



The Nippon Foundation Fellowships  
**API Newsletter**  
 for Asian Public Intellectuals (API)

[ Issue No. 1 ]

[ June 2001 ]

**The International Selection Committee (ISC)**

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## The Pioneer API Fellows

**I**t seemed like a tall order – the first batch of API Fellows to be selected by January 2001, barely half a year from the program's official launch in July 2000; but we managed it.

Thus, in January 2001, the international selection committee met in Kuala Lumpur, and approved the first group of thirty fellows, six from each participating country. The Nippon Foundation sent out award letters by the end of January and by mid-February we had our first group of API Fellows.

Unfortunately, two of the successful applicants were unable to take up the offer; hence we ended up with twenty-eight persons, covering a wide range of interests, skills and orientations.

This pioneer group of API Fellows is indicative of the types of persons that the program wishes to support. It is also illustrative of the range of interests and concerns covered by the three broad themes of the first three years of the program. The concentration on the theme of changing identities and, within that, a focus largely on ethnicity, is, however, an outcome of the leanings of the applicants. Given events over the past few years, as well as the identity-destabilizing effects of globalization, this is understandable. We would, however, much encourage prospective applicants to cast their sights more broadly. This is similarly the case with the concentration on indigenous minorities in the theme on social justice; given the massive increase in the numbers of urban dwellers falling below the poverty line, and the general absence of formal social safety nets in Asian societies, it would be good to know more about how the poor are coping through this difficult period of re-orientation.

The selection also demonstrates our seriousness when we say that the program is not directed at academics only. We have among our pioneers a film producer, a Buddhist abbot, a Jesuit, a number of NGO activists, a comics artist, journalists, and, of course, academics.

We proudly present our pioneer API Fellows, grouped under our three themes, and by countries of origin, with thumbnail sketches of them and their projects. The thematic grouping is only indicative, as several projects in fact span more than one of the themes, but it does demonstrate the extent to which similar concerns are spread across the region.

We wish them every success and we look forward to the forthcoming workshop in late 2002 when they will be coming together to present and exchange the results of their work and experience in this fellowship year. **API**

## The API Fellowships

**T**he API – Asian Public Intellectuals – Fellowships program was formally launched on 8th July 2000. The first fellowship period was fixed for June 2001 to May 2002, with subsequent periods to follow sequentially.

Funded by The Nippon Foundation under the general oversight of its department for international relations and special projects, the program currently covers five countries and will remain so for the initial three years. Within each country, The Nippon Foundation has approved a partner institution to be responsible for running the program within that country.

The five countries are Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. The five partner institutions are:

- Center for Social and Cultural Studies at the Indonesian Institute of Science (PMB-LIPI),
- Center for Southeast Asian Studies at Kyoto University (CSEAS-Kyoto),
- Institute of Malaysian and International Studies at the National University of Malaysia (IKMAS-UKM),
- School of Social Sciences at the Ateneo de Manila University, and

### Important Deadlines

**31 August 2001**  
 Closing date for submission of applications

**December 2001**  
 Award notification

**June 2002 - May 2003**  
 Fellowship period

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# Editorial Statement

Welcome to the very first of the Asian Public Intellectuals (API) Fellowships Program newsletter, issued to coincide with the commencement of the pioneering year of the fellowships on 1st June 2001.

The API Fellowships Program could not have been initiated at a more opportune moment in the remarkable post-war history of the region. With humility, but also not a little pride, we believe that Asia, specifically East and Southeast Asia, has been in many ways *sui generis*. Virtually written off fifty years ago, deemed not to have the necessary cultural attributes for modernity and progress, its ethnic pluralism and multiculturalism *avant de mot* seen as destined to condemn the region to instability and upheaval, Asia has indeed come a long, long way. Asia has confounded virtually every theory and model of development and underdevelopment. It became the hopeful exception to the depressing downward spiral of so much of the South.

The apparent ending of the remarkable growth of post-war Japan, and the crisis of 1997 together with its ongoing consequences has been greeted, sometimes with barely disguised glee, as proof that Asian 'exceptionalism' was a hoax. Yet new books, scholarship and commentary are devoted to Euro-American 'exceptionalism' whether on cultural, institutional or geographical grounds and to projecting it as a lesson for the rest of the world.

Asia's leading intellectuals and activists have never laid claim to an Asian 'exceptionalism'. What they have however laid claim to is the belief that there are multiple paths to modernity, and have been concerned to articulate the view that an Asian modernity (or modernities) can be socially, economically and culturally distinctive while respecting the major gains in humankind's understanding of human rights. This should be evident from the three articles we carry in this issue – by Tatsuya Tanami, a prime mover of the API program, by KS Jomo, one of the pioneer batch of fellows and by *acharn* Prawase, a major Thai intellectual and a member of our international selection committee.

Admittedly, the present represents a critical juncture in the forward movement of the region. We are in a time of tremendous upheavals, of questioning of

the inherited past and of a revaluation of values and commitments coinciding with a project of a hegemonic, homogenising globalisation on the part of some powers in the service of partial interests representing themselves as the interests of all.

This latter project has lately run into serious opposition, and Asian intellectuals, NGO activists and even governments have been amongst those in the forefront of this global opposition. Yet, Asian intellectuals and activists know and understand that the region has, of all regions in the world, derived much benefit from open economies and from participation in the global community. They are not set against globalisation *per se* but against a particular project of globalisation reminiscent of a previous one still within living – and painful – memory. Thus, Asian intellectuals and activists are concerned to seek alternative globalisations and, simultaneously, to address the many issues and problems that have emerged out of the current hegemonic project of globalisation. Asian intellectuals are fully cognisant that this endeavour cannot be only a national one, but international; yet, for too long, Asian intellectuals have had more connection with their counterparts in Europe and America than with each other in the region.

It is this critical juncture and this broad concern that underpins the three themes of the API Fellowships program. These themes recognise that old habits of the heart no longer retain their power, while new habits of the heart are being promoted by the attempt at a homogenising, hegemonic globalisation. The themes seek to encourage Asian intellectuals to seize upon the moment and bring out into open discussion and debate the habits of the heart which we would like to promote, for otherwise, by default, we will unreflectively assume a whole new set of habits.

A brief word about the term "public intellectuals" since many a potential applicant has shied away, modestly declaring that she or he is no "public intellectual". Rather than attempt, again, to provide a definition, we hope that both the profiles of the pioneer API Fellows and the three articles in this issue should indicate to all the broad sweep of the term.

In light of our understanding of this moment as one in which new habits of the heart are in formation, we especially want to appeal to artists, musicians, literary figures, people in film and the media and activists in NGOs to seriously consider applying for the API Fellowships. They, of

all those whom we think of as intellectuals, have most to do with shaping those habits of the heart, those instincts which unconsciously guide us in our day-to-day life and interactions which, per force, cannot but be generally unreflective.

To our pioneering batch of Fellows, we say, "Congratulations!" as well as a gentle reminder that they bear the responsibility of setting the example and the benchmark for future Fellows.

To everyone else reading this newsletter, we invite you to visit our home page at <http://www.ikmas.ukm.my/api> and we would also like to invite you to consider applying for one of the fellowships. As with any web site, ours is very much a work in progress and we welcome any comments and suggestions to help improve it. All comments and suggestions, on the web site as well as this newsletter, can be sent to us via e-mail or regular mail at the addresses noted elsewhere in this newsletter.

