



Symposium Report

Shared Values and Democracy in Asia

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01. Masahiro Akiyama

President, Tokyo Foundation

Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen, and thank you very much for attending our symposium on “Shared Values and Democracy in Asia.” I am delighted to see so many people here today.

This symposium is being organized by the Nikkei and co-organized by the Tokyo Foundation, the Japan Foundation, and the Vivekananda International Foundation. On behalf of the organizer and the Japanese co-organizers, I’d like to make the opening remarks for this meeting.

The idea for this symposium was born during Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s visit to Japan in 2014. He was deeply impressed by the Buddhist temples and statues that he saw with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in Kyoto, and Mr. Modi proposed that India and Japan each host an international meeting focusing on the religious traditions and democratic values that the two countries share. This symposium today is the manifestation of the proposal in Japan; the first conference was held in India in September last year.

We have an outstanding group of speakers from countries around Asia, including such highly distinguished guests as former President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono of the Republic of Indonesia, Abbot Emeritus Kosei Morimoto of Todaiji Temple in Japan, and Minister of State Kiren Rijiju of the Indian Ministry of Home Affairs.

Democracy, I believe, is a political system whose value and appeal is universal. But when we look at countries around the world today, we see that democracy is fraught with many problems. Interestingly, many of the world’s most stable democracies—and countries in the process of democratization—are in Asia.

What accounts for the fact that many Asian countries have embraced democratic systems of government? Despite their myriad philosophical and religious traditions, these countries are seen to share certain core values, such as consideration for others, self-restraint, and mutual respect. These universal values have been a common thread running through the political life of these countries like a *basso continuo*.

Which values, if any, are commonly shared by Asian states, and how have they sustained the evolution of those countries into modern democracies? It was to look for answers to these questions that we decided to organize this symposium.

We will first hear two keynote addresses, after which there will be two panel sessions. The first will focus on how political and religious leaders view the values that Asian countries share with reference to the ties between those values and democracy.

The second panel session will feature researchers and practitioners from a dozen Asian

countries, who will share their insights into the roles that the values widely shared in Asia have played in shaping democratic institutions in the respective countries.

We are very fortunate that the political and religious leaders, researchers, and others who will be speaking today are highly qualified to shed light on these topics and on the various philosophies, religions, and political systems of Asia. Rather than making speeches, they will be addressing these issues through discussion. A single afternoon is hardly enough to consider these topics from so many perspectives, but because time is limited, we have tried to organize our sessions so that each speaker will have an opportunity to contribute the essence of their views to the discussion.

Prime Minister Abe has a deep personal interest in and strong commitment to this meeting. While he is unable to greet you now because the Diet is in session, he is scheduled to join us later in the afternoon to personally present a message to you.

In closing, I hope that the valuable exchange of ideas at this meeting leads to a greater understanding of our common values in Asia and that all of you will come away from the meeting with a greater understanding of our “Shared Values and Democracy in Asia.”

Thank you very much.

02. Shri Kiren Rijju

Minister of State for Home Affairs, Government of India

Distinguished Friends,

I am delighted to participate in this symposium on ‘Shared Values and Democracy in Asia’ organized by Tokyo Foundation Japan jointly with Vivekananda International Foundation Delhi. As you know, it is a follow up to the Hindu Buddhist Global Initiative for Conflict Avoidance and Environment Consciousness held in New Delhi in September last year. It is part of the Global Hindu-Buddhist Initiative conceived during Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s state visit to Japan in 2014.

The leitmotif of this second symposium, like that of the first held in New Delhi, is *Samvad*, which in Sanskrit means “Dialogue”. Good communication holds the key to good relations, whether between individuals or in the conduct of inter-state relations.

Historically, the definition of Asia has eluded stereotypes. Asia was never monolithic, even though there was confluence between the great philosophies it produced, whether Christianity, Judaism, Islam at one end, to Hinduism and Buddhism in India or the great bodies of thought and practice in its eastern reaches. The historical narrative between different parts of Asia was one of mutual exchange and enrichment, devoid of superimposition by one on the other. It was marked by the absence of unilateralism, whether in thought or action. There was always a degree of overlap between the great civilisations, but no erosion of identity.

Asia can well lay claim to being the birthplace of spirituality for humankind. In recent decades, it has also legitimately reclaimed the mantle of being the most dynamic factor in the global economy even as traditional engines of growth elsewhere have slowed. Sixty per cent of the world’s population today is Asian. It is being exposed to high economic growth rates of six per cent or more for prolonged periods for the first time in history, resulting in increased prosperity and the emergence of large markets. Asia is no longer a mere supplier of raw materials. It has come into its own. Many countries in Asia, including my own country India, are recognised today as hubs of manufacturing excellence. India is today the world’s fastest growing large economy. Its economic and social transformation under the dynamic leadership of Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi is strongly rooted in our democratic ideals.

The Asian landmass straddles the Indo-Pacific. The waters of the two great oceans are of key importance to our continuing economic growth and prosperity. More than two-thirds of global oil supplies, one half of all container traffic and one-third of bulk cargo pass through these waters. Freedom of navigation, over-flight and commerce are of great importance to the common cause of ensuring stability and prosperity for all.

There is enough room for all countries of Asia to prosper together. At the same time, the multitude of identities and interests based on ancient heritage, and lingering geographical and territorial issues, have prevented us from achieving better results.

The Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi has often said that we must work on the basis of the motto of “Sab Ka Saath, Sab Ka Vikas” (Together With All, Development for All). This suggests that in inter-state relations, as in individual societies, we seek to build convergence and cooperation for the larger good of all. Today, the concept of togetherness is even self-evident as we face the challenges of international terrorism and climate change, neither of which respects borders.

I can confidently say that even though the formal franchise based electoral democracy might have been established only in 20th Century, the basic principles of democracy have been an integral part of Indian and Oriental Civilizations and their spiritual traditions. The origin of democracy and democratic values in these societies can be traced back to the teachings of Buddhism, Hinduism and Shintoism and other philosophies which emphasized the collective good of society. In the past, Asian societies were based on personal relations. Both Hinduism and Buddhism encouraged differing thoughts and viewpoints. They advocated dialogue and emphasized the power of change and conviction through a democratic process. This provided a strong cultural base for society’s development and acceptance of diversity.

Asian thought and tradition, especially Buddhism, upholds the principles of equality, justice, liberty, interdependence and respect for Mother Nature. These are vital to the task of realizing social, political and economic transformation.

Today, when the world is witnessing increasing levels of polarization in conflict situations, democratic societies must work together to preserve and promote non-conflicting traditions and democratic values. We need to resolve our differences through peaceful dialogue, through better *Samvad* as we would say in India. We need to seek greater convergence in our mindsets. We need to distil the wisdom inherent in our Asian heritage to show us the way forward.

While speaking of Asian values and thoughts in a political perspective we have to also be mindful of the occasional authoritarian characteristic which had existed in the past. It continues to rear its head in contemporary times. There is need to re-emphasize the importance of the rule of law, which is at the core of all civilizations and spiritual value systems. Only the rule of law can provide a good balance between the maintenance of social order and political stability and individual rights and freedoms. It is our duty as democratic societies to encourage healthy debate on these aspects.

Japan and India are models of successful democracies that accept all faiths and thoughts. They have balanced well their march towards modernity and economic prosperity with the need to preserve traditional culture and values.

I am confident that the 21st Century will prove to be the Asian Century. The world is today looking up to Asia not only to provide the engines for global economic recovery but also for ideas and leadership critical for harmonious global relations. Asia should be capable of meeting global challenges emerging from conflict-prone ideologies and societies.

The Prime Minister of India, Shri Narendra Modi, had said at the Buddha Poornima Celebration in May 2014 organized by International Buddhist Confederation that, without the teachings of Buddha, the 21st century can never become Asia's century. I should add that for democracies to flourish it is essential that civilizations founded on inclusive philosophies such as Buddhism and Hinduism come together to play a larger role in global affairs.

No discussion on democracy would be complete without alluding to the importance of making people more environmentally conscious and sensitive to nature's bounties which are hard to replace. All philosophies and religions have a critical responsibility to provide new direction to the cause of the environment. I would like to once again quote my Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi. He has stated that the Buddhist tradition, in all of its historical and cultural manifestations, encourages greater identification with the natural world because, from a Buddhist perspective, nothing has a separate existence. The impurities in the environment affect the mind, and the impurities of mind also pollute the environment. In order to purify the environment, we have to purify the mind.

I should add that Buddha integrated the principles of non-violence and compassion towards all life forms including human beings, flora, fauna and nature at large. His teachings, which are deeply rooted in the Indian ethos, have had a broader impact on the spiritual and temporal value systems throughout Asia. The central idea of non-violence, peaceful co-existence, welfare of all sentient beings and respect for the environment is a common feature of Hindu and Buddhist thought, making them ecologically and environmentally compatible philosophies.

I believe there is an urgent need today to examine how Asian spiritual systems and political thought can contribute to the propagation of democratic values and environmental consciousness since democracy, or the lack of it, and climate change, will shape the discourse over our own future. I am confident that this symposium will endeavour to delve deeper into our collective wisdom to find answers to the question of sustainable development and peaceful co-existence, which is possible only if we develop effective habits of communication and elimination of contradictions between individuals, nation states and between man and nature.

Thank You.

03. Gen NC Vij

DIRECTOR VIVEKANANDA INTERNATIONAL FOUNDATION

Honourable Ministers,

Mr. Akiyama, President, the Tokyo Foundation and distinguished participants. We are indeed privileged to be here in Tokyo to attend the second leg of the deliberations, which were set rolling by the VIF in New Delhi on 3 Sept.

The conference in New Delhi and now this one, are being held as a follow up of a very noble and strong initiative taken by the Hon'ble Prime Ministers of Japan and India. It was most interesting to hear today the marvellous opening remarks made by the Prime Minister of Japan. Mr. Shinzo Abe. He has set the tone for the proceedings of the day. I must also say in the same breath that he visited India only last month and his visit was a roaring success and generated huge enthusiasm, as the people in India greatly value the historical and time tested friendship between our two great democracies of the world. We have so much to learn and gain from each other and also from the other countries in the Indo-Pacific Region.

All the distinguished speakers of this morning, with their scholarly discourses, innovative suggestions and frank opinions have given a sense of direction for today's interaction.

In the conference held at Delhi, we had discussed that the existing institutions of the world, which have mostly Western orientation, have neither been able to avoid conflict and nor safeguard the environment. The environmental protection can be possible only with "self awareness" based on our ancient religious beliefs with respect to the mother earth. The regulatory measures which are in vogue today, to safeguard environment are proving to be fractious.

On the other hand 'Hindu-Buddhist Civilizational Stream' which is founded on the ancient concept of Dharma, which is common to both India and Japan and many other countries not only in our region but also in the world, incorporates two most important aspects:-

(a) Recognition, acceptance and celebration of diversity amongst humans, which leads to Conflict avoidance.

(b) Dharma influenced democracy which is Asian in character, does not rest on idea of rights but also includes duties towards the society and of course nature.

Both Prime Ministers Modi and Abe have espoused the aforesaid basic ideas in their own speeches and have thus set the tone not only for today's exchange of thoughts but also for the international polity.

The topics chosen for the deliberations today are most interesting and of great relevance to the existence and well being of the human kind.

Once again, I will like to express my warm gratitude on behalf of the Vivekananda

International Foundation (VIF), to the Tokyo Foundation, The Japan Foundation, Nikkei Inc & the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Japan whom we are partnering for hosting this wonderful symposium. We also thank 'International Buddhist Confederation' (IBC), who have been our collaborators for these two conferences.

Finally, I would also like to place on record our deep appreciation and gratitude to both Prime Ministers of Japan, Mr. Shinzo Abe and Prime Minister of India Mr. Narendra Modi, for being the moving spirit behind these conferences.

We also hope that this thought process will gain momentum and we will soon have one conference after another in this region to promote these ideas.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH – TOKYO FOUNDATION! Thank you very much everybody.

04. Kosei Morimoto

Abbot Emeritus, Todaiji Temple

Thank you very much for that kind introduction. My name is Morimoto, of Todaiji Temple. This symposium is entitled, 'Shared Values and Democracy in Asia,' which is a very, very wide-reaching theme. However, I personally would like to talk about what sort of a role Buddhism has played in Japanese politics. Of course, I would like to touch briefly on what the shared values of Asia are. But in particular, I would like to discuss the fact that Buddhism has had actually, harbored great value in Japanese politics in the ancient days in Japan and those are the days that I would like to refer to today.

As you know, Buddhism was founded about 2500 years ago by Prince Gautama Siddhartha who was the prince of a small nation called Kapilavastu, in India. He agonized very deeply over human existence and the meaning of life and after such agonization [ph], and after very difficult ascetic practices and training, he discovered the dharma, which is a law on human existence and he finally achieved spiritual enlightenment or Buddhahood. Now, it was in mid-6th century that Buddhism, which was first born in India, finally spread to Japan, at the eastern edge of Asia. Back then in Japan, there already existed a belief that holy spirits, which are beyond human comprehension dwell in all natural things and phenomenon such as the sun, moon, wind, rain, mountains, rivers, trees and plants. And, along with the spirits of ancestors, these spirits were referred to as divine or Kami. This is the faith that was later named, Shintoism.

What's important is that back in those days, there was no doctrine or a set of teachings to Shintoism. When Buddhism spread to Japan, it was actually already 1000 years old and therefore, it had evolved from the initial laws or dharma to include a wide range of philosophies, which had accumulated until then. In any event, there was a law or dharma in a form of Buddhist teachings there. Of course, there was temporary confrontation within Japan on whether to accept or embrace Buddhism or not. But the Japanese rulers of the times, focused on the profundity of the Buddhist philosophy and the sophistication of Buddhist culture, particularly Buddhism statutes and decided to proactively embrace Buddhism. However, that did not lead to an outright exclusion of Shintoism, as it stood, from ancient Japan. As a result, each of these two faiths were recognized with different social roles through a political consideration, opening the way to the coexistence of Shintoism and Buddhism.

Now, about half-a-century later in the year 604, Prince Shōtoku, issued the 17-Article constitution. Although we call it a constitution, it was more like a set of rules and guidelines for bureaucrats. Unlike its modern form, Article-1 says, how harmony is to be valued and this is a message that was engraved deeply in the minds of all Japanese to come. The 2nd Article says, sincerely revere the three treasures. The three treasures here, refer to the laws or dharma, which were developed by Buddha and this became the turning point for Buddhism to take a deep root here in Japan. At just about that same time, in the western end of Asia, in the Arabian peninsula, Muhammad had begun to preach the revelations of Allah to its people and the Arab people, inspired by his teachings, went on to conquer the surrounding nations. As a result, these conquered people were converted and that led to the development of Islamic Law or sharia,

which comprises the revelations of Allah and the operational and life-examples of Muhammad al-Hadi.

Now when you look at East Asia, in the 7th century, the region was in great turmoil. On the Korean peninsula, the three countries of Goguryeo, Baekje and Silla were fighting each other and China, which had long been divided, was unified by the Sui Dynasty. However, the Sui Emperor, failed in his military expectation to conquer Goguryeo and was short-lived. The Tang Dynasty, which took its place, took advantage of the conflict in the Korean peninsula to gain hegemony there. In Japan, there was a political change caused by the assassination of the de facto ruler and Tang took advantage of a request for support from Silla, to destroy Baekje and Goguryeo. In 663, Japan sent massive troops to help restoration of the Baekje Dynasty, but was defeated by the joint forces of Tang and Silla. Now, Emperor Tenji, established a military defense line on guard against Tang invasions. Also, he decided to adopt the centralized government structure, based on Ritsuryō code modelled after Tang. Ritsu means the current criminal or penal code and Ryō is the administrative code. In other words, his design was to establish political management based on laws and regulations. What Emperor Tenji first did was to develop a family register. The family register is often referred to as a means of controlling the nation's subjects, but it's also a means of protecting the subjects as well.

In 672, Emperor Tenmu, won the Jinshin Revolt and established a centralized government and he aimed for the establishment of a Japan-unique Ritsuryō code. After 30 years, this bore fruit in the form of the Taihō-ritsuryō or the Taiho Civil and Penal Code, in 701. The foundation of the Ritsuryō System or penal and civil code system is the Achi-kishi [ph] of which K is the Japanese character for economy and shi for history – and this is Chinese classics in ethics, politics and history. Achi-kishi is actually the sacred books of Confucianism in China and the ancient Chinese history books. The former is the five classics of Confucianism, including the 'Analects of Confucius', a book on filial duty [ph] – duties and book on changes. The latter is a 3-classic history book of the Shiji, which is the Grand Records of historian Han shu, history of the Han and Hou Han shu, which is the book of the Book of the Later Han. This is actually, a Chinese classic, which was compiled from past philosophies and empirical rules of China's history on how to govern from the perspective of the ruling power. So this is a text book on how to be a good emperor and the Japanese rulers adopted this and crown prince and the ruling class children had to learn the Achi-kishi.

Now, by the 8th century there developed in Asia, many different laws in order for human beings to maintain social order, although these laws had different origins, perspectives and values. But these laws had to be enforced by the state, which was the enforcement agency of these laws. So in ancient Japan, which established the central government system, did such a concept of state exist? And if it did exist, then what form did it take? That's one point that we have to verify I believe, in this discourse. Otherwise, we will not be able to lead into the next theme of this symposium, which is democracy. Now, generally put, there're three elements, which comprise a state that is, territory, subject and sovereignty. But these are only assumed for the modern nation-state. But having said that, that concept of a state was actually described in the imperial edict, which is a declaration, which was adopted on the enthronement of emperors in Japan.

