local producers were engaged in selling their products through mobile markets as well as through online portals. Local news showed how, with the support of an NPO, the residents of Tachiarai Town themselves were engaged in activities to make their place better. Residents enjoyed growing various vegetables and fruits and enjoyed cooking and eating together. The news showed that such ideas were presented whenever the residents were engaged in discussions in their "future conference room." The civil servants of the Tachiarai local government also joined those meetings.

Ms. Murata remarked that the activity scale of the residents could be small as long as it matches their lifestyle. One such example is where a resident converted his home into a cafe as the town lacked any cafeteria. Another example is of a person who organized a barbeque party in order to create awareness of breast cancer. He expanded the activity to eventually organizing a lecture meeting. This particular case was proposed by the people so it could be shared with a much wider audience. Through the course of such activities, it was realized that such positive actions not only helped in generating income, but also in rejuvenating the local community.

Like any other part of Japan, Tachiarai also has a significant aging community, and so the local government and the residents also need to develop schemes to bring senior citizens to the forefront of activities. Two years ago, a small market was set up for the residents to sell their handcrafted goods, as well as pickles and other foodstuffs that they make at home, to local people and visitors. The market is called Sakura Ichiba, and it opens at places where a large number of visitors are expected, such as the town office's lobby and the community center. Ms. Murata noted how the Sakura market has helped rejuvenate elderly ladies of the town in particular. They are more cheerful not only because they can have their handmade goods enjoyed by many people at the market, but they can also organize handicraft classes to teach younger generations. Ms. Murata said that in Tachiarai, there still exists an environment where different generations could live together and engage in activities without dividing themselves into age groups or any other categories.

Ms. Murata stated that these activities have increasingly connected the residents, including those who were previously not interested in the local government's activities. The local government's role is to

connect clusters of people with clusters of activities and support them. Residents who used to say their town had nothing attractive have now become more engaged and excited about building a good life on their own initiative. Ms. Murata highlighted that last year, 2013, the mayor of Tachiarai Town established an office in Singapore in collaboration with other local governments, to promote vegetables produced in Tachiarai to high-class restaurants in Singapore.

In conclusion, Ms. Murata stated the purpose of all actions by the local government is to generate interest among the local residents in the government's activities as well as in their own community so they become proactive and create a better future for themselves. The key to town-building is dialogue. Residents can always start with a small-scale activity and expand it later on. Ms. Murata says that the important thing is to enjoy and be excited about what one does.