Finally, although this first issue of the newsletter marks the pioneer batch of API Fellows, there has been a year of very hard work behind the scenes to bring this to fruition. In the spirit of the fellowship program we would like to record our gratitude to the following persons whose commitment and dedication made the API Fellowship program a reality: Michiko Taki at The Nippon Foundation, Dorothy Fernandez Robert and Au Yong Geok Lian at IKMAS in the National University of Malaysia, John Haba and Erwiza Erman at LIPI, Donna Amoroso, Naoko Maeno and Yoko Hayami at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies in the University of Kyoto, Felice Noelle Rodriguez and Gemma Mallillin at the School of Social Sciences in Ateneo de Manila University, and Michiko Yoshida-Rojanaphruk and Charunee Lucktong at the Institute of Asian Studies in Chulalongkorn University. Without their commitment and dedication, there would have been no API Fellowship Program. Last, but not least, we would also like to express our deep-felt gratitude to the parent institutions which have been so supportive of the program. Without their infrastructure and support, the program could not have got off to a running start. **API**



Ishak Shari  
Director, IKMAS  
Coordinating Institution  
API Fellowships Program

## Speech by Mr. Yohei Sasakawa President of The Nippon Foundation



Your Excellencies, distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

It is my great pleasure and honor to be with you this morning to celebrate the inauguration of the API Fellowships, and I would like to express my deepest gratitude to all of you who have come to this gathering from various countries and many parts of Malaysia in spite of your busy schedule.

The Nippon Foundation is a private, non-profit, grant-making organization based in Japan. The Foundation was established in 1962 and has provided worldwide grant support for the betterment of human life, the development of human resources, the enhancement of social transformation, and the promotion of mutual understanding and exchange.

In Southeast Asia, we have concentrated on such areas as eliminating communicable diseases like small pox and leprosy, ensuring the safety of maritime transportation across the Straits of Malacca and Singapore, preventing piracy, establishing public welfare programs for disabled people, lending assistance to refugees, and providing educational scholarships for university students under a program called the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund, to name but a few. All these programs are being conducted with the close cooperation and partnership of governments, private organizations, and NGOs in the region.

Today, we stand on the verge of a new century. The 21st century, it's been said, will be the Asian century. The economic crisis in 1997, however, has clearly shown us that there are still vast hurdles to be surmounted. Fortunately, we have witnessed a swift economic recovery in the region, but there still remain quite a few challenging issues to be tackled.

While the growth of the middle class continues, there is also a widening gap between the haves and have-nots. And the so-called digital divide is enlarging between

people who can access information technology and those who cannot. The great diversity of race, culture, and religion of the region, and the huge wave of globalization that is sweeping across it have their negative, as well as positive effects, such as conflicts and confrontations among the people in the region. Of course, all of you are quite familiar with these matters.

It goes without saying that there is a great need to mobilize our wisdom and knowledge in order to respond to these challenges. To generate ideas for policy adjustment, there exist at present regional and multinational frameworks of intellectual cooperation that are governmental and non-governmental. Amongst government agencies and private think-tanks, intellectual networks have been created to help with regional policy making.

However, our experience tells us that these effort alone cannot adequately respond to the real need for creative solutions, and for the development of ways and means for the practical implementation of these ideas. We need to create a new type of multi-layered intellectual collaborative framework and network in addition to those that already exist.

Let me be more concrete. We need to cultivate regional intellectual leaders who can transcend national, organizational, social, cultural, and linguistic boundaries, leaders who are able to work in the public sphere, whether governmental or non-governmental. These leaders should be able to contribute globally and regionally by identifying common issues, raising questions, seeking solutions, and presenting proposals for actual implementation. We need to identify these public intellectuals, nurturing them and helping them to organize themselves as a new force to work for the public interest.

Who are these public intellectuals? They are not only academic researchers, but also journalists, writers, educators, administrators, NGO activists, and even creative artists who can share their knowledge and experience toward the betterment of society, people who can influence public opinion in order to help formulate a strong civil society in Asia. It is these people who we encourage to make contributions to our common good.

We need to identify these people from our communities and give them opportunities to learn how these common

issues are being tackled in other countries in Asia, so that they might collaboratively and creatively generate solutions. We Asians need to know each other better. It is important therefore to provide greater opportunities for people in this region to discover more about each other.

Today, we are gathered here together to inaugurate the Nippon Foundation Fellowships for Asian Public Intellectuals. This new program aims to nurture both experienced and inexperienced public intellectuals who will work now and for the Asia of the 21st century. And, I trust that the new discoveries, the new knowledge, new ideas, new ways of tackling universal problems these intellectuals discover will be voiced by them, not only within the region but throughout the world where similar problems exist. This will be Asia's contribution to the world.

As we are just starting the API Fellowships, we should bear in mind that we cannot look for immediate results or expect that all problems will be solved overnight. Nonetheless, this is a historic moment, and I invite you all to join me in celebrating the initiation of this new program. We hope that the program will formulate a new network of people who have a strong potential to generate change.

I heard that in Indonesia and Malaysia, there is a saying, "Sedikit-sedikit lama-lama jadi bukit" meaning "A handful becomes a mountain." I sincerely hope that this small handful we place here together will grow into a mountain.

Finally, I would like to express my sincere appreciation to the people here who are representing the Partner Institutions, as well as the other people who are not present but have supported and helped to make this program a reality. Again, as a saying in this region goes, "Berat sama dijunjung dan ringan sama dijinjing" meaning, "if it is heavy we'll carry it together, if it is light we'll dangle it together."

May this program then become our shared future asset. Let us shoulder the burden together, as we courageously march into the future. **API**

*Mr Yohei Sasakawa and Tan Sri Dato' Musa Hitam, Chairman of The National Commission on Human Rights launched The Nippon Foundation Fellowships for Asian Public Intellectuals on 8 July, 2000 at the Nikko Hotel, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.*

# Changing Identities



**Benny Subianto** is a researcher at the Center for Chinese Studies in Indonesia. He will be spending his fellowship period in the Philippines looking at the history of Chinese-Filipino identity and the impact of colonial and government policies in shaping marginality and inclusion

**Herry Yogaswara** is a junior researcher at the Center for Population and Manpower Studies of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences. His project will take him to the Cordilleras of the Philippines to better understand the construction of cultural majorities and minorities.



**Nur A. Fadhil Lubis** is currently a lecturer at IAN Sumatra Utara, Medan. His project will take him to the Philippines and Thailand to explore the changing character of Muslim identity in the context of the nation-state and globalization, an issue of considerable importance not just in Asia but in the world.

**Sri Nuryanti** is a young researcher at Center for Politics and Regional Studies, Indonesian Institute of Sciences. Her interest in the role of young intellectuals in the formation of Muslim identity and politics will take her to Pattani, Thailand, where she will conduct her study over a period of twelve months.



**Etsuko Miyata de Rodriguez** is the curator of asian ceramics in Tokyo. She will be going to the University of the Philippines where she will spend a year teaching the history of Asian ceramics and its relationship to the maritime history of the Philippines.