For example, if I may take the example of the imperial edict issued during the enthronement of Emperor Shōmu, who acceded in 724, at the very beginning at least, the emperor, a living god and ruler of Japan and all of its territory or the eight islands, will read out a declaration, so his siblings, children, the royalty, vassals, the bureaucrats and all citizens must listen, carefully. The list of subjects to whom the edict is addressed is all listed, but herein includes all three elements comprising the concept of a state. However, the sovereign, who is the emperor, is a human being. However, he is regarded as a living god or a god who has mystic that no human can surpass. The edict then continues that past emperors were given a mandate from the gods who formed the imperial family, living in Takamanohara [ph], the mandate to govern Japan and this mandate had been handed down from emperor to emperor over generations. A mandate from the gods is a concept that relates to the theory of the divine right of kings in the west. So, the origin of the right to rule is actually traced to the founding gods of the imperial family. The emperor bears responsibility for governance to the founding gods of the imperial family.

Now then, how will the emperor exercise that sovereignty, which had been mandated in him by the founding gods? The imperial edict continues, all peoples who live in O- Yashima [ph] or Japan are all subject or citizens – the Japanese word is Omitakara – of the emperor. Therefore, the new emperor as in the case of past emperors, must rule well and care for its people, with deep affection. The imperial edict was delivered across the nation, using the post-horse system. Well, this is like at the National Diet when the Prime Minister, when newly-elected will deliver a speech, his State of the Union speech, in order to commit his policies, make commitments of his policies, to the people. What's most important here is the words, to care for its people with affection. Now, the imperial edict of Emperor Shōmu is no different from other emperors who reigned under the Ritsuryo System.

Then, what kind of a view of the nation did all of these ancient emperors hold? Now, one dimension before Emperor Shōmu that is, Empress Genshō and her imperial edict illustrates this. The empress says, the secret to the prosperity of any nation is to make its people wealthy. To make its people wealthy is to place the basis of governance and politics in the economic lives of the people. Now, the actual words used in the edict were 'economic lives,' but the meaning was such. This was actually drawn from the Han shu, history of the Han treatise on food and money, which forms part of the history books of the Chinese classic of Shiji. Now, after his accession, Emperor Shōmu, developed one new policy after another and it appears that through his policies, he was trying to apply to actual politics, all of his learnings as a crown prince, when he was groomed as at future emperor.

Of the Chinese classics, rather than looking at the Confucius' books he was more interested in the history books, which reflected real-day life. In particular, he drew extensively from the governance of Wendi, which is the fifth emperor of the former Han, as written in the History of the Han – of the Records of the Grand Historian, a document outlining a new package of healthcare policies including a reference to the emperor as father and mother, of the nation, indicating that the emperor regarded the state as a pseudo-family. However, 3 years after his enthronement, Emperor Shōmu apparently realized that however much effort he may make

towards good governance and good policies, such policies would lack effectiveness if his spokespeople that is, the bureaucrats, did not execute his policies faithfully. Therefore, he undertook a tighter discipline on bureaucrats, both central and local and reform of the government bureaucracy.

As a result, a top government post holder in the royalty, who was also the head of the conservatives and had restricted or resisted the reforms, Prince Nagaya was punished [ph]. He has received confidence in terms of his reign. At the special ritual [Unclear] Emperor Shōmu was wearing a same dress, a costume with the Tang Dynasty. But with that there was a turnaround of the environment facing crisis, with drought and also the earthquake. There was famine and death that had started. This would continue for 6 years and the forced measure and people are faced with famine, the people's heart and mind become violent, increasing criminal cases and many of the prisons are overfilled with criminals.

Emperor Shōmu, in 734, had blamed himself to the fact and saying that looking at his statement, because the emperor's policies are not well-implemented many people has been made into criminals and that responsibility and accountability solely lies within myself. So because of that excluding serious criminals, he had ordered to release criminals. Due to this forced measure, there was said to be a – the heavily guard had sent out warnings for Hippocratic leaders and the emperor himself has blame on his self as his ill-rule and the governance. Despite the very busy time, when he had time available, the emperor would open up books in order to seek effective and viable guidance in order to govern the people. And during those days, that specific year he has drawn a conclusion in his study that is, in his transcript there is a charter and there is a – on the last page of his charter, his feelings are being reflected, based on what has been stipulated, the Shiji, which is Chinese classic ethics, politics and history and the Buddhism. Buddhism is far superior than the Chinese classic ethics, politics and history.

The basic of course governance is that the leaders based on the moral, the soul of Tokujī era are based on the moral rule – was the basis. But the emperor has transformed the main access of the Chinese way of governance to Buddhism. Of course, with that being said, he has no intent to eliminate the philosophical beliefs of China. The specific plans has been executed, continuously and within the minutes [ph] of that 735-737, smallpox, a contagious disease was widespread, which affected the death of four of the imperial families and many of the senior officials, bureaucrats and farmers have lost their lives. There are a lot of people who have escaped and have seen increase in street dwellers. Emperor Shōmu, stipulated in the teaching of the Ritsuryō, the civil penal code. He was persistent to follow this teaching. But the biggest concern is that many of the public that had a dark shadow in their mind due to this devastating effect and he has started to engage in national projects that will give some physical terms of rejuvenating these people and saving those people.

Two of the projects, one of them is establishing the Kokubunji Temple in having a Buddha and seeking for the dissemination and transformation of the Buddhism philosophy to the public. The second is that in Kokubunji Temple, it creating the prosperity of all living creatures, inclusive of nature in human beings, tried to establish a large Buddha called Rushana Vairocana. And also, the emperor was seeking to transfer the capital and the second project in

order to establish new capital and establishing the large Buddha statue of Rushana Vairocana, there were things that needed to be done, before implementing this program. And that was the allocation and allotment of the rice field to the public, in order to fulfil some of the lacking rice paddies. This government have implemented the so-called law, which enabled to hold on to this rice paddies for three generations. But, there was a lot of pioneering work but the hard working effort will be down the drain because it will be automatically after three generations, confiscated to the state, to the government.

So, although there were many pioneering works on the rice paddies and fields there was a lot of ruins that were caused due to this law. So, Emperor Shōmu, have enacted the perpetual holding of the personal asset regardless of the three generation of the holding the rice paddies had that – has been pioneered – is going to be given as a private asset to the owner and there will be no confiscation from the government. So, in other words – in terms of personal asset holding has been permitted or Yamashima [ph], which is Japan is a public land that will be governed by the emperor from the Ritsuryō law, which is the criminal and penalize-based thinking. It was a dramatic innovation. In other words, with the Rushana Vairocana, a large Buddhist establishment, this action was called. This is again, another aspect of seeking solution for both fulfilling the mental and also physical aspect.

In establishing the large Buddhist statue, we need a lot of labor forces. In that sense, the street dwellers – in reducing the street dwellers they were able to help arm the large Buddha establishment. The laborers, so to speak of, accounts to, according to the record, 51,5500,41902 [ph] people altogether and this tells a story of fulfilling both physical and mental. Emperor Shōmu was its advocate, in establishing the large Buddha. The total people accounts for 2.6 million people who had worked on the establishment of the large Buddha. In – Todaiji Temple, has evolved to a large temple and we had thought that we would never be able to excavate a – gold for large Buddha statue. But that has been discovered and the emperor has said that this is a blessing of the Rushana Vairocana, large Buddha establishment and he had decided to renounce the world and become a priest. And being a priest, he had a belief that he has no right to govern the state. So he had decided to step down from being emperor.

For the emperor to be renounced the world and become a priest was something that is very abnormal to the leaders of that time. But, the emperor, the fact that female emperor – the realization of female emperor was not desired. That political process was well in place by the Emperor Shōmu. So inclusive all that he decided to become a priest, renouncing the world. As I've said, the emperor in renouncing the world and becoming a priest has had a major influence to the history hence after that incident. In front of god, in terms of the reading the charters by the monk, and becoming a priest renouncing the world, realizing the deepness of the things – thing and being the guardian of the god and Buddhism as a religious belief have emerged. And the emperor of course becoming a priest had become a norm and he has been widely disseminated among the public. This is the basis of the philosophy, in terms of the Keshi [ph] the Chinese classic – to our policies, which have been learned by the disciples of the leaders which has been quite different, respecting the god and respecting Buddha.

It is really is the sense of empathy to all the living creatures, ultimately avoiding eating

cow and horses and for 1000 years of time, it has continued. To the minds of general public, deep in our minds, unconsciously, there is a sense of accepting and recognizing diversified set of values and that is a very important element in order to evolve to the democratic beliefs and political philosophy that we have today. During the civil war era, in the 17th century, under Tokugawa regime, the federal system of the Shogunate, 260 years we have seen a peaceful outcome. With the longevity of the regime having a Edo Shogunate as the tip of – top of the policies there were a lot of grievances. On behalf of that Japan has been governed and should have been governed by the emperor. There was a philosophy to respect and cater to the respect to the emperor and this has become very severe. So there was an energy, a political energy in order to keep distance from the respective emperor to – geared towards more respect to the emperors and that has led to the collapse of the Edo Shogunate era.

During the Meiji Regime, for the modernization of the state we had to introduce westernized philosophy. So there was a system that was introduced, eliminating religion beside from Shinto and the policy to establish Shinto as a state religion. As a special means there was a segregation of Buddha and Shintoism for a few 1000 years plus the Shinto and Buddhism – the coexistence, symbiosis has been denied by this move. So with that Buddhism that had a role in playing a major aspect in contributing to the policy have been lost. The policy to establish Shinto as a state religion is contradictory to the freedom of religions that has been protected and conserved by the modern constitution. So therefore the state have said that Shinto is not a religion. With this new legal interpretation, they have established the Shinto as the state religion and having their emperor as a living god and making this mandatory to be included in the curriculum in the educational field.

In the Meiji era, the living god is quite different from the emperor in the past, cherishing people as we have seen in Asian times in the balance of Shintoism and Buddhism as coexisting as we have seen in the 6th century, we have seen the advancement and emergence of militarism and after 77 years of the Meiji new restoration, you have seen the consequences of what it had brought about with this new change, we are now as – the 71st years since that incident. Through the transmission of Buddhism, the 2000 years of the history and trajectory of what Japan had followed, the 77 years of the Meiji Regime may could have been a very special moment, in our past era, in terms of Shinto as a state religion. And after that the World War II, we have been able to embrace the new political philosophy of the principle of sovereignty resides in the people is putting aside the sacrifices of the general public, something that was harnessed within the long history of Japan. In other words, the rule of law and at the same time, acceptance through the pluralism of the various religious beliefs and the set of value that has been embedded in the minds of the Japanese.

So that would be my conclusion on my report. Thank you very much for your kind attention.

05. SUSILO BAMBANG YUDHOYONO
THE 6TH PRESIDENT OF INDONESIA

Bismillahirrahmannirrahim,
May peace be upon us all,
Mr. Masahiro Akiyama, President, The Tokyo Founda-tion,
General Nirmal Chander Vij, Director of the Viveka-nanda International Foundation,
Mr. Kosei Morimoto, Abbot Emeritus, Todaiji Temple, Japan,
Mr. Kiren Rijiju, Minister of State for Home Affairs of India,
Excellencies Ambassadors, Members of the Parliament and Ministers,
Distinguished Participants, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is always good to be back in the beautiful and dynamic city of Tokyo.

In this auspicious moment, I would like to thank the Government of Japan, the Government of India; Nikkei Inc., the Japan Foundation, the Tokyo Foundation, the Vivekananda International Founda-tion, and the International Buddhist Confederation, for inviting me to speak at this important symposium to discuss Asian values and democracy.

Our discussion today takes place at an interesting time in Asia's historical trajectory.

In the 1970's, I believe it was Prime Minister Nakasone who lamented that, as a democracy, Japan felt alone in the region. His feeling was under-standable : the rest of the region were autocratic and authoritarian, some marked by strong economic growth, including Indonesia.

The picture today, some 4 decades later, is quite different. According to several pundits, the number of countries which qualify as democracies or semi-democracies in the world is at its highest. This is also true for Asia.

And it is reasonable to expect that, one way or another, the community of democracies will keep growing, hopefully not just in quantity but also in quality.

But ours is also a challenging time because a lot of democracies are in distress.

The latest countries to join democratic transitions -- the so-called Arab Spring countries -- are still struggling to achieve stability, unity and growth. Extremism and internal conflicts are still problematic. Some established democracies are experiencing economic gloom. Low confidence in leadership is commonplace, and in some democra-cies, restlessness have replaced national self-esteem. Parochial sentiments are growing, as reflected in growing xenophobia and Islamophobia.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is therefore an interesting time for us to revisit the question of how democracies in Asia grow, and how Asian values relate to democracy.

Let me state from the beginning, I do believe that there exists universal values go which every human being on this planet is entitled to.

They may have different skin color, live in different continents, embrace different religions, speak different languages, and have their own culture and history. But every person wants to live in freedom, dignity and happiness. Every person wants to pursue a better life, and wants their children to live in peace and prosperity. Every person also expects their Government to protect them, and to serve the best interests of the people. This, I believe, is a universal aspiration. Its practical application may differ country to country, but its relevance is global.

I believe this is the reason why democracies are growing at a phenomenal speed in the 20th century, because peoples of the world increasingly sought expression, and realization, to these universal aspirations.

As a believer in universal aspirations, I also believe in Asian values.

These are long-standing values in Asian societies that for generations have fundamentally shaped our collective thinking, and how we see the state, the community and the individual. Across Asian societies, there are prevailing values that call for respect and loyalty towards figures of authority, respect for elderly, the importance of the community, pluralism, tolerance and consensus-building, collectivism and mutual accommodation, order and stability, cooperation over competition, and social harmony.

Distinguished Participants,

In my view, even Asian values DO have different nuances.

In East Asia, partly due to the influence of Confucian ethics, there is an emphasis on the values of hard work, excellence, thrift, entrepreneurialism, and discipline.

In South Asia and Southeast Asia, some of these values were less obvious and are relatively new. Given its diversity, the emphasis in Southeast Asia tend to be on multi-culturalism, pluralism and tolerance.

In any case, in my view, there is nothing in Asia values that should stand in the way of democracy. In places where democracy was non-existent and where local conditions were seen as inhospitable to democracy, you now see just the opposite.

The proof is in the pudding.

In Japan, democracy is strong. In India, democracy is solid. In South Korea, democracy is thriving. In Indonesia, democracy is vibrant. In the Philippines, democracy is

healthy.

In all these countries, democratic development have been able to synergize with local values, some of which had to adapt to sustain democratic development.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me speak about the experience of Indonesia, which has endured a long journey of trial and tribulation with regard to democracy.

The history of democracy in Indonesia can be divided into 4 periods.

The first was the era of liberal democracy, which lasted for 15 years. We simply adopted Western-style democracy, but at that time the people were not ready for the very competitive and free-wheeling politics. It did not take long for this liberal model to crumble.

Next, came the era of what President Soekarno called "Guided Democracy". It was essentially an authoritarian system, even a dictatorship. President Soekarno, the strong man who stood at the center of this era, wielded enormous uncontested power. This model also failed.

The third era was authoritarian democracy. There were more freedoms, but it was still authoritarian, with strong emphasis on political stability, national security and economic development. President Suharto commanded overwhelming power in a system marked by weak Parliament. This model lasted around 3 decades.

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Finally, is the era of reformasi, which began since 1999 until today. This is the time when we embraced democracy as universally known, with a free competitive multi-party electoral system. It began with a very bumpy start, and once it settled, like any other democracy, it continued to be noisy -- very noisy. I was fortunate to have the privilege to lead Indonesia during this era. In the years I was President, the Indonesian economy improved significantly, with income per capita tripling within a decade; stability was achieved as I managed to complete 2 full Presidential terms; national security and unity were maintained; democracy bloomed and we enhanced Indonesia's international role.

Distinguished Participants,

Indonesia therefore is rather new to democracy. When we held our first free multi-party elections in 1999, Indonesia became the last country to join the "third wave" of democratization that swept the 20th century.

For many decades, many Indonesians believed that we were not ready for democracy. We had many excuses : that the people were not ready, that they were too poor, that they were not mature enough, not educated enough, and so on. Some even feared Indonesia would turn into an Islamic state if the electoral system were to be opened up.

Stability, growth and status quo were prioritized over anything else, including democracy.

But what happened to Indonesia since 1999 proved these notions wrong.

Yes, our democracy began with a shaky start : with political instability, excessive public protests, ethnic conflicts, and rising separatism.

But once the people chose democracy, they did not let go. Since 1999, we have had 3 general elections, in 2004, 2009 and 2014, and in every one of them, voting turn-out was consistently over 85 %, one of the highest in the world. And contrary to what some expected, the Indonesian people, including the poor, voted enthusiastically, rationally, and responsibly.

Indeed, in building democracy, the Indonesian people did not look back : they kept looking ahead, with determination, and with hope.

Today, Indonesia is one of the strongest democracies in Southeast Asia. We have enjoyed periodic elections, and peaceful transfers of power. The prospect of a military coup is non-existent. Civil society is strong.

We also happily found out that we did NOT have to choose between democracy and development. As we built our democracy brick by brick, the Indonesian economy continued to grow, and indeed, in average our economic growth was the third after China and India among the G-20. For the first time, Indonesians enjoyed more freedom as well as greater prosperity.

Of course, we still have a lot of work to do. Unlike the Indonesia of yesteryear, and unlike many other democracies, Indonesia today is simultaneously a multi-party and multi-ethnic democracy, forming an extremely challenging political landscape.

Thus, to make democracy work in such a complex environment we need to constantly improve the quality and maturity of our politics. How do we measure the quality and maturity of our democracy ? Well, by making sure that these things go together rather than choosing between them, namely : freedom and rule of law, liberty and security, human rights and human responsibilities, and democracy and economic prosperity. If all these things can be to go together in harmony, our democracy will be solid.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

There are many politicians and academics who have asked the question as to how Indonesia escaped a failed state scenario and became successful democracy.

It is an important question. There are many explanations for sure, but let me offer a few.

I think one of the most important things we did was to focus on building a credible system. We learned from our mistakes in the past, where Indonesian politics centered heavily around giant personalities -- President Soekarno, then President Suharto. Cult of personality was particularly strong in those days. As a result, when these leaders fell, the system crumbled with them.

Since 1999, we began to focus not on the leader, but on the institutions. The Parliament became a real independent and restive legislature. The President became directly elected by the people, as opposed to being elected by Parliament. Political parties became strong political force. Rule of law, freedom of speech, and freedom of association became paramount. Governance became a matter of institutional transparency and predictability. And the constitution was amended to become more democratic.

Thus, when people say that democracy is strong in Indonesia, what this means in practice is that democratic institutions are strong. And this guarantees that our democracy is strong because it is homegrown, not imposed by any outside power.

I am happy to inform you that when I stepped down as Indonesia's sixth President last year, the system did not go with me. Indeed, we were able to pass on to the next political generation what the World Economic Forum called Indonesia's 'golden decade', a decade marked by peace, unity, stability and growth. I wish I could take credit for that, but that golden decade was really made possible by a functioning democracy and thriving civil society.

Distinguished Participants,

Another explanation for the success of our democratic transition was our ability to adapt our political culture.

Democracy cannot stand on its own : it needs a particular collective mindset to sustain it.

When we embarked on our new democratic path, the challenge was how to do away the old mindset and old ways of doing things. Authoritarian impulse, long part of our political culture, had to be suppressed. Political conformity was no longer the norm, and consensus was no longer everything. Government officials who were allergic to criticism had to get used to it, and indeed, as I did, embrace it. The mass had to learn how to express their views peacefully, as opposed to violently. The military had to learn how to be non-political and accept civilian supremacy. Political competition and dissent was a normal part of life. Fear of change had to be replaced by entitlement for change.

It was not easy, but slowly and surely, our political culture, our values evolved. And as a result, our democratic system became stronger, although still sometimes a bit messy. This is why it is often said that Indonesian democracy had become irreversible, as it achieved a point of no return.

In saying this, I am not saying that all is well. Authoritarian thinking still exist in some pockets. There are still voices who long for they say is the glory days of the past. But I believe I am right in saying that today, Indonesians have generally mainstreamed democratic values in their thinking, and this has become the primary difference between 21st century Indonesia and 20th century Indonesia.

Yet another explanation is the ability of our democracy to connect with governance. Democracy and governance are two different things. There are many democracies who are lacking in governance, and there are many semi or non-democracies who are good at governance.

In Indonesia, we found out that democracies did not necessarily solve our problems.

Indeed, democracy never guaranteed good and proper decision-making. Which is why democracy did not automatically solve separatism, corruption, poverty, ignorance, and environmental degradation.

In fact, in some occasions, democracy made our problems worse. For example, the rate of deforestation was highest during the time of 1999 elections. Ethnic conflicts and separatist rebellions also deteriorated rapidly around that time. It did happen simply because of the excessive and misuse of freedom practiced by elements of the society, in the so called “euphoria of democracy”.

Thus, it is only by connecting with good governance that democracy can resolve these challenges. Today, as a result of good governance and leadership, our democracy has been able to achieve historic feats. We resolve three decades of separatist conflict in Aceh. We achieved high economic growth. We more than tripled Indonesia's per capita within 10 years. We placed a moratorium on deforestation. And we now have the largest and fastest growing middle-class in Southeast Asia. And in the words of Hillary Clinton, Indonesia has become a global model where "democracy, Islam, modernity and women's rights go together".

The final point on why our democratic transition was successful is that we always have faith in democracy.

In the last 17 years, our democracy continued to face endless trials and tribulations. But in the face of every challenge, our collective response was never to back down : it was always to cling to our democratic values and defend them when necessary.

When terrorism struck with the Bali bombing, and the recent attack in Jakarta, our response was not to curtail freedom and trample on human rights, but by strong law enforcement measures which preserved our democratic mileage.

When East Timor seceded from Indonesia, some warned that our new democracy would lead to further dismemberment of Indonesia, but we pressed ahead with our democracy, and as a result Indonesia has become more united and coherent than ever.

And when some warned that open elections would lead Indonesia to become an Islamic state, we kept our faith in democracy, and as a result, Islamic parties have become staunch supporters of our democracy, and strong defenders of our pluralism, tolerance and religious freedom.

So these are some useful prescriptions for our democratic development. We built a strong system. We furnished democracy with governance. We adapted our political culture and values. And we never lost faith in democracy.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Indonesia of course does not have the answer to the myriad of problems faced by world's democracies. But perhaps, these 4 lessons I outlined to you do provide some hints to how to address the future of democracy in the coming international order.

Democracies that are used to great leaders must focus on building great systems.

Democracies where everything seems to go wrong, should practice good governance.

Democracies that cannot seem to break from the past should have the courage to adapt their political culture accordingly.

Democracies that are in retreat should never lose hope in the virtue of democracy.

Looking ahead, the Indonesian democracy still face a number of challenges.

We must make democracy more relevant to the lives of our citizens; to bring common good to the people; to ensure security, stability and order; and also achieve economic progress and equity and prosperity for all.

We must also ensure that universal values can coexist peacefully and harmoniously with local values in Indonesia. This is not a strange formula for our country, as for centuries our great archipelago has always been home to 3 world civilizations, which provide us with a mixture of eastern values, western values and Islamic values.

Our democracy must also be enriched -- in values and deeds -- with our own local experiences.

This is the only way democracy can be homegrown. I do not agree that it is workable for countries to blindly adopt an imported model of democracy, without due regard to local cultural and historic conditions.

The Indonesian experiment is of critical significance to the world. If, Insha Allah, Indonesia can succeed in building a strong and robust democracy -- and I am convinced we can

-- Indonesia will be able to demonstrate that yet another large Asian nation can practice democracy. We will also show by example that Asian values can go together with universal values, and also that Islamic values can go along with democratic values.

As a final point, I have no doubt that in the coming decades, the number of democracies around the world will increase. We all hope this process will take place peacefully.

Therefore, let us continue to work together constructively to build a 21st century world order that is just, progressive and democratic.

Once again, I thank you for inviting me to this important symposium.

06. Swaminathan Gurumurthy

Distinguished Research Professor, Sastra University, India

I am extremely delighted to participate in convention here on Asian Values and Democracy organised by Tokyo Foundation Japan jointly with Vivekananda International Foundation Delhi. The Tokyo meet is the follow-up of the two day Hindu Buddhist Conference in Delhi on Conflict Avoidance and Environmental Consciousness on Sept 3-4 organised by Vivekananda International Foundation jointly with the Tokyo Foundation. It is a significant next step to deepen the understanding of India and Japan and generally Asian nation about the different facets of Asian Values that present an alternative perspective to the world in different fields extending from conflict avoidance and environmental consciousness in the Delhi Conference to democracy in the Tokyo Convention.

The Delhi meet expounded the theme of conflict avoidance in a world order that operates on the paradigm of conflict resolution and the concept of environmental consciousness in a world that rests on environmental regulations. The Delhi Conference articulated the critical themes from the Hindu-Buddhist civilisational perspectives common to both Indian and Japan and which presents an alternative world view from the Asian experience.

The Tokyo meet theme being Asian Values and Democracy it calls for an examination of what constitutes Asian values and how the concept of democracy works in Asian value system. The idea of Asian values implies that there is a broad Asian value system founded on a distinct philosophy, world view, goal of life, lifestyle, and habits that distinguishes Asia nations and Asian people.

Asian Value System

The core of Asian Values is founded on human and filial relations — individual as related to the family, community and society — where the individual and the collectives share rights and responsibilities. Asian societies are a relation-based and not contract based where the individual is atomised, family weakened and society decimated. The idea of social contract in public domain defining the nation-state and legal contracts in the domain of individuals defining the interface between the peoples, which constitutes the foundation of the theory of state and society and society and individual in the Western society do not apply in the same manner in Asian societies as in the West. There is between State and the Individuals as whole series of intermediate institutions which socialises people through relations. Here the Asian model is akin to the idea of relation based society conceptualised by Emile Durkheim in the West in late 19th century. Relations form the very foundation of culture. Therefore Asian societies are relation-based and culturally defined and the Asian value systems are founded on relations and culture. Because culture is diverse — there being no uniform culture in any nation or society, however small, cultural diversity lies at the very core of Asian Values. The concept of diversity is not limited to Ludo-Diversity or cultural diversity, but extends to Biodiversity as well.

Asian world view recognises that the world of humans and nature is diverse because the creation itself is diverse. The Asian sages and thought leaders have long endeavoured to develop a world view to find harmony in diversity and never believed in homogenising the world — either in terms of philosophy, faith, belief, goal of life, lifestyle, or habits. This world view is in contrast to the homogenising philosophies, faiths, and beliefs which have caused havoc in the world in the last two millennia. The core of Asian Value system recognises the fact that diversity is inherent in creation and the Asian philosophies, faiths and beliefs incorporated this idea. The direct consequence of the Asian approach was that there was relative absence of religious or cultural persecution in Asian nations in ancient times and even into the second millennia. While harmony is achievable, unity is workable, uniformity or homogenisation based on thoughts clanging to be universal is dangerous and is productive of great mischief and violence. In the Asian view that there is no one nation or people, or civilisational experience is universal for all nations and peoples is the only universal value applicable to all peoples and nations.

Wrong assumption of universalism

Yet for over a century a wrong assumption that the modern world is founded on universal values drawn on the experience of the West has misguided the world. This was not just a thought but a social cultural and political philosophy and economic architecture based on that presented to the world by leading thinkers and international institutions. This approach called for the adoption of a universal world culture and lifestyle and discarding of one's own culture in the interest of development. An official document of a world institution called for nations, aspiring to develop like developed nations, giving up their national cultures and adopting homogenous global culture [1] This approach was based on methodological individualism on which all neoliberal political and economic theories were founded. [2] This advocated post World War II by Western social, political and economic philosophers and theoreticians was hailed as having won the final victory over the Rest of the world when the ColdWar ended and liberal democracy and free market economy based on individualism practiced in the West was declared. Francis Fukuyama, a well known academic and the best selling author in 1992 declared that the Western world view had finally won the ideological war against the Rest of the world — making the Western value system as unquestionably universal. [3]

Universalism and universal models fail

But within a few years Francis Fukuyama himself substantially modified his view and added to that the theory of civilisational clashes began occupying a very large part of the global discourse — pointing out to the impracticality and impossibility of homogenisation of all peoples based on geo-economic and geo-political institutions. All homogenising approaches were based on unbridled individualism in which the balance between family, community and society was lost to the prejudice of the latter collectives. But as the third Millennium turned, a perceptible U-turn from the “Fit All” Economic model — which included the social and political models compatible with that — began with the Western nations getting exposed to terror attacks and to explainable economic crises even ahead of the comprehensive economic melt down of 2008.

While the entire range of modern economic theories were founded and functioning on this approach, U-turn began occurring in October 2005 when the Central Governors of G-20 nations declared that there was no “Fit All” Economic Model suitable to all nations and peoples and each nation has to work out its development model based what suits its special characteristics — thus reversing the global economic establishment conviction of over half a century. [4] In 2008 the World Bank also echoed this view. It admitted it has failed in its view that there existed a Fit All Model: “In our work across the world, the World Bank has learned the hard way that there is no “one model that fits all”. Development is all about transformation. It means taking the best ideas, testing them in new situations, and throwing away what doesn't work. **It means, above all, having the ability to recognise when we have failed. This is never an easy thing to do. It is even more difficult for an organisation to do so, be it the government or the World Bank, which constantly need to adapt to the changing nature of the development challenge.** [5] The United Nations officially endorsed of “no one size fits all” paradigm in 2010. “Development must be nationally driven, Deputy Secretary-General Asha-Rose Migiro stressed today, rejecting the “one size fits all” approach to eradicate poverty and foster economic growth [6]

And finally, in June 2013, during the General Assembly debates, the General Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon stressed the need to recognise that there is no “one-size-fits-all” development model. [7]

This brings the emerging world thought of today nearer the Asian Values which are founded on culture and relations. The global thought is now linking cultural diversity as an essential element of development

Paradigm shift: The world debates link between cultural diversity and development

The UN Secretary-General went further to declare the importance of culture in development and said, “It is not enough to set global targets for all – we need to adapt to each context. Too many well-intended development programmes have failed, because they did not take cultural settings into account. This must be an overarching principle for all development efforts.” He added that development approach has not always focused enough on people and said: “To mobilise people, we need to understand and embrace their culture. This means encouraging dialogue, listening to individual voices, and ensuring that culture and human rights inform the new course for sustainable development. The fundamental role of culture was not fully acknowledged within the MDGs [Millennium Development Goals] – as a goal, an overarching principle, or as an enabler. [8]

President of the Assembly Vuk Jeremic who convened the debate in cooperation with the UNESCO said: “The significance of the nexus between culture and development for the post-2015 agenda is not yet fully grasped.” He added: “Fully embracing the potential of this nexus will also help promote a greater sense of indivisibility and mutual belonging — a feeling that no community or nation can fulfil its potential until it is accompanied by the advancement of the entire mankind.” He noted that, “The gap between means and ends has yet to be bridged

— in my view, partly because the cultural component has largely been absent from our discussions.” [9]

In her keynote address, UNESCO Director-General Irina Bokova told the UN that no one would like to live in a world without music, art or dance, or with only one language. “Culture is what we are. It is the wellspring of collective imagination, meaning and belonging. It is also a source of identity and cohesion at a time of change. It is a source of creativity and innovation,” she stated. “No society in the world can flourish without culture. No development can be sustained without it. Cultural diversity is also a source to find creative solutions to problems. It enhances critical thinking to challenge old models,” she added. “We need to fully acknowledge this power of culture today as we shape a new global agenda to follow 2015.” [10] The global debate today reflects the Asian world view of millennia. The essence of the Asian Value system — cultural diversity as aiding and not impeding economic development — is being accepted at the global level today with the failure of the attempted universalism and homogenisation of the people of the world

Asian Values founded the Idea of Dharma — common to all ancient peoples

The main contributories to the Asian value system are the Hindu Buddhist spiritual and cultural streams which are founded on the ancient concept of Dharma. The ancient concept of Dharma is common to both India and Japan — as the Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe said in his video-recorded speech to the Delhi conference. Dharma was in fact common to all ancient civilisations — Indic civilisation, Japanese Shinto, Egyptian Maat or Sumerian Mae or Chinese Dao. [11] The ancient Dharma incorporates the core value on which the modern world craves for — namely the recognition, acceptance and even celebration of Ludo-diversity and Bio-diversity. The first one leads to conflict avoidance among humans and the second one, to avoidance of conflict between humans and their endeavour with nature. Maharishi Aurobindo, one of the greatest freedom fighters and saints of India, said: “Dharma is the Indian conception in which rights and duties lose the artificial antagonism and regain their deep and eternal unity. Dharma is the basis of democracy which Asia must recognise, for in this lies the distinction between the soul of Asia and the soul of Europe. [12] Through dharma the Asiatic evolution fulfils itself; this is her secret. Rishi Aurobindo explains the distinctness of India and Japan as Dharma-based democracies. This is the secret of Asia according to Aurobindo.

Asian Democracy — consensual and not just arithmetic

Dharma-based democracy in Asia is not just an arithmetical aggregate of just contractually connected individuals without any natural relation among them and intermediated by the adversarial rules of majority and minority as it happens in modern democracies where social contact rules the public domain and individual contract rules the private domain. The idea of Dharma or the equivalent value system informs the relation between people — at the family community and social layers. The duty to one’s parents, children and other near and dear is not and cannot be matter of contract. It is a non-formal moral order implied in the very philosophy of human life. The idea of dharma which defines a relation based society connects every one — there is no human being who does not owe moral duty to another human being.

The relation based societies unburden the state in matters of social security where the family plays a principal role in taking care of the young, infirm and the elder — whereas in a contract based individualist society the burden falls mainly on the state. The difference between the two models — the relation based collective model and the individualism-centric contact model — results in a vastly different relation between the State and the individual and the state and the society. The legal and constitutional system of the state is aligned in Asian democracy to the social relations and social milieu — which produces a consensual model where the non-formal moral order of the society co-exists with the rule of law. The non-formal moral order is Dharma.

That is why statecraft is called as Raj Dharma in the Indic civilisation. In Japan too, Rāgarāja is venerated in the Tangmi schools in Japan as a Dharmapala namely one who keeps up Raja Dharma. [13] Dharma in democratic statecraft is common root of India and Japan.

Asian democracy therefore rests on consensus. The Dharma influenced democracy is Asian in character which does not rest on idea of rights alone but also includes duties. The Indian constitution provides for legal fundamental rights and moral fundamental duties.

Debate and dissemination needed

Asian value system and how differently they handle modern world and its institutions need to become subject of study in educational institutions starting from schools and should be a subject of continuous research in higher educational institutions. In a world swept away by a Tsunami of information, it is necessary to ensure that the educational institution and public discourse properly disseminate and debate the Asian model. Different national governments of Asia must network and produce appropriate curricular materials for mass education on the Asian value system and the failure of universalism virtually imposed on the Asian nations for the last several decades. Co-operation among the Asian nations can help to disseminate within and outside the different nations the differentials of Asia. Conventions like the Tokyo convention would help to generate the ecosystem for Intra-Asian co-operation to start with and later promote Asian perspectives in the world where the Asian contribution to the global discourse is commensurate with the strength and the importance of Asia and the Asian nations.