**Tatsuki Kataoka** is a doctoral student at Kyushu University, Japan. He will be going to northern Thailand to investigate changing identities and intra-ethnic cultural diversities amongst the hill tribes, specifically the Lahu.



**Abdur-Razzaq Lubis** is currently the Malaysian representative of Sumatra Heritage Trust. He has also been active in heritage work in Penang. His project will look at the Mandailing in Sumatra and Malaysia and the shaping and re-shaping of Mandailing identity across the political divide

of Indonesia and Malaysia.

**Wong Soak Koon** lectures on literature and literary studies at Universiti Sains Malaysia in Penang. She is also a member of Aliran, the well-known Malaysian NGO. She will be going to the Philippines to explore changing identities as refracted through the reception of literary works, such reception to be accessed via the critical literacy approach.



# The Pi



**Nick Deocampo** is the director of the Mowelfund Film Institute in the Philippines. His knowledge of and involvement with the cinema will be directed towards an investigation of the role of the Asian cinema in the changing identities of Asian countries. This investigation will be carried out in Indonesia, Japan, Malaysia and Thailand.

**Cecilia De la Paz** is with the Department of Art Studies at the University of the Philippines in Quezon City. She will go to Japan for comparative work to explore the politics and aesthetics of identity construction via the ethnographic museum and folk villages, supplementing her experience and study of the same in the Philippines.



We, representatives from five countries in Asia, are gathered here today to inaugurate a new collaborative endeavor.

As we enter the 21<sup>st</sup> century, we recommit ourselves to unified action toward a better future for Asia, even as we celebrate our cultural differences.

## API Declaration

While we uphold our national borders and traditions, we seek a regional response, aware as we are that the political, economic, and social challenges which our nations face transcend our national boundaries.

Asians unfortunately remain strangers to each other. The lack of familiarity and strong bonds among us prevents us from articulating regional approaches to the difficulties that are upon us.

The shared challenges beckon us to come together to fashion a shared, collaborative response. We take on the challenges with confidence because, while we take pride in our differences, we are all unified by a common heritage and spirit that is Asian.



**Alexander Carlos Gregorio II** is an information officer with the Supreme Court of the Philippines. Currently working on a book on governance, law and architectural heritage in the Philippines, he will be going to Japan and Thailand to obtain comparative understanding of this issue in the context of the management of identity and historical memory.

**Rene Pio B. Javellana, S.J.** is the Creative Director of Jesuit Communications and a Lecturer at Ateneo de Manila University. His concern is the rapidly disappearing traditional and historical architecture and urbanscape of Asia and the consequent cultural loss. He will be seeking to forge a network of heritage conservation advocates in



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the region to facilitate trans-national sharing of experiences and approaches and to develop greater public participation in heritage advocacy.



**Mozart A. T. Pastrano** was a noted features writer for the Philippine Daily Inquirer and managing editor of Globe Telecom Magazine. As such, he is acutely aware of how the media shapes the relationships of majority and minority, particularly those at the margins, and hence the dynamics of change. He will be looking at how mainstream

media organizations relate to selected marginal communities in Japan and Malaysia.

**Prangtip Daorueng** is the country director of the Southeast Asian Press Alliance (SEAPA) in Thailand. Prangtip will be going to Indonesia

An effective response to regional problems will invariably require the participation of public intellectuals – men and women committed to working in the public sphere and to collaborating beyond traditional boundaries in articulating common concerns, in proposing effective solutions and in fostering a perspective that is regional in scope and universal in value.

We announce herewith the establishment of The Nippon Foundation Fellowships for Asian Public Intellectuals, a program designed precisely to help build a community of Asians who can think and work in the public sphere. The Program will be initiated in the five countries we are representing today, and public intellectuals to be identified are to be given opportunities for research and professional activities in other participating countries. By promoting mutual understanding and shared learning among Asian public intellectuals, the API Fellowships aim to contribute to the growth of public spaces where effective responses to regional needs can be generated.

All of us gathered here are determined to work together to realize this goal for ourselves, in the hope that our collective effort will bear fruit for the betterment of humanity. Signed by all API Participating Institutions on the occasion of the launch of the API Program on 8 July 2000. [API](#)

*The API Declaration was adopted by the five partner institutions at the program launch in July 2000*

to develop a feature series and, ultimately, a book, on Indonesia's national identity problems in the context of its overall on-going crisis. The most ethnically plural of all Southeast and East Asian states, an understanding of Indonesia's national identity problems and its relationship to current globalization will have lessons for other states in the region.



**Sukran Rojanapaiwong** is the executive editor of the Green World Foundation (GWF) in Thailand, an environmentalist NGO. Sukran will go to Malaysia and the Philippines to study the role and impact of the print media of NGOs in those countries in environmental protection and conservation.



## The Human Condition & Social Justice



**Surmiati Ali** is a researcher at the Center for Social and Cultural Studies, Indonesian Institute of Sciences. Surmiati's interest is the changes in the traditional system of marine resource management of Malay fisherfolk and the causes and impact of such changes. Her work will look at Malay fisherfolk in Malaysia and Thailand.

**Henry Chan**, an anthropologist, is currently the socio-economic consultant to the German Agency for Technical Cooperation (GTZ) in Sarawak, Malaysia. The GTZ is engaged in a controversial sustainable forest management project in Sarawak in collaboration with the state government. Henry will be going to Indonesia and Thailand to seek comparative experience and understanding of forest resources and conflict management.



**Colin G Nicholas** is the well-known long-time coordinator of the Centre for Orang Asli Concerns (COAC) in Malaysia. The Orang Asli are the aboriginal peoples of peninsular Malaysia. His project will be primarily in Thailand where he will look at the role of indigenous leaders in the decline of indigenous socio-political systems and the marginalisation of indigenous communities. Additionally, he will also be exploring ways by which indigenous knowledge and systems can be revitalised and incorporated into existing dominant systems.

**Cristina Montiel** has an appointment in both the Center for Social Policy and Public Affairs and the Department of Psychology at Ateneo de Manila University. Her interest is in the possible application of federalism as a means to manage the conflict in Mindanao. That interest takes her to Malaysia, the only instance of a federal state in Southeast and East Asia, and to Indonesia where massive decentralization and local autonomy is being introduced.



**Somchai Preechasinlapakun** from Thailand, is a lecturer in the Division of Law, Faculty of Social Sciences at Chiang Mai University. He has been involved with social movements to raise public awareness about the rights of communities in forest management. Somchai will be going to Malaysia and the Philippines to work on forest resource management in the making and remaking of the modern state and the resistance, adaptation and participation of indigenous peoples and local communities in this process.

**Pibhop Dhongchai** was a major participant in the drafting of Thailand's 1997 constitution. President of the Campaign for Popular Democracy as well as secretary of the Foundation for Children, Pibhop anticipates amendments to the present constitution in 2002. His project will take him to Indonesia, Japan and Malaysia. It is intended to broaden his understanding of the role of civil society in various Asian contexts and to link up with leading local democratic, educational and environmental groups as part of his effort to reflect on and consolidate his experience – with an eye to developing appropriate responses to the anticipated amendments



# Globalization & Alternatives



**Pande K Trimayuni**, a project officer with Solidaritas Perempuan, or Women's Solidarity for Human Rights, is concerned with the vulnerability of migrant workers to HIV and its impact on the HIV situation in both sending and receiving countries. Her project will be conducted in Malaysia and the Philippines where she will assess the degree of vulnerability of such workers, and link up with local NGOs working with them.

**Fusanosuke Natsume** is a well-known Japanese comics artist and essayist. The Japanese comics and cartoon form is one of Japan's most successful cultural exports. Fusanosuke's project is entitled "Penetration of Japanese and Developed Countries' Comics into Southeast Asia: Universality and Indigeneity of Japanese and Southeast Asian Comics". The project will be conducted in Indonesia and Thailand.



**Yasuhiro Mizutani**, a Ph D student at Kyoto University, will examine the management and control of people's movements in Thailand, a process relevant to the current role of the state in responding to globalization. This will be done through a study of the development of the modern police institution in Thailand from the 1930s to the 1950s.

**K. S. Jomo** lectures in economics at the University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. A major contributor to the on-going debates and

discussions on globalization and national development, he will be using his fellowship award to further develop a network of concerned analysts in the region and, simultaneously, to research the determinants of post-crisis recovery and the prospects for rapid sustained growth in the region.



**Phar Kim-Beng**, a Malaysian, has worked as a journalist and features writer and is a senior correspondent at the foreign desk of Singapore Press Holdings, owner of, amongst others, the *Straits Times*. He is also currently enrolled at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy of Tufts University in the United States. His interest in regional security cooperation will approach it via a study of 'think-tanks', an increasingly important site of intellectual inputs into national and foreign policy-making. This study will be conducted in Japan.

**Pataya Ruenkaew** is chairperson of THARA Association (Thais Articulate their Rights Abroad). Her fellowship award will be used to explore the migratory process of Thai women to Japan and their living conditions there as well as to link up with Japanese organizations providing services and assistance to these Thai migrants. Her objective is to build a network between such organizations in Japan, Thailand and Germany.



**Phra Paisal Visalo** is the abbot of Wat Pasukato in Thailand. Naturally, his concerns are with the impact of globalization on religion as well as religious responses to globalization and the possibilities of a new spirituality in the current context. He will be travelling to Indonesia, Japan and the Philippines in search of cross-cultural and inter-faith experiences.

## The API Fellowships *contd...*

- The Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University.

Of these five partner institutions, IKMAS-UKM was designated the coordinating institution for a period of three years.

The main objective of the API Fellowships is to stimulate the creation of a network of public intellectuals in the region. The term 'public intellectuals' is intended to signal that the fellowships are not targetted at academics only, but at anyone – academics, persons working in film and mass media, artists, NGO activists, literary and theatre figures, etc. – working to shape public opinion and influence public policy in his or her society, in the region and, indeed, globally.

It is a primary requirement that fellows spend the tenure of their fellowship in a participating country other than their own country of residence, conducting a project or projects that address current issues of concern and contribute to the creation of a regional network of public intellectuals, activists and citizens.

Towards this end, three broad themes have been identified for the first three years of the program. These are:

1. Changing identities and their social, historical and cultural contexts
2. The human conditions and the search for social justice
3. The current structure of globalization and possible alternatives

In order to not only have the intellectual and moral weight, but also to nurture the growth of a younger generation of public intellectuals, the program offers fellowships in two categories, distinguished by age: a senior fellowship for those over 35 and a junior, for those under. However, the fellowships are currently restricted to persons living or working in one of the participating countries, regardless of nationality.

The closing date for applications for the June 2002-May 2003 fellowships is 31<sup>st</sup> August 2001. Contact addresses and telephone numbers for the partner institutions are listed at the back of this newsletter.

Alternatively, please visit our web site: <http://www.ikmas.ukm.my/api> for an online application. **API**

# Asians understanding Asians, working with Asians, for a better Asia

**Tatsuya Tanami**

*Mr Tatsuya Tanami, Director for International Relations and Special Projects of The Nippon Foundation, is a prime mover of the API Fellowships Program. He continues to take a close interest in the program despite his other responsibilities. These are his thoughts on the occasion of the selection of the pioneering batch of API Fellows, adapted from his speeches at the orientation programs for Fellows from the Philippines and Malaysia.*



Early in the last decade of the 20th century, it used to be said that the 21st century would be the Asian Century, meaning that Asia, home to almost half the world's population, would once again be a, if not the, centre of a world economy and system. Now, it seems that we still have a long way to go.

In the 1980s and the first half of the 1990s our countries were mostly enjoying rapid and promising economic growth - Japan, Thailand, Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines, all API Participating Countries. However, since the 1997 economic crisis, things have changed and all these countries have experienced serious economic downturn as well as political and social turmoil.

We are seeking ways and means to recover from the hardship we have been experiencing. There are vast hurdles to be surmounted. We are witnessing a burgeoning social crisis in various parts of Asia.

Our traditional institutions are becoming weaker and incompetent in dealing with current issues in particular with those transcending national borders. Governments alone cannot come to grips with the huge range of economic, political, social and cultural problems we are facing. We need to generate reform everywhere. We need legal reform, educational reform, economic reform, etc. Government reform and bureaucratic reform are especially needed and for that we need to nurture the growth of a strong civil society in the region.

In order to cope with these unprecedented difficulties, we need to mobilize our joint wisdom and knowledge. We need the greater participation of society. Most importantly, we need to relate ideas to actual politics. These challenges are not national or local alone, but multinational and common. Here we need a new pool of committed intellectual leaders who work in the public sphere for the public good.

We call them the Asian public intellectuals. The public intellectuals defined here are those who are or will be committed to the betterment of society and those who articulate issues, ask questions, and stimulate thinking and knowledge-sharing in broad contemporary problems in the social sciences, humanities, arts and culture. This group of people includes not only traditional academic intellectuals, but also media professionals, NGO leaders, opinion leaders, creative artists and others who are working to present concrete proposals for actual implementation of ideas and visions to change the situation.

The API Fellowship program tries to identify these public intellectuals, and provide them the opportunity to learn about the common issues of concern in other Asian countries, to nurture and help them to organize themselves to be a new force to work for the public good in the region.

It is often said that Asians do not know other Asians well. This is half true, and half false, because Asians do know other Asians, but through the eyes of the West, through western concepts, media, or education. The knowledge and information about other Asians has been largely based upon the interpretation of the West of

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**“Public intellectuals...are those  
who are or will be committed  
to the betterment  
of society”**

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Asia. It is important that we Asians ourselves learn more about our Asian neighbors through our own eyes. To know better our neighbors is an essential goal of this fellowship - essential not only for ourselves, but for the rest of the world. It is time that knowledge about Asia be disseminated from Asia.

On behalf of The Nippon Foundation, as one of the partners to this endeavor, I am very happy to see the first batch of intellectuals selected as API Fellows.

The fellows chosen from the participating countries are representative of the leaders and emerging leaders of the region and we hope they will become the new social, cultural, intellectual and moral force of the region. Asia's 21<sup>st</sup> century indeed is on their shoulders.

API Fellows, congratulations again, and we look forward very much to your future contribution to the social and cultural transformation of the region. **API**

# Program Operations

The API Fellowship program is operated on a country basis by the five partner institutions designated by The Nippon Foundation. One of these five partner institutions acts as the coordinating institution for a fixed term.