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07. Surin Pitsuwan

Former Chairman of ASEAN

Bismillah ir-rehman ir-rahim. It is a great privilege for me to be invited to this very, very important symposium on shared values and democracy in Asia. I happen to be a Muslim, but I come from the Kingdom of Thailand and I have had the privilege of serving as Secretary-General of a new community in Southeast Asia called the ASEAN community. One of my bosses was no other than His Excellency Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Just imagine the description of Southeast Asia, of East Asia, we have heard all this morning. My job for 5 years was to put these countries together in one community, extremely difficult. Because of the diversity, because of various dimensions of the world diversity in Southeast Asia. The largest Muslim country, Indonesia, now the third largest democracy in the world, Indonesia. Four consecutive continuous Theravada Buddhist countries, Myanmar, Thailand, Cambodia, and Laos in Southeast Asia, a strong dose of Confucianism and Taoism and definitely Hinduism and all many other traces of civilizations could be found on an area of about 4% of the flat surface of the earth.

From that experience, I have to try to put together a community. The only thing that we could think about is that - yes, we don't have the same forms and institutions of democracy, but as long as you are committed to the principles of democracy and respect for human rights, you are qualified and we shall together try and endeavor to perfect our own forms of democracy going forward into the future. I believe that East Asia, along with other speakers, East Asia, Southeast Asia, ASEAN included, has some of the fundamental values and ingredients necessary for democracy. We have mutual respect, we have accommodation, we have moderation, we have certainly respect for the elderly, and we are all committed to the principle of compassion, of Metta, of Karuna. Now, many of these states and societies in East Asia have accommodated these values but they do it differently in different forms.

I am now and we are now aspiring to reach out to East Asia; China, Japan, Korea. How to evolve a small C community out of the other three important economies and countries of East Asia important to ASEAN. The challenge has become more complicated because within Japan, within Korea, within China, there is also tremendous diversity. So the way forward is that we create a future, we create a vision. In our part of the world, in Southeast Asia, in ASEAN, we have that vision of ASEAN which is supposed to be peaceful, united, and prosperous, but these visions will have to be worked upon, will have to be subscribed to, will have to be contributed to by the entire people, not only from Southeast Asia, 600 million people, but China, Japan, Korea, and now we are talking about India because we are expanding that idea of community to include six countries of East Asia, China, Japan, Korea, India, Australia, New Zealand.

You can imagine the challenge that we have trying to evolve this small C community in East Asia. But we have no other choice. We have to work together, we have to exchange, we have to cooperate, and we have to have this kind of opportunity, this kind of form to come and learn and listen and exchange our views looking into the future together. I think if we hang

on to the past, with the diversity, with the differences, with the struggles, with the history of bitterness that we have in the past, it is difficult to look into the future and to evolve into that East Asia community, which has been, you have heard today, you have heard yesterday, has been regarded as the nucleus of the Pacific century. We in south west Pacific, we in East Asia, are now serving as that nucleus of evolving locomotive community going into the future in order to serve as that spearhead of the new century called the Asia Pacific Century.

How to manage the diversity that we have? It is a big challenge for all of us. The only way that I can see from Southeast Asia perspective is that each and every one of us is opening up more space for our people, is allowing and inviting people to participate, to make a contribution, different forms of democracy that we are now pursuing in Southeast Asia. President Yudhoyono made a distinction between democracy and good governance. The experience of Southeast Asia is exactly that. You may have forms of democracy, but you don't have good governance and effective way of managing your problems. My country, Thailand, what President Yudhoyono used to call one of the noisy democracies in ASEAN, including his, Indonesia, is going through just that. We took the majority that we got from the ballot box as license for concession of the country, so we appeal to the fact that we have the majority in our hands, we could do anything with the country, including corruption, including inefficiency, including abuse of power. Well, the country failed, democracy was derailed because of the misunderstanding of the concept of democracy. Democracy does not automatically bring good governance. I can testify to the statement by His Excellency Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.

What do we have to do? Without 600 million people in Southeast Asia, without the people of Japan, without the people of East Asia, India, China, Korea opening up and having access to power, participating in this journey into the future, forming this what I would call a small C community yet - if I call it big C community of East Asia, there will be a lot of questions, whose community is it, who is behind it, but small C community, prosperous, integrating, working with each other, the only way to do it is to have the people participating in this process, in this evolution of East Asian community building through their own opening, through their own space, through their own contribution. In a way, shared values of East Asia will find their practices and their implementation in various forms, but they are shared values and they are the ingredients for democracy, different forms, but going in the same direction, and that is the dignity of our people, the prosperity of our society, and the security and this ability of our state, of our nation, we can combine all these things together and make sure that we have the people behind us through their process of communication, through their process of participation and contribution.

I think East Asia has that mission in front of us and we can do it as a region, as a people, and we will together deliver that 21st Century which the world now concedes it should belong to us all. Thank you very much.

08. Bayartsogt Sangajav

MP, Minister and Chief of the Cabinet Secretariat of the Government of Mongolia

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentleman,

Thank you for that kind introduction. I want to thank the organizers for inviting me here to speak. It is truly a great honor for me to be here today and to see this kind of an audience to hear and talk about Mongolia's democratic development here in front this prestigious audience.

Mongolia is a country with rich and ancient heritage, unique culture and breath-taking nature. It is a land of free and brave, peace-loving and hard-working people. We inherited from our forefathers great lessons and lasting traditions of statehood while enriching the history of our nation and building for a better future for the generations to come. The roots of our statehood go back more than two millennia and two centuries to the origins of the Hun Empire. Building upon the legacies and power of the Huns, Mongols had built the largest land empire in the history of the mankind. In the Great Mongol Empire, Mongols governed by a written law called the "Ikh Zasag," which is translated as "the Great Order." Then, as now, Mongols promoted free trade and conducted an open foreign policy. The Empire actively engaged with nations near and far in Asia, Europe and the Middle East. It was an era when the Mongols strove to establish a new world order, thus, justice, peace and cooperation in their relations with other states and peoples. Through periods of prosperity and decadence, ruling and being ruled, Mongolia entered the world of the twentieth century. Modern Mongolia restored its freedom and true independence at the dawn of the 20th century. These were turbulent times around the world, and in early 1920s Mongolia took on communism, which ruled the country for 7 decades.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Twenty-five years ago, Mongolia stood at the crossroad between gaining our freedom or remaining locked behind the stone wall. Mongolians thus joined the universal movement for freedom, justice, human rights and individual liberties. We had a peaceful revolution. It was a miracle, although we had a disadvantaged location in terms of its proximity to the free world, and while the Soviet Union was still intact. Our revolution did not break a single window, and not a single drop of blood was shed. In June 1990 for the first time, the Mongols conducted free, democratic, full election in our region. As a matter of fact, most of the countries in the third wave of democratization were changing only some number of deputies. We established a

multiparty, plural political system. Mongolia has become a dynamic market economy. The private sector which barely produced even less than 5% of GDP twenty years ago today has become the driving force of the economy yielding more than 80% of our gross domestic product.

Many still believe that conducting political and economic reforms at the same time is not an Asian way. But we broke that old stereotype by reforming our political, economic and social systems concurrently since 1990. Mongolia has made major breakthroughs and created open and most liberal governance in our region. Putting it shorter words, Mongolia has become the most vibrant democracy in our part of the world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We all understand that democracy is not perfect. It is not the course to utopia. But it is the only way to common success and human dignity. Democracy as a representative form of government will reflect, in any nation, their cultures and traditions. They will not and should not look the same. But in every decent society there is a common trend. They limit the power of the state, they tend to be responsive and ruled by the institutions of the people. They protect the freedom with consistent and impartial rule of law. They support healthy civic institutions, independent media and judiciary. They fight corruption, invest in human capital, and recognize gender equality. They appeal to the hopes of their own people.

I am confident that if we stand for the hope and freedom of others we will make our own freedom more secure. To this end, we are committing funds and time to share our experiences and lessons with other countries. To name but a few cases, with Kyrgyzstan we are sharing our lessons learned in building effective parliamentary democracy and doing legal reform; with Afghanistan, we are conducting training for diplomats and public servants; with Myanmar, we are hosting media workers, journalists and civil society members; and with North Korea, we are engaging in economic and security dialogue.

We understand that we should not take democracy for granted. Democracy can emerge and develop, but it can also decay. We have to defend democratic principles and manifest our tolerance to the opposition, minorities and respect for the rule of law. The constitution is a sacred document in a democracy. In Mongolia we made that mistake once some years ago, which has a notorious name “the worsening change”. Until today we are wrestling to reinstate the original principles of our constitution. The lesson is, we all should commit to a fair, level playing field of democratic competition. All governments must maintain power through consent, not coercion.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is important for leaders to remember that it's not only what you say, but truly what you feel and believe, which reminds us that emotions in decision-making are a powerful motivator.

Or in some cases, a de-motivator. We're social creatures, who need interaction. If we're going to have impact as leaders, we have a responsibility to communicate directly. In Mongolia in order to keep leaders and decision-makers responsible for their decisions, we've established a Citizen Hall in our Government House. Since then, all administrative units, all cities, towns and settlements have established such chambers. Every draft decision would be consulted with citizens here. This has become an established tradition in our decision-making system at all levels. People discuss their pressing issues according to a rule they collectively adopt, distribute the funds and place control over its performance. Even the most far-sighted leader cannot fully see the problems which community confronts every day, it is the people, as one family, who know their day-to-day challenges and solutions.

It is everywhere that people are sick and tired of sweet tongue of politicians. People are not really interested in what politicians talk about, but what they are really interested in is how tax money is spent. Therefore, we have introduced the "glass account system" - the Budget Transparency Law. We demand our public officials to publicize what they spend. By Law, they should update their expenditure decisions, the amount of money they spend within 72 hours on the Internet or in paper in public places, no matter where they work. If they fail to do so, punishment will follow – they will be dismissed from whatever official positions they hold.

Democracy is a learning process. We can make mistakes, but it will not cost our life as in leadership. In Mongolia we have no censorship at all on any media entities. Our law bans government ownership and any form of government control of any media entity. By the number of public and free media and the number of social media users per capita Mongolia is among the top countries in the world. People have a right for suspicion about the deeds of their representatives and state officials. We should never intimidate and discourage the people who voice their words with courage. The essence of freedom rests precisely here - in the freedom of expression of the people. And we must protect it.

Recently adopted Laws on Public Hearing, Participation, on Responsibilities of Elected and Appointed Officials and the National Program Against Corruption were discussed by interested parties, experts and citizens before it was tabled to the Parliament. These are only a small portion of laws which we introduced to improve the quality of democratic institutions in my country. It will in turn help us exercise horizontal accountability between state agencies, branches and officials for their performance. We believe that real test for any public official is not defined by how politicians deliver their social and economic promises, but by how they fight with the misuse of power.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The challenge of corruption must be addressed. Corruption is a true enemy to development. It devours the fruits of hard work of people. It destroys the fundamentals of fair,

just and secure society. It makes government less efficient, less effective and less accessible. Corruption is a brutal force capable to destroy institutions, values, culture, nations. To exterminate this evil the whole society must fight. At the end of the day, people painfully pay all the prices of bad governance and corrupted behaviours. The hope is our people, intolerant to corruption and abuse of power.

In order to sustain a healthy society, we must keep it tidy every day. It is true that power corrupts. The hope at the polling stations and the actions of the elected representatives, unfortunately, often turn to be opposite. The power of ballot turns into the power of wallet. Some law-makers become law-breakers. This fact seriously endangers the genuine trust of the people in democracy. We have to remember our gratefulness to the citizens on the election night in all our days when we are in office.

We are taking drastic measures. We put moratorium on establishing new state enterprises and limiting government's commercial activities. We are ending with government equity shares. Besides, one-third of our existing permits and licenses are eliminated, one-third we shifted to private institutions and professional organizations, and the remaining one-third of essential ones will be offered through internet. I also suggested that budget allocations be stopped to unnecessary administrative bureaucracies.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We Mongolians seek to make our own contribution for solving some of the world and regional pressing challenges. In particular, we actively work to ensure peace and security in North-East Asia. In this context H.E. Mr. Ts. Elbegdorj, President of Mongolia, formally launched an Initiative for "Ulaanbaatar Dialogue on Northeast Asian Security". The ultimate goal of the Initiative is to defuse tensions on the Korean Peninsula and help promote confidence building and peace-making in Northeast Asia.

Our nuclear weapon-free-zone status was supported by permanent members of the UN Security Council. Mongolia became one of the 20 largest peacekeeping contributors in the world. Recently Mongolia chaired the world's most reputable democracy movement – Community of Democracies. Also Mongolia has chaired the Freedom Online Coalition, an intergovernmental coalition for promoting internet freedom. In 2016 Mongolia will host the 11th ASEM Summit. The leaders of 53 countries of Asia and Europe will meet in Mongolia on the 20th historical jubilee of this renowned organization. I thank Japan for supporting Mongolia's initiative to host ASEM Summit in acknowledgement of the success, achievements and hard-work of the Mongolian people.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Mongolia declared the initiative of permanent neutrality status. This initiative has been underpinned by Mongolian geographic location, its history and the development path it has embraced. It has gained particular relevance at the current geopolitical juncture, prompting us to finally declare it officially. Permanent neutrality, formalized de-jure, will be an important guarantee of our country's freedom, independence and sovereignty. It needs to be emphasized that the status of permanent neutrality will entail no substantive changes to Mongolia's current foreign policy, including neither its bilateral relations with other countries nor its multilateral cooperation with States as well as regional and international organizations. This is because the current declaration of permanent neutrality is the de-jure definition of the foreign policy of peace and non-alignment pursued by Mongolia in the past and further reinforced with the adoption of its new democratic Constitution in 1992.

The main principles of the status of permanent neutrality have already been enshrined in Mongolia's Constitution and other laws, as well as the fundamental concepts of Mongolia's foreign policy. Apart from domestic legislation, the international agreements, that Mongolia is a party to, are also consistent with the principles of permanent neutrality. Hence, the status of permanent neutrality makes no substantive changes to Mongolia's current foreign policy, but rather combines in one single status all the elements of permanent neutrality contained in the Constitution and a range of separate laws and state policies. Just as before, while developing equal, balanced relations with other countries, Mongolia will continue, in accordance with the UN Charter, to contribute to common efforts to resolve regional and global issues, including by supporting efforts to strengthen democracy and ensure human rights and freedoms. The status of permanent neutrality will reinforce Mongolia's efforts to contribute to international peace and security through its mediation efforts in the region, such as the Ulaanbaatar Dialogue Initiative on Northeast Asian Security, launched by the President of Mongolia in 2013.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

In his keynote speech delivered at the 21th International Conference on the Future of Asia, held in May 2015 here in Japan, the President of Mongolia H.E.Mr.Tsakhagiin Elbegdorj underlined that in today's ever-changing environment there is a need for a regional platform, inclusive of all Asian states to cope with common challenges and opportunities. In this regard, the President proposed a new initiative named "The Forum of Asia" with an equal representation of interests of all sovereign nations of Asia, be it a small or big, to promote dialogues and cooperation in security, rule of law, environmental, economic and social areas. Every single nation's participation and efforts are crucially important in implementing "The Forum of Asia" initiative, that would provide a regional dialogue and confidence building platform in Asia, a continent which enlists 48 of the United Nations member states, represents 60 percent of the world population and produces 35 percent of the global GDP. Within the framework of implementing "The Forum of Asia" initiative in practice and not just on paper, we are planning to host an International Seminar in September 2016 among the representatives of the leading Asian research institutions to encourage an exchange of views and ideas. We are confident that the International Conference would serve a sound basis towards implementing "The Forum of Asia" initiative.

Hereby, I would like to conclude my remarks on the Mongolian democracy and recent developments in our foreign policy.

Thank you for your kind attention and I'll be glad to answer to your questions.

09. Narendra Modi

Prime Minister of India

I am delighted that the Tokyo Foundation is hosting a conclave on the theme of Asian values and democracy on January 19th as followup of the conclave held by Vivekananda International Foundation in Delhi last year.

The theme of the 2-day conference held in Delhi in September 2015 was conflict avoidance and environmental consciousness from the Hindu-Buddhist civilizational perspective. It is universally accepted that this century belongs to Asia. Asia is at the crossroads of a very special moment in the history of humanity. This is a continent bustling with energy, enthusiasm, and exuberance driven by the dynamism of a youthful population that is constantly innovating. All Asian civilizations, Indic, Shinto, or Tao [Ph] had a common value system which could avoid conflicts among humans and between humans and nature, the conflict among states being different. That common value system recognizes, accepts, and even celebrates diversity among humans. This is what leads to conflict avoidance as it is founded on harmony in diversity. Conflict avoidance based on harmonizing the diversity of humans inherent in Asia, democracy as its basic value.

Our idea of democracy is not just a game of numbers mediated by the rules of majority and minority as it happens in numerical democracies. Our democratic approach is founded on consensus. It does not rest on the idea of rights alone, but also includes duties. The Indian constitution provides for moral fundamental duties of individuals towards one another and to the creation which sustains us all.

Our idea of democracy is founded on values which recognizes the space of not only humans but also of nature, animals, and plants which incorporates the principles of environment. The inclusion of nature and environment makes our life and approach less anthropocentric and more ecocentric. Great Indian thinkers like Maharishi Aurobindo, Swami Vivekananda, and Rabindranath Tagore have envisioned Asian unity in this higher sense of term.

I am sure that with its theme of Asian values and democracy, the Tokyo conclave will enable India and Japan to expand, articulate, and include the concept of conflict avoidance and environment consciousness as integral to our larger democratic framework.

With this, I wish the Tokyo Conclave all success. I send my heartiest congratulations to the Tokyo Foundation and the Japanese Government for having organized this meeting. Thank you.

10. Takashi Inoguchi

University of Niigata Prefecture/University of Tokyo

Good Afternoon! I'd like to share with you my humble thoughts on the subject of this symposium to help stimulate our discussion on Shared Values and Democracy in Asia.