The partner institutions each have a national selection committee to review applications and to make the country selection of candidates to be forwarded to an international selection committee for final approval.



## Partner Institutions

At present, the five partner institutions are:

**Indonesia:** *The Indonesian Institute of Science (PMB-LIPI)*

The Indonesian Institute of Science is a non-departmental institution reporting directly to the President of the Republic of Indonesia. Currently headed by Dr Taufik Abdullah, LIPI's brief covers the following: to assist the President in organizing research and development and to give guidance, service, and advice to the government on national science and technology policy. A huge organization with multiple divisions and branches, LIPI has assigned the task of operating the API Fellowships program in Indonesia to its Center for Social and Cultural Studies.

**Japan:** *Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS), Kyoto University*

The Center for Southeast Asian Studies (CSEAS) is multidisciplinary research institute

attached to Kyoto University. It was established in 1965 for the purpose of carrying out systematic and integrated "area studies" of contemporary Southeast Asia. The Center's staff of scholars in the humanities, social sciences and natural sciences collaborate in research on various aspects of the region. Their research projects have involved intra- and extra-mural affiliates. CSEAS publications include a quarterly journal, four monograph series, and a research report series. The Center is currently headed by Dr Narifumi Maeda Tachimoto. The API Program at CSEAS is directed by Dr Takashi Shiraishi.

**Malaysia:** *The Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS), Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (UKM)*

The Institute of Malaysian and International Studies (IKMAS) is an independent centre for research and post-graduate teaching in the social sciences and humanities at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia (the National University



# The Triangle That Moves The Mountain

**Prawase Wasi**



*[Professor Prawase Wasi is a medical doctor by training who also holds a Ph D in human genetics. He taught and worked at Siriraj Hospital of Mahidol University until his recent retirement when he was appointed Professor Emeritus of Medicine. A leading Thai intellectual, with several national and international awards, including the 1981 Magsaysay Award, he has long been active in advocacy work and with promoting the need for intellectuals to take their social responsibility seriously. Much inspired by Buddhist morality and philosophy, acharn Prawase is the author of 'The Triangle that Moves the Mountain' in which he spells out his philosophy of social and political activism and the need for a strong civil society. He is married to the well-known HIV virologist, Dr. Chantapong Wasi. The following article is edited from the translated text of his speech at the Thai API Fellowships seminar "Why Does Thailand Need Cultural and Intellectual Exchanges? — The Role of Public Intellectuals in Asia and the Mission of API Fellowships" in March.]*

I would like to start by telling you how I became involved with this project. In November 1999, I was in Tokyo and met Mr. Tatsuya Tanami, whom I had known for several years since he was with the International House of Japan. I had been impressed by his interest in international studies as well as his knowledge of other matters. When I met him in Tokyo in November 1999, I was informed that he was with The Nippon Foundation. I also learned that the Foundation was embarking on the Asian Public Intellectuals (API) project aimed at forging a network of Asian public intellectuals for social reform. I was deeply taken by this very important idea. I have long thought that intellectuals in Asia must be linked as a network to make a strong movement. The Nippon Foundation then invited me to be a member of the API Program's international selection committee.

In the age of globalization, all societies have become interconnected to create a very complex, multidimensional system. Its dynamism is illustrated by, for example, how money travels at light speed nowadays. A new kind of global society has emerged, one that never existed before. But however complex our society has become, most people still think of it in one-dimensional terms. Most academics work in one dimension – they become one-dimensional academics, even though the realities are multidimensional and highly complex. We lack understanding of this new, highly complex global society. Its rapid dynamics can result in chaos. A disruption at the periphery can become very serious and quickly harm the whole system. A single currency speculator in New York can cause the sudden demise of the whole Thai economy. This is characteristic of the complex non-linear dynamics described in "Chaos Theory", which asserts that a tiny disturbance can wreak havoc on the whole system.

Consequently, crises are common and inevitable in our global society. All national societies share this common woe, and are easily prey to one or another crisis. There is, however, a common social

crisis facing all our societies. This social crisis has three main characteristics:

Number one: poverty and the gap between rich and poor. This gap has been widening rather than narrowing despite the implementation of modern development. The gap exists in a country such as Thailand, within countries across the world, as well as between countries. It has led to severe difficulties in many areas – social, psychological, environmental, etc.

Number two: social disintegration. Family ties have weakened. Communities are breaking down. Harmony has become the exception. Various forms of exploitation are rampant. Drug addiction has become an epidemic. Environmental crises and resource mismanagement threaten our collective survival. This is social disintegration.

Number three: the cultural crisis. The cultural crisis is very severe, but few people realize its impact. Culture is terribly important, as it is a collective and distinctive way of living of a particular group of people in a distinctive environment, in each region, in each country.

These three characteristics sum up the social crisis of our time. Its symptoms are impoverishment, large-scale migration for jobs (which gives rise to many slums in Bangkok), an increase in prostitution, ever more severe drug problems, violations of children's rights, women's rights violations, and all forms of violence. Traditional institutions can no longer cope with these problems. They have become too weak to handle them. Political and bureaucratic institutions, social and educational institutions, even monastic institutions, have all become weaker and are unable to come to terms with this new, highly complex, multidimensional social crisis. There is minimal ability to tackle these problems.

Therefore, we need comprehensive social reform, one that includes political and bureaucratic reform as well as social change in order to forge a society with more equitable, horizontal structures rather than

## The Triangle That Moves The Mountain

*contd...*

authoritarian, vertical social structures. We need economic and financial reform, education reform, media reform, legal reform, and so on. We need overall reform. We need a civil society that encourages people to cooperate on a horizontal level.

But reform is difficult. The key to kick-starting the reform has been laid out in my concept of “the triangle that moves the mountain.” Any huge and stagnant structure can be budged by triangular mobilization. The top angle is wisdom or intellectual nourishment. An ideology is not sufficient to help us overcome a very tough challenge; wisdom must play its role.

The second angle is social movements – individual learning must be extended to collective social learning. The third angle is connection to the political arena, whether or not politics is “clean”; for if the other two prongs, namely wisdom and social movements, are strong, we can work towards great benefits for society. However, most people opt merely for watching from the sidelines and criticizing politicians – wishing that they would become “clean” and sincere so that society could become better. This can never be realized. None of the politicians can be “clean”. But even if they were of unquestioned integrity, the absence of the other two prongs – wisdom and social movements – will prevent politicians from rendering any service to society. We may miraculously get a sage-like politician, but that is not enough.

In Thailand, we have tried to tackle these challenges by using this triangular model. I am referring to the drafting of the new constitution in 1997 aimed at reforming politics. In ordinary circumstances, a total political reform as such could not occur without a bloody uprising. Constitutions are usually written by the powers-that-be. Constitutions are rarely written by commoners, what more one directed specifically at political reform, even though it needs to be ratified by the politicians (like the said new Thai constitution). Our politicians did not want political reform, but the circumstances created by the power of this triangular mobilization were such that they had to accept the new constitution. Building wisdom and social movements are the two most important tasks on the road to political reform.

This point is very relevant to the underlying philosophy of the API project. In this highly complex global society, we cannot afford to wait for a “white” knight to solve our problems. We need public intellectuals to come together. In my opinion, the word “intellectual” should embrace the idea of being “public.” In other

words, intellectuality (or wisdom) ought to be employed to achieve the public good. In the Buddhist context, the use of knowledge for one’s own good or to advance one’s own interests is not considered *pañña* (wisdom), but *avija* (ignorance). The word “intellectual” in its true essence implies an orientation to the public good. Putting these two words together as “public intellectual” emphasizes its virtuous aims.

Considering the circumstances in Asia, it is appropriate that all countries should join hands. In the highly tumultuous currents of globalization, Thailand plays just a tiny part and thus cannot withstand it on its own. Japan, considered a very competent society, faces difficulties in resisting its currents. So we need cooperation. The world should avoid unipolarity, which is currently the case. The single pole today is American power. This situation is very precarious and unstable. We need to have a balance of power.

As a physician, I like to explain my points from a biological perspective. In nature, in order to attain equilibrium or balance, a living system must be diverse. Diversity creates sustainability. In biology, diversity helps create new breeding. One molecule cannot make up a cell or a living organism. A living organism exists on molecular diversity. Nature relies on diversity to face crises and sudden changes. In ordinary circumstances, a bacterium splits into two, two to four, etc., without conjugation. But when it faces a crisis – for example, a lack of food or a too acidic or too alkaline environment – that seriously threatens its survival, two bacteria will then conjugate and exchange their DNA. Without diversity we cannot cope with crises.

Culture is basically diverse, depending on geographical differences. Formerly, there was a multitude of culture and civilizations in the world: Japanese, Chinese, European, Sindhu basin, etc.. But now there are attempts to create a monoculture, which is gravely dangerous and threatening to the world’s survival. The world must be teeming with different cultures and civilizations, and exchange among these cultures is very important because cultural diversity functions in similar ways to biodiversity in plant and animal species. The world’s cultural heritage is as important as biodiversity, the lack of which can cause extinction. We need cross-cultural learning.

That was why upon hearing about this API project from Mr. Tanami, I was very interested. In the midst of crises, Asians must be aware of the diverse and subtle cultures they have inherited and stop putting the sole emphasis on economic

development. The emphasis on economic development breeds a very inequitable and steeply vertical power structure. If economics is the sole emphasis, Thailand will function simply as a satellite country for Tokyo, Europe, London, New York, etc. And all its provinces will have no dignity, but be subjugated by Bangkok. But if we take culture as the premise, every local community will retain its dignity, its history, its beauty, and can function independently.

UNESCO has asked all of us to join its campaign for a *Decade of Cultural Development*, a campaign which stresses how the sole pursuit of economic progress will bring about suffering. Culture helps us to live harmoniously together. I am glad to hear that UNESCO will convene a general meeting on education this September in Paris with the theme 'Learning for Living Together'. This theme is highly important for communities in a given country, region, and throughout the world. Eventually, we will become one world, a globalized world, but with a new face, a noble globalization. The kind of globalization touted everywhere now is uncivilized globalization, an underdeveloped globalization, one which simply concentrates on integrating the financial systems or a few other structures to facilitate the exploitation of the weaker by the stronger. This is what we call neo-liberalism, whereby exploitation can take place liberally.

The globalization of the future should emerge from a new consciousness that enables us to treat all human beings as brothers and sisters who love to be with each other, to support each other, and to learn from each other in order to live together. It is a civilized globalization, a noble globalization, entirely different from the present kind of globalization.

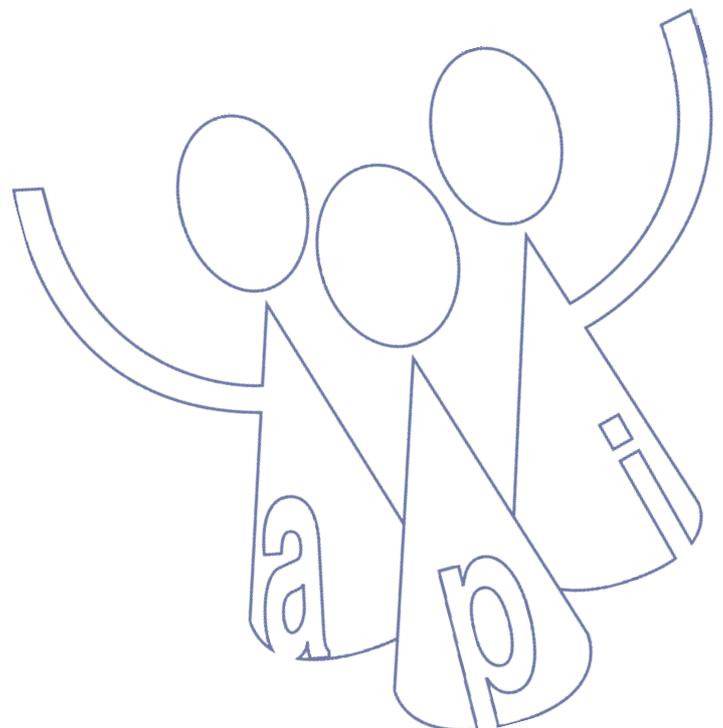
Our most important purpose is to enable human beings to live peacefully with each other. Intellectual exchange and cross-cultural learning in Asia will help us forge a network of Asian public intellectuals. If the network becomes strong enough, it will function like the structure of our brain, which is the finest structure in the universe. Just one inch behind our eyeballs, there are approximately one hundred thousand million brain cells, each of which connects with another seventy thousand cells to create a neural network. This is the most exquisite structure in the universe. Similarly, society will become a social network at different levels: the community level, the national level, the regional level, the Asian level, eventually linking up throughout the world as a global "neural" network.

I therefore appreciate the importance of the API project, which is supported by The Nippon Foundation. In his talk, the preceding speaker, Mr. Utagawa [*the Executive Director of The Nippon*

*Foundation*], spoke like an activist (and I am told that he is one). Many of us here must have been pleased to hear his speech. Like him, I am of the opinion that an Asian must understand Asia from an Asian point of view. A Westerner, however sincere, may not be able to understand this continent. Many problems cannot be solved by the utilization of Western approaches. But, having said that, as pointed out by Mr. Utagawa, we almost do not understand our neighbors – or we understand them from a Western point of view that might not give us a true understanding. It is therefore necessary that we have direct exchanges, to learn from each other and to create our own mutual understanding.

My first year on the international selection committee to recruit the fellows from five countries tells me we are off to a good start. We have six fellows from each country, so altogether thirty of them. But in reality we need to recruit many more. Therefore, I would appreciate any effort – be it from the universities, the government, foundations – to support this cultural and intellectual exchange, so as not to look for help from The Nippon Foundation alone.

Last but not least, the exchange of public intellectuals in Asia in different areas including politics, journalism, culture, history, etc., is vitally important and should be widely publicized. Please do not succumb to the idea that all problems can be solved only within the political arena. For in this highly complex situation, there is no single power and approach that can solve every problem; only our collective social energy, stemming from our strong collaboration in acting and thinking together, can do so. **API**



**Program Operations** contd...



of Malaysia) or UKM. A young organisation, the Institute celebrated its fifth anniversary in April 2000. IKMAS publishes a working papers series and a monograph series. Besides its own program of research, the Institute also undertakes consultancy work for various government agencies and institutions. It seeks to develop itself as a regional centre for the study of globalisation and social transformation. IKMAS is currently under the direction of Dr Ishak Shari.