Margaret Thatcher registered many distinctive views on a wide range of subjects lucidly and forcefully. At one time she remarked that if Europe has been determined by History, the United States has been determined by Philosophy. Yes, Europe has 1,000 years of history while the United States has 200 years of history. The United States is no match in this regard. Yet the United States is full of philosophies as we now comprehend it especially when we hear a lot of philosophies from US presidential election candidates-aspirants. Europe is shaped by History while the United States is molded by Philosophy. It rings true because of her astute way of contrasting and reinforcing what she argues.

When you think about Asia, how would you say about its determinants? In my view Asia is determined by Co-Existence with Nature. You might as well argue that Asia has been determined by Nature. While Americans and Europeans alike aspire to conquer and control Nature: In my view Americans and Europeans have the tendency to distinguish Human Beings and Nature very sharply. They do so with clear bias to overestimate the Human ability to control Nature. Asians in general, again in my humble view, tend to see Human beings as part of Nature, over which Human beings can aspire to be harmonious with Nature. Latest findings of neuroscience have shown that indeed human beings constitute parts of Nature and that even the highly vaunted Human will is often difficult to sustain itself, often violating the very assumptions of modern political philosophy. Asians want to live with it or live as parts of Nature. Since Asia is so vast and so diverse, let me start to think subregionally, i.e., East, Southeast, South and Central Asia. What is not to be forgotten is that Nature overshadows all the four subregions in each own way.

In my humble view East Asia is determined by Human power. It is the region where the notion of meritocracy was first conceived and has been long practiced. It was circa B.C. 200 that meritocracy was created by Qin's Emperor Shi. East Asia has 2000 odd years history of meritocracy while Western meritocracy has a history of 200 odd years as Anthony Giddens eloquently argues. East Asia has had no less strong counter-ideologies to meritocracy as well such as Daoism. Which makes East Asians not to drive themselves solely by meritocracy but also by Daoism, harmony with Nature, the environment, human and natural.

Southeast Asia is determined by Human adaptation. Southeast Asians, being located at the conjunction of diverse civilizations, are adept at adapting themselves to the Nature, both human and environmental. Thais are fond of calling it 'bending with the wind' while Vietnamese' favorite self-portrait as the willow trees. Human beings are parts of natural environments.

South Asia is determined by Human praying to God(s). It means salvation to the pre-ordained, sometimes known, other times unknown, destiny to each person. Buddhism and

Hinduism have many Gods while Islam and Christianity have one God each. Irrespective of praying to one God or many Gods, South Asians are one of the most religious of Asians. Praying to God(s), South Asians are always reminded of Human beings being parts of Nature.

Central Asia is determined by Human reliance on kith and kin. Overwhelmed by geography of deserts and mountains, Central Asians survive with the primary and almost exclusive reliance on kith and kin. Pushtuns in Afghanistan and Baluchistanis in Pakistan practice the most extreme form of sharp and strict discrimination of others from their kins. In Central Asia, Nature is stern, human and environmental.

Thus Asia shares the value of diversity on the basis of Human beings living as parts of Nature. Human beings constitute humble existence on earth, always vulnerable to larger and mightier Nature, stern or benign. This is common to many Asians, it seems, in stark contrast to Europeans and Americans who often want to control Nature by Human will.

Asia's democracy is not to be underestimated. It is in 2014 that free and democratic elections were held with the combined population of 10 billions of India, Indonesia and Japan. According to the Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index, out of 29 countries only two are fully democratic (Japan, South Korea) while a dozen or so many are termed as flawed democracy including India and Indonesia. Furthermore, hybrid regimes crowd the Asia's picture and authoritarian regimes are simply dominant. Yet it is clear that democracy has been moving forward despite all the odds. Tight cleavages along religion, ethnicity, gender, class, caste, language have been more loosening and less binding in many societies. Democracies in Asia are sustained and will be further promoted by such values and norms as caring others, restraining oneself, respect for others. Recognizing the limit of human beings as parts of Nature and living amidst kinds of diversity, Asians have large potentials of living with democracies at home and across nations. Ten billions under democracy are not nothing but are definitely something to be reckoned with. Ten billions is far larger than 3 billions of the United States and 5 billions of the European Union. Given the strong and rich potentials of Asian citizens, it would not be far-fetched to argue that Asia will be a largest democratic bloc in the whole world surpassing north America and western Europe in a longer term.

Thank you very much.

11. Shin Kawashima

Professor, The University of Tokyo

(1) Democracy in Asia

As a regional concept, Asia was formed in Europe's mirror image, and this concept came to be shared by people in Asia in the modern period. In the first half of the twentieth century, most Asian countries were occupied by Western empires and lost their independence. Colonialism prevailed throughout the world, and most Asian countries became the colonies of Britain, France, and other Western countries. The only exceptions were Japan, Thailand, and a few other countries.

For the colonized people, democracy meant independence from their suzerains. Most people in Asia took part in independence movements, and after winning their independence, they realized that many kinds of democracy exist. Authoritarian governments gradually opened the door to people's participation in the policymaking process, and as these countries developed economically, they achieved Western-style democracy. Other countries adopted "socialistic democracy." The shape of democracy in socialist countries may be different, but they still need democratic mechanisms to secure people's support. Many Asian countries have gone through similar experiences in the process of democratization, and yet there is also great diversity in how democracy has become manifest.

Historically speaking, Asian cultures and civilizations have tended to give deference to the feelings and opinions of others, as taught by Confucianism, Buddhism, Islam, and other traditions. Such undercurrents may differ from the foundations underlying Western democracy, but recognizing these cultural and philosophical pillars is key to an understanding of democracy in Asia.

(2) Values in Asia

The concept of "Asian values" was proposed a few decades ago. This, though, needs to be distinguished from "Shared Values and Democracy in Asia," which was the theme of this symposium. Asian countries can be said to share certain experiences and characteristics of democracy, but our purpose was not to identify features that make democracy in Asia unique. In fact, Asian democracies are basically the same as democracies in other parts of the world.

The topic of democracy in the socialist countries of Asia can be a sensitive subject. Some countries may insist that socialist democracy is simply not in the mold of Western-styled democracy. Rather than disputing such claims, it may be more practical to generously recognize the special, democratic features of their form of government. Generosity, after all, is one of the most important values shared by democracies in Asia.

12. Shoukei Matsumoto

Priest of Komyoji Temple, Tokyo; Managing Director of Japan Fellowship of Buddhists

1 Japanese view of nature supports relativism of all beings

Consciously or unconsciously, the Japanese are strongly influenced by the philosophy of Buddhism, because the Japanese language has deep roots in it. Japanese view of nature is a typical example. Since ancient times, the Japanese have been very good at living harmoniously with nature. You could see the presence of nature in the Japanese tradition of tea ceremonies or the flower arrangements.

"Nature" is translated as "自然" in Japanese. After being exposed to Western culture, the concept of 自然 have been largely influenced by Western concept of "nature" and 自然 is pronounced as "Shizen" when used in that sense. But originally, 自然 was pronounced as "Jinen" in the ancient times and the meaning was "let it go" or "It is as it is", which is derived from Buddhist philosophy.

The concept of "Nature (Shizen)" which has been nurtured in Western culture reflects human centered vision of the world where human stands on the top of hierarchy as the agent (messenger) of Creator. On the other hand, the concept of "Jinen" has been nurtured in the Japanese culture that worship animism and nature. After Buddhism and the other philosophies were introduced to the Japanese people, they began to see Buddha nature not only in the humans, but also in all sentient beings and even in all existences like mountains, rivers, plants and trees. We could see the influence of that view of nature in the Japanese modern contemporary pop culture. As a result, even when we pronounce 自然 as "Shizen=nature", it is not harsh nature which confront human beings. It still keeps the Japanese view of nature which does not exclude humans from nature.

In conclusion, the Japanese view of nature which see Buddha nature in all existence support relativism of all beings, which I think leads to the uniqueness of the value on democracy in Japan.

2 The role of Buddhists in the society of Japan (From the viewpoints of Entrepreneurship and Association)

Not only Buddhism itself, but also the role of Buddhists in the society of the Japanese Buddhism is very unique compared to the other Buddhist cultures. In the middle ages, most of the Japanese Buddhist monks were "public" monks who were supported and protected by the government. Hieizan Enryakuji Temple served as a top university across Japan and produced a large number of great monks. Monks of high potentials worked on national project as a powerful entrepreneurship. On the other hand, there were another type of monks who went into "private" and served for the ordinary people. Those movement led to the foundation of "Kaga, the province owned by the farmers" for the first time in medievales. Whichever public or private, Buddhists have not been separated from secular world but rather been connected closely.

3 The roll of temples in the Japanese society (Temple as a device to avoid sectarianism)

Since the Japanese society have been modernized,, temples are defined as public service corporation. But practically, temples still have been financially dependent on the Japanese traditional family system since Edo-era and maintained the high economic growth. However, because of the falling population and the shrinking economy, temples have almost lost their supporting ground and accordingly lost the significance of their existence in society. And now, some temples began to make an effort to update themselves so that they can meet the needs of the people.

My initiative called Mirai no Jushoku-juku is a good example. We set up a management school for Buddhist priests and monks four years ago, and we have over a hundred monks studying each year. After launching the school, we have been creating a powerful Buddhist monk's network. In four years, the number of temples in our community will reach over 350 across Japan. We are trying to support those temples to develop a good relationship with the local people in their community. We believe that the value of temples exists not in tangible assets but in intangible assets like a relational value with people. While temples have to take care of their financial sustainability, they should focus on how to change people better in terms of spirituality.

In reality, whatever the religion is, a respectable religion does not exist to bind one's values or actions. It is there to free people from the systems and standards regulating society. I believe that the real religion is a collection of knowledge and practice that free us from the "religions" we subconsciously devote ourselves to – such as money and science.

The world is beset by endless conflicts over "religion". For this reason people everywhere need to transcend religion and support dialogues that can shape a new way of religion for the future. Temples in Japan have been relatively free from dogmatism and sectarianism. As you can see, Japanese people visit both temples and shrines to face our belief freely. Temples in Japan give us a hint on how religion and human beings should coexist.

13. R. Vaidyanathan

Indian Institute of Management, Bangalore

The Issues:

What accounts for the fact that many Asian countries have embraced democratic systems of Government? Despite their myriad philosophical and religious traditions, these countries are seen to share certain core values, such as consideration for others, self-restraint, and mutual respect. These universal values have no doubt played a role in sustaining democratic institutions in Asia –a common thread running through the political life of these countries like a *basso continuo*.

Symposium participants will examine which values, if any, are commonly shared Asian states and how they have sustained the evolution of those countries into modern democracies. Research findings on shared values in Asia will be referenced and the future of Asia's political and democratic institutions, as well as interstate relations, will be explored. Speakers including political and religious leaders, researchers, and others will shed light on the philosophies, religions and political systems of Asia.

Acceptance versus Tolerance:

Democracy per se is linked to rule of majority chosen through a process and possibility of replacement say once in 4 to 5 years. It essentially involve respect for majority and rule of law with due processes. Republic-- is larger idea of respecting the minority and formulating policies which is not inimical to the minorities which may not get full recognition under a democracy. The philosophy of Dharma focus on not just respecting the differences but accepting them as part of human existence. Acceptance of myriad paths creates an ambience for conflict avoidance rather than conflict resolution.

Conflict resolution arises after conflict is made possible. Conflict avoidance is initiated at the beginning by accepting differences and respecting those differences. This idea of conflict avoidance arises out of age old civilizational belief that different groups have different ways of living /eating/praying and performing rituals. Hence conflicts are meaningless in such a social situation. As long as it does not harm ones way of living –acceptance is the primarily criteria for human co-existence

Dharma and Homogenisation

Hence the values of the Asian Civilisation are embedded in the concept of dharma which encompasses both rights and duties. They also do not subscribe to the notion of Homogenisation unlike other civilisations based on Abrahamic traditions.

They have multiple ways of worship and myriad ways of dealing with issues of heaven and earth. They do not subscribe to “my way or high way” approach to differences and they are not just tolerant but “acceptance of others’ is the critical aspect of their culture.

It is essentially a conflict between homogenizers and heterogenizers. Hindus talk about “multiple paths to reach the ultimate God, like different rivers finally reaching the ocean.” But these traditions believe in one and only path and the necessity for everyone to follow it. The classic example of Homogenizers is the followers of the Catholic tradition. One Pope and his way is *the* Way. It can be called Vaticanisation of the believers. His word is law and his interpretations are final. He even considers that the followers of the Protestant tradition as having some difficulty in reaching God. The non-Abrahamic civilizations which are anchored in heterogeneity - were not able to deal with the homogenizers. The myriad traditions and methods of dealing with human existence provided no clue to these ancient civilizations like Hinduism about dealing with traditions which brook no dissent. These civilizations also did not know how to deal with concepts of infidels, non-believers, heathens, crusades, jihad etc. since all of these are completely alien to their élan vital. Hindu and Buddhist civilizations could not even visualize the possibility that some belief systems could kill you to prove the existence of the “true” God.

Being heterogeneous in belief and action, these civilizations were easily conquered but they never vanished. Heterogeneity implies acceptance, and not just tolerance, of others. Those who did not believe in God were also part of the societal system; the caste system reinforced lively heterogeneity. Even though Western scholars and deracinated local intellectuals have portrayed the caste system as the most oppressive system in the last thousand years, we find no caste wars listed by even left-leaning historians in India. If it were so oppressive then many caste war should have taken place - unless we assume that Indians are unique in accepting oppression for two thousand years!

It is also told that Hindu systems has thousands of Gods which is not true. It has one GOD but thousand manifestations of HIM—It is polymorphic rather than polytheistic. There are also other issues. Abrahamic traditions believe in linear human existence or a linear Weltanschauung. Other civilizations like Hinduism consider a cyclical world view and the concept of re-birth and karma. This is true even of Buddhist civilizations. This view of the world makes Hindus less worried or affected by uncertainty.

Uncertainty aversion using Homogenization:

One of the main methods by which Abrahamic traditions try to avert uncertainty is to strive for homogeneity in terms of behaviour and belief systems, worship methods and world view. The ultimate homogeneity can be observed in the performance of the Hajj by millions of Muslims wherein one finds every individual similar to the next in terms of attire, stance, appearance and trance. Contrast it with a Kumb Mela, a celebration of heterogeneity with a thousand colours.

Homogenization is perceived to be a passport for security against uncertainty. The words of the Father in a Church [the same words carried across the globe] or the Moulvi in a mosque provide comfort but much more importantly a reinforcement of the strong belief that every single word in the Book is final. There is a desire to create certainty in a world full of uncertainty.

The later day ideologies of Fascism and Communism are in a sense evolved forms of the original tradition of Abrahamic beliefs. Both of them took this homogenization agenda a bit too far. That is one of the reasons the Catholic Church could never take an unambiguous stand against Fascism. But it did take a stand against Communism, since by then the USA had become a major power with its corporate and market mantra as a counter weight to Communism. Corporates or company forms of organizations are the evolved stages of the Church as an organization. Ernest Kantorowics, in his well-argued and celebrated essay “The King’s Two Bodies”, analyses how the mystical body of Christ, which is central to the Christian liturgy, acquired sociological meaning in the later middle Ages. The “*corpus mysticum*” became the organized body of the Christian society and created in due course the greatest of artificial persons namely “the State”. Out of this modular structure or building block emerged Western Capitalism along with other fictional entities like “joint stock companies”, “Public Corporations” etc. [Ernst Kantorowics: *The Kings Two Bodies: A study in Medieval Political Theology*-Princeton-1957- pp194-206]. Hence it is a Medieval Christian Anglo-Saxon construct which says that “Corporations” are more evolved forms than say joint families or cooperatives or trusts. One is not sure why a country like India should accept this medieval European evolution, which was essential for the colonial conquests driven by joint stock companies like the East India Company, who thought that the whole of India is “unorganized” and went about organizing / homogenizing it. In other words the term “Unorganized” belongs to the category of terminological terrorism left over from colonial days. Hence the corporate evolution is the highest expression of homogenization wherein in the initial stages it was modelled on the basis of the Church in terms of hierarchies, belief in a leader or book etc. It is supposed to reduce risk or uncertainty in business.

Economic versus cultural conflicts:

When Samuel Huntington wrote “The Clash of civilizations” - first as an article [Foreign Affairs Journal--Summer 1993] and later as a book - it created enough consternation among the left and liberal intellectuals who were used to looking at conflicts of the world from a point of view of class and ideology and not from one of culture and civilization. He enunciates in his celebrated article that “It is my hypothesis that the fundamental source of conflict in this new world will not be primarily ideological or primarily economic. The great divisions among humankind and the dominating source of conflict will be cultural. Nation States will remain the most powerful actors in world affairs, but the principal conflict of global politics will occur between nations and groups of different civilizations. The clash of civilizations will be the battle lines of the future.”

He goes on to elaborate on the conflicts between the Islamic East and Christian West. He also considers the Chinese as “Confucian” civilization and a possible ally of Islam. He generally treats the west as modern and does not dwell on the “Secular West” and the “Born again Christian West”. He also does not spend much time on the “Hindu “civilization. In the post-Cold War era, his enunciation of fault lines were attractive and in the post September 11 world, began to be considered as prophetic with President Bush talking about the war on terror as if it were a crusade.

Hence we find that in the earlier part of 21st century there is more conflicts based on culture/religious beliefs than traditional economic inequality.

As argued by Kenan Malik in the “**The Failure of Multiculturalism**” in foreign affairs
March/April 2015 issue

Quote

Consider France. In the years of the French Revolution, for instance, only half the population spoke French and only around 12 percent spoke it correctly. As the historian Eugen Weber showed, modernizing and unifying France in the revolution’s aftermath required a traumatic and lengthy process of cultural, educational, political, and economic self-colonization. That effort created the modern French state and gave birth to notions of French (and European) superiority over non-European cultures. But it also reinforced a sense of how socially and culturally disparate most of the population still was. In an address to the Medico-Psychological Society of Paris in 1857, the Christian socialist Philippe Buchez wondered how it could happen that “within a population such as ours, races may form—not merely one, but several races—so miserable, inferior and bastardised that they may be classed as below the most inferior savage races, for their inferiority is sometimes beyond cure.” The “races” that caused Buchez such anxiety were not immigrants from Africa or Asia but the rural poor in France.

In the Victorian era, many Britons, too, viewed the urban working class and the rural poor as the other. A vignette of working-class life in East London’s Bethnal Green, appearing in an 1864 edition of *The Saturday Review*, a well-read liberal magazine of the era, was typical of Victorian middle-class attitudes. “The Bethnal Green poor,” the story explained, were “a caste apart, a race of whom we know nothing, whose lives are of quite different complexion from ours, persons with whom we have no point of contact.” Much the same was true, the article suggested, of “the great mass of the agricultural poor.” Although the distinctions between slaves and masters were considered more “glaring” than those separating the moneyed and the poor, they offered “a very fair parallel”; indeed, the differences were so profound that they prevented “anything like association or companionship.”

Multiculturalism and assimilationism are different policy responses to the same problem: the fracturing of society. And yet both have had the effect of making things worse. It’s time, then, to move beyond the increasingly sterile debate between the two approaches.

And that requires making three kinds of distinctions.

Finally, Europe should differentiate between peoples and values. Multiculturalists argue that societal diversity erodes the possibility of common values. Similarly, assimilationists suggest that such values are possible only within a more culturally—and, for some, ethnically—homogeneous society. Both regard minority communities as homogeneous wholes, attached to a particular set of cultural traits, faiths, beliefs, and values, rather than as constituent parts of a modern democracy.

Unquote

Hence we find that the arguments of multi-culturist is in a sense represent Asian values of acceptance but it cannot be primary theme of Europe where a dominant culture is recognised.

Dharmic traditions do not rely on dominant culture but on multiplicity of paths for the same end or all rivers flowing into the same ocean

As it is told in Hindu tradition **“Ekam sad vipra bahudha vadanti” [Rig Veda]**

"One alone exists, Sages call it by various names." God, Ishvara, Krishna, Yahweh, Allah, etc., they are all names that different people use to describe the same. This in essence is the basis of functioning Asian democracies.

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14. Rahimah Abdulrahim

Executive Director, The Habibie Center

Your Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen.

Allow me to thank the co-organizers of this symposium, The Tokyo Foundation and the Vivekananda International Foundation, for allowing me this honor to be part of such an important symposium.

The experience of democracy is unique for every country. In the case of Indonesia, for instance, the country practiced ‘*Pancasila* Democracy’, whereby the state ideology of *Pancasila* served as the pillar to consolidate and preserve the spirit of democracy. The efforts of consolidation and preservation, did not happen overnight. Instead, Indonesia’s success in consolidating and preserving its democracy was made possible due to several factors.

1. Unity in Diversity

As a diverse country, not only in ethnic groups, language, religion - Indonesia has remained true to the motto of unity in diversity. Diversity was not a problem; instead, it was a fact of life and should be cherished. The willingness to unite amidst remarkable cultural diversity. The founders of the country, for instance, agreed to adopt Bahasa Indonesia as the national language despite being in essence a minority language when compared to the majority language of Javanese. As a diverse country, not only in ethnic groups, language, religion - Indonesia has remained true to the motto of unity in diversity.

Indonesia’s main principle of *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* or Unity in Diversity prevailed since the beginning of Indonesia’s democratization. *Reformasi* brought the formation of political parties that were created by figures from religious organizations. However, in the formulation of the policy allowing the creation of political parties, it was made mandatory for parties to be represented in every province. Thus political parties mainly stood on the platform of the principles of *Pancasila* and was not exclusive to only one religion, race or ethnic group. This once again ensured that no race, religion, or ethnic group had a monopoly on the political competition. Although there were political parties that pushed for a more Islamic Indonesia, it became difficult for them to only push for an Islamic agenda as they still had diverse constituents.

2. Democratic Actors

Civil society organizations, scholars, think tanks to flourish in challenging government policies and contributing positively.

The actors of democracy are as important as the structure of democracy itself. Those who have the willingness to recognize limits, willingness to accept results, and willingness to accept loss. In Indonesia, the transition to democracy in 1998 - 1999 was led by President Habibie. Although heavily criticized during this presidency, he has now been recognized as being the right person for the right time. His only interest during his administration was to save Indonesia from imploding, not reelection, or willingness to cling to power. He is indeed also the one who embodies this willingness to recognize limits, and willingness to accept results. His unwillingness to be nominated as candidate for President in 1999 because the parliament had rejected his accountability speech during that time was heavily criticized, but it was the right move for him as history now remembers him as a true statesman who put the interests of the nation above power.

The other strong “actor” of democracy that is one of Indonesia’s greatest advantage in its transition to democracy compared to other countries, is the role and the strength of civil society actors and civil society organizations. Long before *Reformasi*, the role of civil society organizations, NGOs, academics, scholars, think tanks, laid the foundation for what was to come. Hence during the *Reformasi*, existing civil society organizations which consisted of focus groups, think tanks, women’s groups, youth groups, and the like, strengthened in their resolve to push the process of democratization. These groups were the ones that ensured that the process did not take a step back, ensuring democracy continued to move forward.

3. Democratic education.

Electoral education the exposure of the country since its independence to modern ideas and electoral process, if not substantial, enabled the formation of ideas that ‘democracy was the only game in town.’ Understanding the process and participating in the process. However, it was also vital that people understood that democracy does not happen overnight. It is a continuous process that requires the participation of all citizens. Democracy needed to be understood beyond elections and democratic participation was vital.

4. Open society.

One of the main changes in Indonesia that happened in 1998 was the guarantee of freedom of speech without any consequence of arrest or a shutdown. The decision of President Habibie to free the press was a conscious decision to allow the free flow of information. This decision was taken as he considered the media as a vital source of information so that people – including the government – make decisions that are informed.

Since then, the media in Indonesia has thrived and issues of governance are discussed openly allowing debates, discussion and deliberations in order for people to form independent

opinions and for decision makers to be able to make decisions based on the information received. The growth of social media in Indonesia as well has contributed to a more open society that allows all citizens to take part in shaping opinions. This has also allowed for more transparency to be demanded from the government and a stronger accountability is demanded from elected officials.

Indonesia's democratization is far from perfect, however, with a concerted effort of all stakeholders we remain steadfast in pursuing a more democratic Indonesia that is inclusive, transparent, accountable, and just.

15. Shamsul Amri Baharuddin

Director, Institute of Ethnic Studies, Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia

The notions of ‘Asian Values’ and ‘Democracy,’ as concepts or idioms, are indeed two of the many popular ‘ideal types,’ meaning idea-constructs, that have appeared at high, middle, and lower levels of discourses, among leaders and scholars both in the East and the West since the 1990s.

Epistemologically, ideal type is not referring to perfect things, moral ideal, or statistical measurements but rather to stress certain common elements found within given phenomena. It helps put the seeming ontological chaos of social reality in order. Methodologically, ideal type is a very useful analytical tool for making comparison between different cultures, societies and economies across civilizations.

Asian values as an ideal type has a set of common elements, embedded in the various Asian traditions, that themselves have evolved from an indigenous form that successfully accommodated the embedding of world religions’ influence and, recently, European & American colonial-imperial rule and practices. In short, Asian values, sociologically speaking, are not a homogenous whole, indeed there exists many variations within, such as the Confucian kind, the Hindu based, Buddhistic forms and the Islamic entities.

Democracy, as an ideal type, has its set of common element, too. Its first and earliest original form was founded in the Eastern Mediterranean civilization. In its second historical phase, called the ‘representative democracy’ phase, the centre of gravity was Europe. Since advent of its third phase, at the end of Second World War, or in the mid-20th century, democracy has become a global force and labeled as ‘complex democracy’ because, through the adoption of democracy in most decolonized countries, it became embedded into various cultures thus giving rise, globally, to a number of variants with some specific features (see John Keane essay on “Democracy: A Short History,” <http://www.johnkeane.net/democracy-a-short-history/>).

United States, Britain and India and Argentina were recognized as the main global players of democracy, but never perceived as perfect examples. The said countries and other practitioners of complex democracy were divided between, on the one side, being the advocates of ‘participatory’ or ‘direct democracy’ and, on the other, those who favour ‘indirect’ and ‘representative democracy.’ The election of the President of Indonesia is an example of the former and the election of the President of the USA is the latter.

In the decades after the Second World War ended, four decolonized countries in Asia, all were practitioners of free-market democracies, namely, Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan, achieved and maintained exceptionally high growth rates, exceeding 7% per annum, and rapid industrialization between 1960s to 1990s, surpassing even the achievement of the developed countries in Europe, North America and Japan. These four countries were known as the “Four Asian Tigers” or the “Four Asian Dragons.”

The outstanding economic success of the Four Asian Tigers led to the an unprecedented worldwide discourse and debate on seeking the so-called ‘formula’ of their incredible economic success, both among the developed countries and the underdeveloped countries. It seemed everyone wanted to follow the Tigers’ footsteps. But what is the game plan to be emulated?

As a result, in the 1990s, the world was flooded with the outcome of the discourse. There was a plethora of explanations generated in the forms of books, articles, media report, op-eds, seminars, conferences, and TV news.

Two major arguments on why the success happens in the four countries were put forward, first, from North America and Europe and, second, from within the Four Asian Tigers countries themselves.

Those from North America and Europe argue that the economic success was due to a different style of political governance practice, though proclaimed based on democratic principles in reality it is based on draconian rules, strong-arm tactics and violation of human rights, especially workers, the ‘soldiers’ of their successful industrialization. Trade unions became impotent and in-house union was introduced to smoothen relations between management and labour for to increase productivity many folds.

Not all owners of North American corporations found this style of political governance bad or negative. Some researchers from North America demonstrated that many North American companies, holding to the principles of economic rationalism of global capitalism, invested heavily in the Four Asian Tigers country because of the very reason of its unique political governance and cheaper labour cost that guarantees an increase in their productivity and as a result of which bring them quick high profits.

Those from the Four Asian Tigers argue that the culture of Confucianism is the key to their success, which are demographically Chinese-dominated countries. Like Protestant work ethic theory in Germany, it is argued that the culture of They say, Confucianism is compatible with industrialization, especially because it valued stability, hard work, loyalty and respect towards authority figures. Evidence showed there is a significant influence of Confucianism on the corporate and authority figures in the said countries.

However, this claim regarding the prowess of Confucianism values behind the Four Asian Tigers’ success is not completely acceptable by researchers from within the said countries. In the 1990s, People’s Republic of China (PRC) lacked economic success, yet China was the birthplace of Confucianism. In 1919, during the May Fourth Movement, Confucianism was blamed for PRC’s inability to compete with the West.

In the year 2000 onwards, the discourse became rather mixed and the label “Asian values” instead of “Confucian values” was used more frequently. This was because Malaysia, Indonesia, The Philippines and Thailand have become ‘Little Tigers’ on their own right because of their fast-growing ‘tiger’ economies and industrial enterprise. These countries benefit from cheap, plentiful labour, and export manufactured goods, such as clothes and electronics.

However, since they don't practice Confucian value they therefore cannot claim their economic was success due to Confucius values. Instead, they have Islamic, Buddhist and Christian values as guiding moral framework in the working life and at home. The label 'Asian values' is more suitable to cover the Confucian and non-Confucian values, that are nevertheless Eastern or non-Western values.

Ironically, the proponents of 'Asian values' were, indirectly, promoting a self-imposed orientalism, meaning promoting the representation of Asia in a stereotyped way that is regarded as embodying a colonial attitude, which Asian nationalists had vehemently opposed, indeed in violent forms at times, during their anti-colonial struggles. In short, the exercise of producing elaboration about Asian values and its features has been an exercise of social reproduction of orientalism by the 'orientals' themselves.

On the other hand, the proponents of democracy, especially in the developed West, seemed to think that the free market democracy they have practiced is the best form that everyone should follow. Using the Western practices as a benchmark, it has been judged that the economic success of the 'Four Asian Tigers' and 'Little Tigers' was the result of undemocratic practices and political control of labour and not of Asian values.

However, in the midst of the 'Asian Values vs. Democracy' debate, a Yale law professor, Amy Chua, the author of "*World on Fire: How Exporting Free Market Democracy Breeds Ethnic-Hatred and Global Instability* (2002), offered a more refreshing and informed view on the relationship between 'democracy' and 'Asian values' in the plural societies of the so-called 'Tigers.' She said:

"...Market-dominant minorities (like the Chinese in Southeast Asia) are the Achilles' heel of free market democracy. In societies with a market-dominant minority, markets and democracy favor not just different people, or different classes, but different ethnic groups. Markets concentrate wealth, often spectacular wealth, in the hands of the market-dominant minority, while democracy increases the political power of the impoverished majority. In these circumstances the pursuit of free market democracy becomes an engine of potentially catastrophic ethno-nationalism (such as, violent bloody conflicts in Indonesia and Myanmar), pitting a frustrated 'indigenous' majority, easily aroused by opportunistic vote-seeking politicians, against a resented, wealthy (even poor) ethnic minority. This confrontation is playing out country after country today, from Indonesia to Sierra Leone, from Zimbabwe to Venezuela, from Russia to the Middle East." (p. 7)

Where does it take us from here?

When we examine 'Asian values' and 'Democracy' in its representative form and compare them, we are indeed comparing two different civilizations, each with its deep histories and longue duree trajectories that underpinned them.

If we look at all the civilizations that existed in the Braudelian sense we are looking at civilization that each of them has four generic domains, namely, geographical, societies,

economics and ways of thought. The way the content of each of these domains becomes ultimately weaved and enmeshed and forms in totality a particular civilization has its long cyclical historical trajectories thus creating its own unique mould.

Capitalist-led internationalization or globalization have created a continuous process of interaction between these different civilizations resulting in a process of continuous of 'embeddedness,' or complex layering, in the form of 'embedization' and 're-embedization,' that, in turn, transforms each of the civilization into a different form or mould.

For instance, as mentioned above, in the first phase of democracy there was a huge influence of the Mediterranean civilization in shaping it. In the second phase, the Western civilization played a critical role over a number of centuries, through mercantilism, imperialism, colonialism, and post-colonialism that eventually gave birth to a representative democracy.

Western domination through capitalism (not a fashionable word now!) remains the power that frames what is democratic and what isn't in a rather condescending manner. The debate on the virtues of 'Asian values' by default is an attempt by the leadership of the successful Asian Tigers to show that if there is such a thing as Protestant ethics in the European spirit of capitalism, there is also an Asian ethics in the Asian spirit of capitalism. Fundamentally, both the experience of the West/Europe and Asia had been driven by capitalism though showcasing different cultural faces.

What is relevant for our present discussion on 'Shared Values and Democracy in Asia' is the impact of what has been termed by Keane as a 'complex democracy' phase. During the present phase, the anchor of capitalism and the benchmark of democracy remains in West, in particular the United States.

Another fundamental fact we have to bear in mind in our present discussion is the emergence and rise of ICT and the Internet and the proliferation of new forms and platforms of communications through social media that changes the meaning, practice and process of democracy. Democratic struggles are now digitalized and fought, as it were, on the web. 'Hacktivist' has a central role in this new struggle. (see, John Keane, "Democracy in the Age of Google, Facebook and WikiLeaks," <http://sydney.edu.au/arts/downloads/news/ALR.pdf>). What is of great concern is that in the present social media we can't really separate facts from fictions and rumour mongering.

Without doubt the media now has played a bigger role in democratic campaigns through smartphones and other digital platforms. Indeed, the media moguls, through the media platforms they owned can actually undermine democracy and human rights. The case of Rupert Murdoch and his now defunct *News of the World* in the UK comes to mind as a stark example of such activity. (see, John Keane, "Hidden Media Powers that Undermine Democracy," <https://theconversation.com/the-hidden-media-powers-that-undermine-democracy-3028>

In other words, there is a need for a fundamental revision of the way we think about democracy in our times, and of course, what are our shared values not only in Asia but globally.

Some argued, in particular Keane, that there has been 'epochal' transformation taking place within the practice of representative democracy. From 1950s onwards, representative democracy began to change into a new historical form of 'post-representative,' especially, in countries that has 'media abundance' or 'media-saturated' which includes developed and developing countries in Asia.

Where is 'Asian values' in the complex democracy phase? Why is there less talk about 'Asian values' now?

This is not surprising at all if we see how many more 'Tigers' have been produced around the world in the 21st century after the success of the Asian Tigers. They are in Latin America, Africa and former Eastern Europe and Russia. They are not Asians and can't claim their success has resulted from embracing Asian values.

One thing is certain that their mainstream shared values are capitalist values. These values promote free market democracy. However, free market democracy, says Chua, brings trouble to ethnically divided societies that have its economies controlled by market-dominant minorities. In such societies, although democracy is practiced, ethnic values (Asian or not) become the bastion of anti-Western values, including Western driven 'democratic values.' In the micro sense, or at the everyday-defined level, Asian values remain the lifestyle and lived values. Democracy can be perceived as values or a form of measurement for modernity competence.

'Asian democracy' is indeed a convenient label developed by scholars and Western media still deep in orientalism and orientalist values. Perhaps that's the shared values we actually have globally, orientalism and orientalist values, that even the 'orientals' find them comfortable to embrace.

16. Tin Maung Maung Than

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Myanmar's political values are informed by ethnic nationalisms of its component 'nations'. However, the nationalist discourse has been dominated by Bamar (majority Burman) 'nationalism' that emerged as a response to British imperialism that colonized Burma (the name used until the military junta changed it to Myanmar in 1989). British conquest of Burma in three phases (1824, 1852 and 1885) resulted in not only the loss of sovereignty but also a serious undermining of cultural and religious identity of the Bamar nation under 'alien' rule. The imposition of secular government and administrative "steel frame", as a province of British India further marginalized the entire community. The exploitative mercantilist economy that was developed under the laissez faire further aggravated the downtrodden socio-economic condition of the masses.