IKMAS has been designated the coordinating institution for the API Fellowships program for the initial period of 2000-2003.

***The Philippines: The School of Social Sciences, the Ateneo de Manila University (ADMU)***

The School of Social Sciences of the Ateneo de Manila University consists of eleven departments which administer undergraduate/graduate programs and research centers. The School seeks to contribute to the building of a more human and humane world by its commitment to teaching, research and action. The School fosters a multiplicity of perspectives for understanding of and acting in the contemporary world. While it has particular familiarity with the social realities of the Philippines, it strives to contribute not only to local development but to that of region and indeed of the broader world. Dr Jose M Cruz, SJ, is the dean of the School.

***Thailand: Institute of Asian Studies (IAS), Chulalongkorn University***

The Institute of Asian Studies, Chulalongkorn University, an inter-disciplinary research and service organization, was established in 1967 as a unit of the Faculty of Political Science. It was officially constituted as a separate institute in 1985, providing it a status equivalent to that of a faculty. The Institute seeks to promote Asian Studies and an interest in Asian affairs as well as a better understanding of Thailand in the context of



Asia. It also actively seeks out regional and international collaboration and understanding. The director of the Institute is Dr Supang Chantavanich. Dr Surichai Wun'Gaeo, the Institute's deputy director for research, has charge of the API Fellowship program.

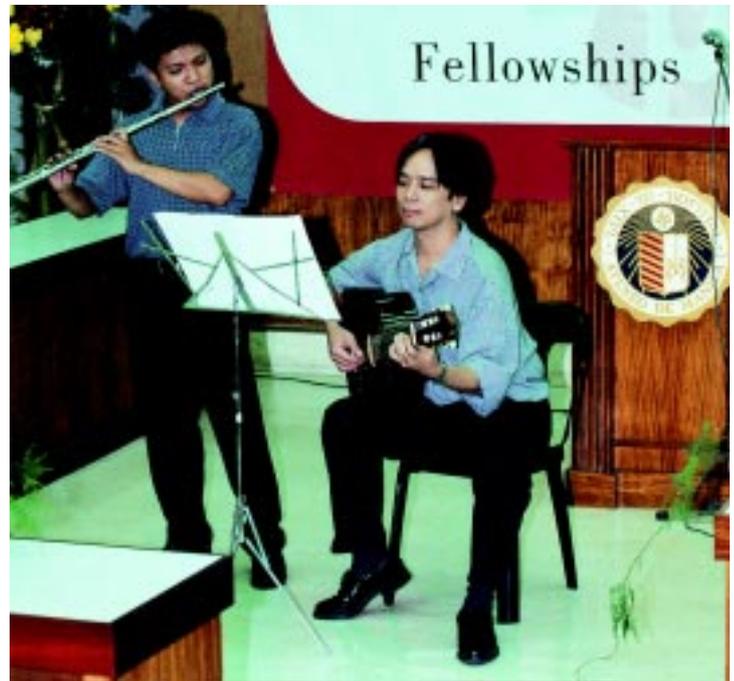
### The Country Selection Committees

Each of the partner institutions has appointed a country selection committee to assist in its work and, primarily, to review applications and to select suitable candidates from that country. The country selection committees comprise respected intellectuals and activists in that country but from outside the partner institution in question. However, the program directors of the partner institutions are *de facto* members of the country selection committee.

### The International Selection Committee (ISC)

The ISC makes the final selection of fellows from the candidates short-listed by the country selection committees. The heads of the partner institutions are automatically members of the International Selection Committee; however, in the case of the Institute of Asian Studies at Chulalongkorn University, the API Fellowships program director is the member of the ISC.

In addition, The Nippon Foundation has also appointed additional members of the committee. For the 2000-2001, these additional members are Dr Nurcholish Madjid of Indonesia and Dr Prawase Wasi. Dr Prawase has been briefly profiled in the introduction to his article in this issue of the newsletter. Dr Nurcholish is a highly respected Muslim intellectual in Indonesia as well as Rector of Paramadina University. Mr Tatsuya Tanami, director for International Relations and Special Projects of The Nippon Foundation is also a member of the ISC.





# PUBLIC INTELLECTUALS IN MALAYSIA AND IN THE REGION

**K. S. Jomo**

*K.S. Jomo is one of Malaysia's most well-known intellectuals, public and otherwise. Jomo is an economist by training, and currently a professor at the University of Malaya. Author and editor of numerous books, he is one of Malaysia's most prolific academics, and much in demand as a media commentator and in international conferences. One of the pioneer batch of API Fellows, the following article is excerpted from his talk at the orientation for Malaysian API Fellows on 15<sup>th</sup> March 2001.*

I would like to go back to consider some of the people who inspired me and the issues they raised in addressing the question of the role of intellectuals and public intellectuals in society.

I would like to begin with two people – the late Paul Baran, an economist at Stanford University, who died in the 1960's, and the pre-eminent public intellectual in the United States today, Noam Chomsky. In their writings they have made a very important distinction between intellectuals and the intelligentsia. For Baran and Chomsky, what distinguishes an intellectual is a personal and ethical engagement with society and a partisanship. Partisanship, not in the sense of belonging to a particular political party but partisanship in the sense of taking sides, taking positions. For both Baran and Chomsky it is this personal and ethical engagement and partisanship which distinguishes the intellectuals from the intelligentsia.

Closer to home, here in Southeast Asia, I would refer you to the very important work of two people. I refer to the important public lecture given by our greatest national poet Usman Awang on *The Role of the Intellectual in Malaysian Society* and the very courageous lecture by Pramodya Ananta Tur in 1979, months after being released from 14 years of detention without trial. In that lecture, Pramodya, like Usman Awang a decade before, advocated a similar role for intellectuals in third world societies.

When the Malaysian Social Sciences Association organised its first international conference Fernando Constantino of the Philippines came and he, too, spoke on the subject of the role of intellectuals, in Philippine society in particular.

Now these three persons I've just mentioned – Usman, Pramodya and Constantino – share positions which are

essentially nationalistic in two senses of the word: (i) nationalistic in rejecting imperialism and the heritage of imperialism, and (ii) nationalistic in calling for the unity of their respective nations. I emphasise this because the futures of many nations now seem to be in doubt, especially in the face of globalisation and with the fashionably post-modern rejection of nationalism

Recent analyses of course reminds us that these challenges to the integrity of these nations largely come from social forces which have been set in motion or have grown in significance because of what is often referred to as globalisation.

But before drifting off in the direction of globalisation, let me remind you of one more person who has spoken on the subject of intellectuals – the late Amilcar Cabral. In one of his important essays, Cabral brought home the notion of the 'suicide' of the middle class intellectual. Cabral basically reminded us of what, in those days, we referred to as 'class location' or 'social location'. He reminded us that intellectuals have to rise above their social background, and that it was therefore important to make this break with their class origins or location. This is what he meant by the notion of the suicide of the intellectual – a break with the past, so to speak, to be able to rise above one's social location.

I don't mean to be pretentious in saying this but I think this ability is extremely important in societies especially like ours; societies which are very deeply culturally divided. It's something I hope we will explore and I'm sure all of us will explore it in different ways.