Bamar nationalism began to take shape in the early twentieth century in the form of a Buddhist movement spearheaded by activist monks and progressive elites. It also took on an anti-foreign stance and had a cultural dimension of preserving traditional norms and one's lineage. The disparate elements in the movement then coalesced into the Dohbama Asiayone' (We Burman Organization) in 1930. It adopted socialism as the guiding philosophy and mobilized the public with the slogan "Race Religion and [Buddha's] Dispensation". In defiance of the British overlords the young nationalists (mainly Bamar activists) who were more militant than the old guard politicians took a confrontational approach in challenging colonialism. Its members used the prefix "Thakhin" (master) in front of their names to reflect their desire to be masters of their own destiny in the quest for self-determination and independence. They were led by an alliance of progressive older politicians and tertiary student activists like Aung San (Aung San Suu Kyi's father), Nu (Myanmar's first prime minister), Than Tun (Burma Communist Party leader), Soe (Communist Party of Burma leader) and Ba Sein (progressive politician). Under the nationalist flag peasants, workers and students agitated, demonstrated and boycotted, demanding independence.

Later, these younger nationalists, hounded by British authorities, took advantage of the turmoil in Southeast Asia in World War Two to raise an army under Japanese tutelage to fight for independence by first driving the British out and later overthrew the Japanese occupiers as well.

Independent Myanmar embracing nationalism, socialism and parliamentary democracy emerged in January 1948. Thereon, the Bamar-dominated nationalist discourse led to an uneasy "Union" in dissonance with the aspirations of the ethnic minorities whose 'nations' were never integrated with the Bamar nation despite the 1947 Panglong Agreement which was supposed to bind the destinies of all the disparate nations together.. When the Bamar majority tried to build the Myanmar state to conform to its own 'imagined community', the legitimacy of the Union government was challenged by ethnic minority nations who sought redress outside the democracy framework. As a result armed revolt erupted soon after independence and separatism was the order of the day.

As democracy faded from Myanmar's political stage, the core values behind ethnic nationalism upheld by most ethnic armed organizations (EAOs) remained virtually unchanged throughout six decades of armed conflict though autonomy had replaced separatism as the main objective of identity politics. The political economy of civil war had added additional parameters into this ethnic nationalism that drove the conflict still raging in Myanmar's border regions despite the government-sponsored Nationwide Ceasefire Agreement (NCA signed by eight out of 15 invited EAOs) which was signed on 15 October 2015.

As electoral democracy returned to Myanmar's political stage another form of nationalism emerged from the communal rioting that erupted in 2012 between Buddhists and Muslim migrants in the Rakhine State in Western Myanmar that later spread to Myanmar's heartland. Reacting against the real and perceived threats of Muslim migrants and Islamic dominance, a movement arose throughout the Bamar Buddhist community that resurrected the eight-decade old nationalist rallying cry "Amyo Bathar Tharthanar" or "Race, Religion and Dispensation" that challenged the values associated with universalism, rights and freedom usually identified with liberal democracy. The resulting organization commonly known as Ma-Ba-Tha (Myanmar acronym) or Organization for Protection of Race, Religion and Dispensation had lobbied successfully for four so-called race and religion laws (religious conversion, inter-faith marriage, birth-spacing and monogamy) seen by some as discriminatory and undemocratic. Led by conservative senior monks Ma-Ba-Tha has its share of fanatics and radicals whose extreme views borders on bigotry and xenophobia,

As the new leader of the party that won a landslide victory in the November 2015 general election, Noble Peace laureate Aung San Suu Kyi who has been espousing national reconciliation and democratic rights as reflecting core values. Earlier in the 1990s she had indicated her preference for virtues associated with righteous Buddhist kingship: generosity, morality, liberality, rectitude, gentleness, self-control, non-anger, non-violence, patience and non-opposition to the will of the people. She also argued that "When democracy and human rights are said to run counter to non-Western culture, such culture is usually defined narrowly and presented as monolithic. In fact, the values that democracy and human rights seek to promote can be found in many cultures". "People's participation in social and political transformation ... can only be achieved through the establishment of societies which place human worth above power and liberation above control. In this paradigm development requires democracy, the genuine empowerment of the people. Recently Aung San Suu Kyi forbade her supporters not to celebrate her party's election victory in the form of parades and rallies while indicating that she will choose members of the government based on capability rather than party affiliation or partisanship. She also said that she would not protect her party members who are in the wrong. All these suggest that she has a distinctive set of political values informed by Buddhist traditions and universal values of (liberal) democracy and human rights.

Nevertheless, Aung San Suu Kyi must reconcile both the ethnic nationalism(s) and the new religious nationalism with the new democratic regime much expected by the voting public which is both multi-racial and multi-religious. It remains to be seen whether she could come up with a 'Myanmar' value set that could be seen by all stakeholders (including the

military) as satisfactory to build a nation-state out of the disparate nations and communities with different values and aspirations.

17. Ambeth R. Ocampo

Associate Professor and former Chair of the Department of History, Ateneo de Manila University

Before I begin I would like to thank the organizers of this forum for bringing us together to discuss Shared Values and Democracy in Asia. Values are everyday things we often take for granted—we see, experience, and utilize them but we rarely notice them until a forum like this provides us the space to focus and exchange ideas. I thank the Japan Foundation Asia Center for making my participation in this forum possible.

Any discussion on shared Asian values in relation to democracy usually involves the fields of philosophy, sociology, psychology, or political science with history underlying all as a framework. With your indulgence, I shall supply a historical background from the Philippines. The idea of Asian values in the Philippine context has been discussed and debated as early as the late 19th century when the Philippines National Hero, Jose Rizal, having lived and studied in Europe looked with fresh eyes on the land of his birth—then a Spanish colony—and asked: What was the Philippines like before the Spanish conquest? What was the identity of the pre-Spanish Filipino? More than a century hence, Rizal's inquiry still remains relevant because the Philippines today is a young nation continually in search of self.

Unlike its Southeast Asian neighbors, the Philippines has a long and varied colonial past beginning with Spain, that colonized the archipelago from 1565-1898, a extended period broken only when the British occupied Spanish Manila from 1762-1764. Spain re-engineered Philippine society by introducing their brand of Roman Catholicism, a political system, and other socio-cultural changes that covered but did not erase indigenous Filipino and Asian values. You can see this very clearly today in the externals of Filipino Catholicism that manifest traces of pre-Hispanic belief and spirituality.

Filipinos rose in revolution against Spain in 1896, declared their independence from Spain in 1898, and became the first Republic in Asia in 1899. Unfortunately, Philippine independence was short-lived because Spanish Manila was surrendered to the Americans in the context of the Spanish-American War that concluded with Spain selling the Philippines to the U.S. for twenty million dollars. From one colonial master, Spain, the Philippines went under the U.S. rule from 1898-1946, half century, with short interlude during World War II, when the Philippines was occupied by Japan 1941-1945. This long and varied colonial past resulted in a land and people best described in a remark that describes the Philippines as “a country that spent 300 years in a convent and 50 years in Hollywood.”

In this context the Philippines can be said to be the least Asian in Southeast Asia, relatively untouched by Asian traditions and religions like Confucianism and Buddhism that took root elsewhere in Asia. The Philippines today remains predominantly Roman Catholic with a minority comprised of other Christian denominations and Islam. It is a country with many values both Western and Asian.

In terms of democracy the Philippines adopted American-style democracy in the last century: first as a colony of the U.S. and second after World War II when it became a free and independent nation. For many decades the Philippines was considered “America’s showcase of democracy in Asia.” It had free and rowdy elections, freedom of speech, freedom of expression and freedom of assembly, and even what was heralded as the “free-est press in Asia” but the experiment in democracy was suspended when Ferdinand Marcos instituted authoritarian rule from 1972 until 1986, when he was deposed by a peaceful popular uprising then known as “People Power.”

What does all this history tell us about shared values and the future of democracy in Asia? Studies in the 1960’s identified key Philippine surface values that influence the way Filipinos see themselves and interact with others. These values in many ways are shared with Asia but known under different names: *pakisama* literally translated as “camaraderie” actually means “companionship or esteem” that the Filipino expresses through “smooth interpersonal relations” that contrasts with or is averse to Western frankness, directness, and confrontation; *hiya* literally translated as “shame” actually means “propriety and dignity” an Asian value that mitigates “loss of face”; *galang* literally translated as “respect” is the deference to elders, authority figures and peers; *utang ng loob* literally translated as “debt of gratitude” actually is a recognition not of debt but another who shares common humanity (loob). These values accommodate rather than confront the Other.

While individualism is a landmark value in the West, in Asia the individual is always seen in the context of others---family, peers, community---in Asia the family and society take precedence over the individual who is expected to surrender individual rights for the common good and in doing so accepts some form of hierarchy. In the Philippines the individual is always rooted in family, which is a good trait that can turn bad when one’s family is privileged over the individual and the community. The discourse on Asian versus Western values often come to the fore when Asian leaders try to stem the Westernization of their countries. For some authoritarian leaders democracy is seen as an intrusive Western value incompatible with Asian culture and values.

In recent times the discourse on Asian Values was dominated by the late Lee Kuan Yew of Singapore and Dr. Mahathir of Malaysia who credited the rapid economic development of their countries on “Asian values” rather than Western values that were not applicable in Asia. These leaders faulted democracy for the disintegration of society in the West and suggested that Western democracy that embodied values like Human Rights, One-man One Vote Elections, Freedom of the Press, Freedom of Expression, and Freedom of Assembly were incompatible with Asian values of: Hierarchy, Order, Mutual Respect, and Cooperation. At best human rights seen as basic in the West, could be suspended until economic progress and stability are attained. One could say that outspoken leaders like Lee and Mahathir were for modernization but not the Westernization (or should we say the Americanization) of their countries. However, following the economic downturn of the past two decades we see that the previous discourse of Asian vs. Western values emphasized differences rather than commonalities, created tension and competition rather than cooperation and understanding.

In a rapidly global world we can see beyond differences to see ways in which values both Asian and Western and contribute to the development of democracy and human rights in Asia. The post colonial experience of the Philippines, for example, has given way to a lot of soul-searching and while a generation before us saw colonialism as evil and suggested throwing out all that was Western and foreign to revive the pure Asian in the modern Filipino, a younger generation sees things differently. It sees and accepts the realities of both Asian and Western values and uses these not against but with each other to form a better world that is moored on universal human rights, democracy, and respect for the environment.

Any discourse on Asian and Western values today has to be taken in the context of the global society where media and the internet has broken down the former barriers of nations, national cultures, national values, and national identities. We are slowly moving away from the barriers of nation states into a global realm and we in Asia are going to see an experiment in ASEAN integration when barriers to trade, immigration, culture etc. will come down or be relaxed making people to people contact easier. Such was not possible even two decades ago.

The task at hand is not to set Asian values against the Western that sets us back, it is not even to find commonalities that bind. To move forward, the recognition of Asian values in the context of cultural diversity and the interdependence of people is the first step in relating these values to democracy and human rights. The discourse on Asian values is not about comparison, contrast, or the search for commonalities rather how do these values help people manage the rapid changes and developments in the global world to make it a better place.

18. Thitinan Pongsudhirak

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Asian Democratic Values

Geopolitical tensions have soared alongside risk perceptions stemming from intensifying major-power rivalry in 21st century Asia, from the East and South China seas to the Indian and Pacific oceans. Yet the crucial battlefield that is likely to determine the region's broader fate is not about terrain but revolves around values that underpin Asia's authoritarian and democratic regimes.

The emergent axis between Japan and India on one hand and China on the other – with contrasting values and cultural roots that respectively underpin their democratic and authoritarian systems -- are a potent indicator of the shape of things to come. The common factor is a uniform drive across developing Asia for capitalist success. If China truly succeeds in having a centralized one-party state in control of the world's largest market economy, the chief lesson to others will be that authoritarian regimes can have their cake and eat it, too. But if China's currently challenged economy leads to internal political disruption and contagious turbulence beyond, the cautionary message will be that authoritarian states can only govern and guide their markets up to a point, beyond which centralized control will lead to internal distortions that cause implosive reckonings.

Either way, Japan and India as global economic heavyweights with pluralistic societies and democratic regimes have a moral responsibility and inherent vested interests in winning the tally on democratization and authoritarianism in the region. So far, Japanese and Indian leaders have harped on democratic values only in rhetoric. They have instead focused on hard bilateral interests, including infrastructure investment, defense technology, and nuclear energy. The world's largest and Asia's wealthiest democracies now need to substantiate and walk their pro-democracy talk. A cursory glance around the region explains why.

Practically in an offsetting fashion, Myanmar has taken a democratic turn, while Thailand has reverted to its military-authoritarian past. After its landmark election that catapulted democracy icon Aung San Suu Kyi and her National League for Democracy party to a spectacular triumph at the expense of a half-century military government, Myanmar is poised to reap democracy dividends of better human rights, transparency and accountability, notwithstanding deeply embedded challenges of ethnic conflicts, environmental degradation, and incipient income inequality.

Myanmar's democratic outcome was a debit for China and credit to pro-democracy governments elsewhere. Its viability in the longer-term is crucial for Thailand and other political systems that intend to re-enter the democracy realm. If Myanmar democracy is derailed, it will set a bad precedent for Thailand and developing democracies more broadly. Thailand's twin coups in 2006 and 2014 have been a boon to China, as the ruling generals in Bangkok have openly sought superpower succor from Beijing. It is not inconceivable that Thailand's military

rule will last longer than anticipated ahead of the first royal succession in seven decades. As Western criticisms of Thailand's repression and authoritarianism have hit a brick wall put up by Bangkok's conservative establishment, louder Asian voices for democracy from Japan and India, flanked by South Korea, would go farther in making a difference and returning to popular rule in the nearer term.

Malaysia and Cambodia have been exhibits of illiberal parliamentary democracies with authoritarian tendencies, marked by suppression of dissent and growing intimidation and persecution of the opposition. The longstanding incumbent regimes in these two countries resist giving more space to opposition parties and dissenting voices, instead resorting to ethnic and racial chauvinism (Malaysia) and brute force (Cambodia). Averse to more political pluralism and openness, these regimes prefer authoritarian means for survival. The glaring exception to its credit is Singapore, where the entrenched power holders have proved themselves at the polls ahead of rivals through merit-based mobility, appealing policy ideas and responsive governance.

Indonesia and the Philippines are edging more firmly into the democracy camp. It is as difficult to foresee a military coup in Jakarta as it is easy to anticipate another putsch in Bangkok. But Indonesia's consolidating democracy will need to keep delivering and catering to popular demands and grievances to keep its hard-won democracy on track. It also must fight military Islam and global jihadist movements, such as Islamic State, effectively as it did a decade earlier against al-Qaeda. Jakarta is surely not eyeing China for an authoritarian future but is coming up with its own democracy brand, enabled by moderate Islam, steady economic growth and tolerant politics where rules are observed and electoral players wait their turns.

While it is vulnerable to democratic setbacks as another election looms this year, the Philippines has locked horns with China over South China Sea territorial claims and will likely lean on the United States and Japan as a matter of national security. For this reason, the Catholic-predominant archipelagic state is unlikely to fall for Beijing's authoritarian draw indefinitely. Other long-term authoritarian holdouts, such as Laos and Vietnam and even Brunei, will want to emulate the Chinese model of top-down control with fruitful growth results. But widening modernization and blanketing globalization will only lead to mounting openness pressure from below. China's performance is thus key to how these regimes will evolve going forward.

What is taking place in developing Asia and Southeast Asia in particular harks back to the Asian values debate from nearly three decades ago. This time, however, the values confrontation of democracy, human rights and basic freedoms together with irreversible constitutional rule and parliamentarianism is not so much between East Asia and the West but among the Asian states themselves. Discredited by hypocrisy and misadventure in the Middle East and constrained by glacial growth and mountainous debt, Western countries can spout democracy all they want but it does not reverberate like the past. The future of democracy in Asia will be decided less by Western democracy-promotion and more by Asian democracies espousing Asian values of communitarianism and social harmony that are compatible with popular rule.

As Asian powers, Japan and India along with South Korea should lead in the values battlefield for democracy over authoritarianism. Many who clamor for greater freedoms, basic rights and popular rule through representation in Asian countries such as Myanmar and Thailand, Cambodia and Malaysia look not to Beijing or even to Washington and London for their aspired horizon but to Tokyo, Seoul and Delhi for democratic pathways with Asian attributes.

The Thai case

Thailand's political crisis can be portrayed in several different ways. It is a crisis of a fledgling democracy underpinned by popular resentment and deep-seated polarisation and a crisis of a traditional political order which is out of sync with modern times. It also may be seen as a crisis that revolves around Thaksin Shinawatra and his abusive and manipulative rule, directly and via proxies, exploiting popular sentiments based on populist policies that catered to their demands and grievances. It may also be seen as a crisis peddled by Thaksin's opponents who are unelected and unable to abide by the rules of electoral democracy.

It is necessary to appreciate Thailand's political order over the past century. The country was an absolute monarchy until 1932, when constitutional rule was introduced. From 1932 to roughly 1958 – through the 1930s and Second World War – the role of the monarchy in politics was at its lowest point. Parliament, political parties and politicians were most prominent, alongside the budding role of the military. After a see-saw rivalry between civilian and military leaders who overthrew absolute monarchy, marked by factionalism and volatility, the army led by strongman Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat staged a coup in 1958 and ushered in absolute rule by dictatorship. Sarit resurrected the monarchy and its role in Thai political life.

Over time, the monarchy and military became a symbiotic relationship. Over time, the monarch surpassed the military and became the apex of Thai society through much hard work with the masses during the Cold War. As the monarch became paramount and revered in Thai society increasingly from the 1960s, the monarchy, military and bureaucracy became the core pillars of Thai politics. The mutually reinforcing trinity among the monarchy, the military and the bureaucracy became a kind of a Cold War fighting machine for Thailand in the 1960s through the 1980s.

This Cold War fighting machine became phenomenally successful on two counts. It kept communism at bay – at a time when many countries became communist dominoes that fell in succession. For example, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam all succumbed to communism. But Thailand defied the communist domino theory. Second, during this time, Thai economic growth was impressive, about 6 percent per year through the Cold War. So the monarchy, military and bureaucracy kept communism away and enabled Thai economic development. This traditional political order then became a victim of its own success, as economic development gave rise to new voices and growing democratization.

The development and modernization in 1960s to 1990s culminated with the rise and rule of Thaksin Shinawatra by 2001. Thaksin is the embodiment of the new elites that benefited from sustained economic development. He is also a major beneficiary of Thailand's economic boom after Plaza Accord in 1985, and was able to capitalize on Thailand's open economy and

global financial integration. Thaksin's conglomerate, Shin Corp, skyrocketed after listing on the stock exchange in the early 1990s. He became a billionaire telecoms tycoon and a consummate politician with extensive networks in the police, military, bureaucracy, business and politics.

As democratization made inexorable headway from the end of the Cold War, the monarchy-centred political order and hierarchy was still intact. The chasm between electoral democracy as a new and undeniable source of legitimacy and power caused tensions with the old order that relied on moral authority, integrity and unelected sources of legitimacy. These tensions have manifested in different ways and still with us today. It is as if Thaksin opened Thailand's can of worms, so to speak, letting the genie out of the bottle. The country has been transformed from a kingdom of traditionally loyal subjects to a democracy of increasingly informed and politically conscious citizens. The overlap between subjects and citizens is Thailand's way ahead as the country needs the right mix of monarchy and democracy. It is still in a painful search for the right mix. Such is Thailand's endgame in the late twilight of a glorious reign when democratic rule appears undeniable.

Restoration: the twin coups of 2006 and 2014

Thailand vicious coup cycle is well known. A coup – Thailand has had 13 successful ones since 1932 – sets in motion a new constitution, elections, an elected government that become corrupt, paving the way for another coup and so on. This is how the coup-prone system perpetuates itself. We are still in the midst of this cycle. The 2006 and 2014 are one and the same. The 2006 putsch was “half-baked”. It did not go far enough in preventing the Thaksin regime from reincarnating after elections to engage in the same sort of abuse and graft that deposed it in the first place.

And so the 22 May 2014 coup is “all-in”. The coup council – the National Council for Peace and Order – intends to ride out the storm and clean up Thai politics. The NCPO has not delegated authority to caretaker technocrats as in past coups. This time, the ruling generals are running Thailand more or less directly, with a concentration of power that has not been seen since Field Marshal Sarit's time. The NCPO forms a nexus, the heart and inner sanctum of a clutch of related bodies. Indeed, ruling generals, led by hitherto army chief Gen Prayuth Chan-ocha, have even conceded that the NCPO will function like a “politburo” in the interim coup period.

Thus the NCPO, via Gen Prayuth, has established an interim constitution that effectively provides absolute power to the NCPO chief. Beyond the interim constitution, the NCPO has handpicked and set up a National Legislative Assembly (NLA). In turn, the NLA has selected Gen Prayuth as prime minister, and he has formed a cabinet. Going forward, a National Reform Council (NRC) will be organized, followed by the Constitution Drafting Committee (CDC), which will be picked by the NRC, NCPO, NLA and cabinet. Such is the concentration of power that is mutually reinforcing, all reporting to NCPO with Gen Prayuth at the top. Even after he retires from the army on 30 September 2014, Gen Prayuth will still be prime minister and NCPO leader.

This astonishing concentration of power may be seen more broadly as a reaction and regression in the face of 21st-century challenges and dynamics associated with electoral democracy that have been evident since Thaksin's rise. The generals are thus reacting against what they see as the abuse and usurpation of the Thaksin years and through his other proxies and sister Yingluck Shinawatra. The Thaksin regime is the most daunting problem and elected politicians have been the bane of Thai democracy. Or so goes the pro-coup argument. This is why the NCPO through Gen Prayuth see themselves as having to clean up Thai politics and in so doing as having to turn back the clock a bit.

Whether the generals get away with it is a different matter. Thailand in 2015-16 may be too complex to turn back but the generals will try at least to make fundamental adjustments by rewriting the rules and tackling corruption without adding their own graft. The generals are likely to feel in 2016 – elections are promised by mid-2017 – that their job is unfinished, that they may face retribution, that their vested interests need to be looked after. As a result, the likelihood that the generals will stay longer than intended and the likelihood that their initially genuine intentions may go awry are likely to increase in the coming months.

An existential search for a new moving balance

Notwithstanding two coups over the past eight years, there is no exit from elections and democracy in Thailand. International norms have changed, reinforced by a revolution of transformative information technologies. Thai people are more politically conscious and awakened than ever. The international community, unlike the Cold War, no longer condones coups because there is no more communist expansionism to fight. And globalization marches in leaps and bounds, empowering the lower rungs of the Thai electorate and allowing them to voice aspirations and grievances like never before.

The problem Thailand has been having is that the electoral winners have not been allowed to rule while the losers who ultimately rule cannot win elections. It is a pity that Thailand's main opposition Democrat Party has been most disappointing, morally bankrupt and utterly unable to win a national election for more than two decades. This means the Thaksin camp has been the main beneficiary. But his sort of democratic rule can be manipulated and monopolized, as mentioned above. At the same time, the moral authority that we have been seeing from unelected sources, such as the military and the judiciary, appears untenable.

This means the military junta under Gen Prayuth will be forced to come up with new rules that will somehow keep the Thaksin side at bay at a minimum and perhaps a kind of constitutional rules that can enable military rule to be institutionalized within an electoral framework for the longer term. It is a contentious framework that has been dubbed "Thai-style" democracy but the electorate will likely oppose it if the rules are distorted and manipulated too blatantly. A recalibrated political order is thus imperative to return Thailand to a more genuine democratic path without manipulation from the likes of Thaksin but also a democratic rule that cannot be derailed at will by Thaksin's opponents, such as the ruling generals and their supporters.

These dynamics point to growing tension. The NCPO and military-backed

government under Gen Prayuth are likely to do some right things and many wrong ones. They will tackle some corruption but may not be able to avoid their own vested interests. Economic growth will be moderate but a longer-term growth strategy will be lacking. A confrontation of sorts between the military and its opponents of many stripes is likely to emerge in the coming months. From early 2016, the NCPO and Gen Prayuth will be under pressure to stick to the election timetable but will also be tempted to delay the election. Tension and confrontation are likelier than the best case of the military's benevolence and enlightened rule. The Thais are in for a rough ride. All that said, Thailand is likely to muddle through and emerge intact because of its immense critical mass, strategic location, hard-working, well-endowed resources, and hospitable people – assets that even Thai people cannot take away from themselves. Finally, the main lesson and implication from the Thai experience is that entrenched incumbent regimes that have been in power for a long time – i.e. the Thai military, monarchy and bureaucracy since the 1960s – need periodic recalibration and adjustment, conceding some to keep a lot rather than keeping all and risk losing everything.

19. Yu Tiejun

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Introduction

Democratic values and systems have been developed mainly in the West and then spread to the other parts of the world. In Asia this process is still ongoing, with some countries already being democracies while some others still democratizing.

Now the timing is good to think about “Values and Democracy,” considering the mediation on the consequences of the Arab Spring and the Ukraine Crisis, the Asian Values legacy of Mr. Lee Kuan Yew who passed away last year, the discussion on Francis Fukuyama’s new bestseller *Political Order and Political Decay: From the Industrial Revolution to the Globalization of Democracy*, the debates on the China Model and the future world order. All these contribute to rethinking the relationships between the traditional values and democracy.

And we live in Asia. Asia today is home to 67% of the world's population and accounts for one third of the global economy. Meanwhile, Asia is a region of great diversity. Countries differ in size, wealth and strength. They vary in historical, cultural and religious traditions as well as social systems and have different security interests and aspirations. Therefore we definitely need to discuss “Shared Values and Democracy in Asia.” For the space limits, this outline will only touch upon the case of PRC. For many people here, China may belong to a democracy that they don’t belong to. I will argue that China is working hard to build a democracy with Chinese characteristics, and during this process, Chinese traditional values (e.g. Confucian values) have played an important role in shaping the Chinese-style democracy.

I. Democracy Is a Good Thing in PRC

1. Constitution of PRC (Outline and Article 34...)
2. CPC Party Charter
3. Report to the National Congress of CPC
4. China’s Core Socialist Values (Three Levels: State, Society, and Individual): Prosperity, **Democracy**, Civility, Harmony, Freedom, Equality, Justice, The rule of law, Patriotism, Dedication, Integrity, Friendship. Democracy as a value, system of government, and principle has little been challenged now in China... But,

II. Democracy with Chinese Characteristics (Chinese-style Democracy)

1. Democracy has been accepted by China with conditions. We add some adjectives to the term of democracy to show our Chinese characteristics, such as People’s Democracy and Socialist Democracy.
2. China Model is different from the Western model of democracy (mainly, liberal democracy) which involve the multi-party system, and the separation of the executive, legislative and judicial powers, etc.
3. China would not like to copy the Western model of democracy (“We should place high importance on systemic building, give full play to the strength of the socialist

political system and draw on the political achievements of other societies. However, we will never copy a Western political system.”—The Report to the 18th CPC National Congress)

III. Why Is the Case?

1. An Ideological Explanation: The Leadership of CPC and Regime Security
2. A Cultural Explanation: Value Priority
3. A Rational Explanation: The Limits of Liberal Democracy Consultative democracy or Deliberative democracy

IV. Confucian Values and the China Model of Democracy

1. Humanity (仁): benevolence, love; Harmony is prior to conflict
2. Civility(礼): proper; Obligation is prior to right
3. Community: Community is prior to individual
4. Responsibility: Responsibility is prior to freedom
5. The China Model of Democracy: Beyond Liberal Democracy

Concluding Remarks

1. One size doesn't fit all: Democratic Variants in Asia
2. The Linkage between the Chinese Traditional Culture (esp. Confucius) and the China Model of Democracy
3. China is not alone in this regard. Consideration for others, self-restraint, and empathy are usually regarded as shared values in Asia. Then what are the implications for the political development of other countries in Asia? What prospect for democracy in China and Asia?
4. In China, the rule of law must be strengthened and democracy must be institutionalized and codified in order to guarantee people's democracy. We need further exploration of the mechanism through which the traditional values of Asia affect or alter democratic values that evolved in the West.
5. Is there an Asia's democracy? I am not sure whether it helps to mitigate sectarian conflict or not. The academic findings on the correlation between democratization and violence are not encouraging.

20. Shinzō Abe

Prime Minister of Japan

Good evening everyone! I am Shinzō Abe. Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to say that it is most timely that at the start of a new year, you have gathered to reflect on Asian values and democracy in the region.

The topic is fitting as we greet a new year, as it brightens our spirits, does it not? I have never once held even the slightest doubt that in Asia's future, democracy will take root.

Whatever twists and turns there may have been along the way, Asia is now poised to become a champion of democracy. I have been told that Asia has already surpassed any other region on earth in the number of people living under democracies.

In my view, democracy can never be anything but a work in progress. It is, and will forever remain, a work yet unfinished. First moving one way, then back again, it proceeds from one generation to the next, assimilating refinements atop still previous improvements. It knows no other way, but there is one absolute requirement – namely, being open to others while imparting mutual respect towards differing opinions and points of view.

It is here I believe we can be optimistic. For example, we have here with us His Excellency, Dr. Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono. Take a look at his country, Indonesia. Or indeed, have a look at India, led by my valued friend Prime Minister Narendra Modi, who kindly gave us a message by video.

A tremendous number of languages, multiple religions, rapid economic development, and enormous changes throughout society, whether you consider Indonesia or India, the people of these nations keep working within societies rich in diversity to make democracy take root.

As the great Swami Vivekananda stated at the Parliament of the World's Religions in Chicago 123 years ago, it is none other than the spirit of tolerance that formed India and Indonesia into the nations you see today.

The self-portrait of Asia that each of us should hold is one that should surely be drawn using warm colors, portraying tolerance.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, because of impediments like the walls between races and ethnicities, nationalities and religions, even in the 20th century, it was not until the latter half that we could say the values of freedom, democracy, and the rule of law were “universal” among the peoples of Asia and Africa in the true sense.

Which brings me back to memories of the 1964 Tokyo Olympics: they were the first Olympic Games to come to Asia. In celebration of that, the Olympic Torch relay visited lots of countries in Asia. At each stop people shared in that celebration as their own. Even at only ten

years old, I felt very gratified at that.

I also recall that I felt very upbeat, having heard that for many newly independent African states; the Tokyo Games were their very first Olympics. The athletes who marched below the flag of Northern Rhodesia for the opening ceremony held aloft the brand-new flag of Zambia during the closing ceremony. On that very same day as the closing ceremony Zambia achieved its independence. Half a century has passed since then. The Olympic and Paralympic Games, having come to Seoul and Beijing, will again return to Tokyo.

A great many Asian countries have achieved remarkable economic development during this interlude. The sacred flame, which will soon burn against the Tokyo sky once more, will come to symbolize the rapid progress achieved by the region.

The 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games will surely also be an opportunity for many of our Asian friends, having persevered through numerous difficulties, to embrace democracy and mutually and vigorously confirm human rights and the rule of law to be principles that they themselves hold.

That's right, ladies and gentlemen: alongside Asia's growth and steady democratization, the universal values we speak of have become values that cover more people than any other region in the world, and "universal" in the true sense of the word. Can you think of anything else that could please us more?

And yet, Asia's democracy has a distinct mark engraved in it from ancient times, reflecting the values we have held dear for generations.

The statues of Buddha, we see in Myanmar and Thailand sometimes lie on their side, truly feeling at ease. Japan's Buddha statues, perhaps because they are in Japan, are quite upright, standing or seated, but the features we all think of are invariably those of a kindly face.

We have been taught that theirs is a face of 'loving-kindness'.

As a child, I was also told that "medicine is a 'benevolent art'." I knew that the Confucian concept of "benevolence" should mean loving attachment and a kind spirit.

Those of you from Indonesia, Malaysia, or Pakistan will, I believe, say that you find a morality identical to loving-kindness and benevolence within the teachings of Islam as well. Japan, too, has a tradition of putting the utmost priority on harmony.

Mahatma Gandhi himself said, did he not, that for him democracy was something that would give the weak the same chance as the strong.

I have renewed my belief that within the veins of water that have run continuously since ancient times under the ground upon which we stand, there is endless nourishment fostering democracy and imparting value to freedom and human rights, namely tolerance and loving-kindness.

We say that the democracy found in India demonstrates its durability during each and every election. The same was the case with Taiwan, as we learned just 3 days ago. I heard that the election held recently in Myanmar was also conducted in a fair manner, impressing observers from abroad, including Mr. Yōhei Sasakawa, who headed the Japan mission.

Democracy is always a work in progress. Still, it is an unmistakable truth that what improves it one step at a time is a commitment to due process and an adherence to the rule of law.

The same is true with fostering civil servants immune to bribery, police and judicial administration that are impartial, and a military organization serving under civilian control.

The foundation for everything is ensuring due process while promulgating the rule of law. This is what we ourselves have learned over a long time. And yet, creating and then upholding just, fair, and transparent procedures and making the rule of law absolutely steadfast is also ultimately up to the skills of human beings. Everything starts from making each individual human being wiser and stronger.

And it is that awareness post-war Japan has held dear. Japan wasted little time after losing the war in beginning its assistance to other Asian countries, acting under the credo that it is human resources development that brings about nation building, and that there can be no nation building without human resources development. This became Japan's approach in carrying out foreign assistance and is the approach we still embrace today. I believe you can agree with me on that.

It was a little more than a month ago, while I was visiting India that Prime Minister Modi kindly took me to Varanasi. There I experienced with him a Ganga Aarti ceremony, which began just as dusk fell and was gorgeously showy within a solemn atmosphere.

I knew that Varanasi was among the most sacred places, and while observing the ceremony, one thought after another struck me. A feeling of respect for the flow of water – that's something we Japanese need no explanation to grasp. I might also add that this is why the Government of Japan has for a long time lent a helping hand in the remediation of the River Ganges.

Varanasi also reminded me of samsara, a teaching the Japanese have also valued since ancient times. People are born and ultimately die and transform into something else, and that's precisely why we must live treasuring the present. Somehow, we have been thinking that way.

Though I could not make it during my last trip, I knew that nearby was the place where the Buddha bestowed his very first teachings to his followers. He told them to venture forth for the gain of many; this teaching spread to far-off Japan and lives on today as a sutra.

On the bank of the Mother River, as I allowed myself to become lost in the music and the rhythmic movement of the flames, I was dazzled at the bottomless depths of history connecting both ends of Asia.

Be it loving-kindness, benevolence, fraternity, or harmony, I believe that in Asia, there extends an underground rootstock of thinking that supports democracy and values freedom and human rights.

From there, a beautiful and large-blossomed lotus flower is now coming into bloom. Coupled with increasingly flourishing trade and investment, it is bringing peace and prosperity to Asia. If this is not something for us to rejoice about, then I must ask, what on earth is?

At the beginning of a new year, as we unmistakably feel the curtain lifting on a new era for Asia, an era in which we make freedom, human rights, and democracy our own and respect the rule of law, Japan reaffirms its determination to continue to be a member of Asia that you can count on. With that resolve, I conclude my remarks.

Thank you very much.