Let me now quickly turn to the theme of globalisation. The term is now used in many different senses and I don't want to elaborate on them all. I think there are obviously very important ways in which

the current phase differs from earlier phases of globalisation. Still, I think there was a very important period of globalisation in the past which should not be forgotten, and we should recognise that there's much in contemporary globalisation which is far from new.

The earlier phase of globalisation was, of course, largely under colonial auspices. And it remains important to recognise that colonialism happened, how Africa and much of Southeast Asia were divided among the colonial powers, and its ongoing implications for what we are, how we live and the limited options we all face.

There were of course many important critics of that phase of globalisation, termed imperialism by John Hobson, an important English liberal thinker of the late 19th century. This term was taken up by Lenin, and commented on by Joseph Schumpeter, a pioneering Austrian economist.

Now, the three of them have rather different views about this phenomenon which all recognised as imperialism. For Hobson, imperialism was due to the emergence of oligopoly or monopoly capitalism and created corrupt and clientelist colonial governments subservient to the interests of international monopolies. For Lenin, imperialism was the highest stage of capitalism. Lenin's analysis was germinal to his classification of international struggles into two categories: the class struggles, which characterised advanced industrial societies, and the struggles for national liberation in the colonies. Schumpeter held that imperialism was a relic of the pre-capitalist past, a leftover that had crept through culture and history into the capitalist present

So we find that these three ideologically different commentators on the globalisation of their time had rather

different explanations for what they all recognised – and rejected – as imperialism. Part of the reason for this was, of course, the direct control of territory and people. In that narrow colonial sense, one can talk of the end of empire.

But did the end of direct colonialism mean the end of the kind of exploitative economic relations Hobson and Lenin talked about? I think many of us have serious doubts about that. Here, I think of the Italian thinker Antonio Gramsci and his notion of hegemony: how there may be tacit acceptance of particular relations of domination, of exploitation, minus the mechanisms and institutions of direct control we normally identify with domination. This reminder from Gramsci is important, particularly in looking at the cultural sphere, at what Edward Said called 'cultural imperialism'.

Now these new patterns of domination are still relatively poorly understood. There's little consensus as to the mechanisms and how they operate, indeed even how to identify a particular situation. The system of domination today is much, much more subtle than in the past. For precisely this reason the term Adam Smith used to describe the market, the 'invisible hand' actually comes into its own. The system of domination we experience in the world today is much less visible, although not completely invisible, than ever before. In economics, for instance, if you think about relations of trade and investment, about regimes of intellectual property rights and movements of high finance – these are not very visible; they do not mean soldiers in a village, policemen in a house. The system of domination during the contemporary phase of globalisation is much more subtle than before, though not always so.

Let me try to quickly review how intellectuals in this region have engaged globalisation and its consequences in the recent period.

Most of the nations in our region of the world, and in the South, are legacies of colonial imperialism. In many ways they were born in the anti-colonial movements for national liberation in the post-war period. The movements for national liberation were largely led by the intellectuals – in the sense spelled out earlier – of that period. Their success in achieving independence, in ending the

imperialism of their time, gave them special influence in the formation – and leadership – of post-colonial governments. These post-colonial governments were in many senses what Kalecki referred to as intermediate regimes and they had a nationalist developmental project which was supposed to be in the national interest. Unfortunately, over time, this was largely betrayed. So, in the 1960s and 1970s, there was a new generation of revolt, largely manifest on university campuses by the generation which achieved independence. Out of this 1960s and 1970s generation of students emerged many of the new social movements in the region. At the same time, it is also very important to recognise the strengthening of ethnic identities in ways which cut in many directions. I think this is something we Malaysians have to come to terms with.

In the 1980s, we saw a global reaction to the 1960s and 1970s, which John Tovey referred to as a 'counter-revolution'. It was led in the Anglophone world by people like Mrs Thatcher and Mr Reagan but it



has spread all over the world. It led to, at least for those of us in economics, a new orthodoxy, a rejection of the social-democratic and developmentalist projects of earlier years and the ascendance of the neo-liberal Washington consensus. This, I would suggest, has been dominant since the 1980s; it has certainly been recognised as such since the 1990s. But it is precisely because of the continued hegemony of the neo-liberal Washington consensus in its many different forms that the earlier generation of campus activism has largely abated in most countries of the region. There's relatively little campus activism these days and while there are some important concerns and discourses, even this has largely abated. In Malaysia, of course, the continued ethnic divide continues to haunt, stifle and distort progressive discourses and dissent

The fruits, if you will, of this Washington consensus, of the rise of neo-liberalism, were made evident during the 1990's. The Japanese growth rate slowed to a trickle and eventually, as we all know, in 1997 and 1998, the rest of East Asia experienced a most traumatic financial crisis which resulted in many important regime changes throughout the region. I would argue that even in Malaysia, there has been an important regime change although the leader of regime itself has not changed.

All this cannot be understood simply in terms of national trends. These national trends are in varying ways embedded in trans-national regional and global tendencies and changes. In Malaysia, in particular, we have in my view to face two particular challenges in the context of this resurgence of globalisation. Firstly, Malaysia has historically had a very open economy, probably a more liberal market order than most other economies in the region. It seems to have done us well in the sense that post-colonial Malaysia has experienced relative stability and significant economic progress by many criteria. At the same time, as a nation, there has been rather uneven progress towards developing a more resilient basis for national integration and in the most recent period even some reversal of trends that had emerged during the early 1970s. If anything, we have moved in the direction of international trends towards liberalisation and increasingly, the state has stepped in, in favour of the rich and powerful rather than of the masses.

In this context, I think the goal of the public intellectual is to enhance and deepen popular understanding of these problems which seem very obscure and are not necessarily visible to most people. You can't really go to the people and get them excited about globalisation, about the terms of trade, about an enemy they can hardly see, or more importantly, an enemy many actually like. And so, it is a difficult challenge that confronts intellectuals and social movements of this period

I hope that this sharing of my own intellectual journey is of some use for thinking about the question of the responsibility of the public intellectual of this age in dealing with the forces and consequences of globalisation in the Asian region and in this country, Malaysia. **API**

# Participating Countries and Partner Institutions for 2001-2003

*For further information about the API Fellowships or for assistance with the application, please contact your country's Partner Institution.*

## **Indonesia**

### **Center For Social & Cultural Studies, The Indonesian Institute of Science (PMB-LIPI)**

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# The Nippon Foundation



What is known today as The Nippon Foundation was founded in 1962 as the Japan Shipbuilding Industry Foundation, a private, nonprofit organization devoted to promote shipping and shipbuilding, and to prevent maritime hazards. The Foundation was established by legislation that set aside 3.3 percent of the revenues from the motorboat racing industry to be used for philanthropic purposes.

Those funds have created one of the largest philanthropic organizations in the world, supporting projects in Japan and overseas. The Nippon Foundation

funds four types of activities: social welfare and public health, volunteer support, maritime shipping and development and overseas cooperative assistance. Under the last category, we have disbursed more than \$886 million since 1971 for projects in over 100 countries.

The Nippon Foundation is a grant-making organization. Finding good partners and creating working partnerships are essential to our success. To build those partnerships, we work with nonprofit organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations and international organizations. Our major concern is teaming up with the most knowledgeable and motivated partners and helping them do what they can do best.

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