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A Study of Folk Medicine In a Central Thai Village

The following report by Chantana Banpasirichote, a researcher at the Social Research Institute, Chulalongkorn University, Thailand, is based on research conducted as part of "The Dynamics of the Indigenous Knowledge System and Prospects for Its Revitalization," a project supported by international grants in fiscal 1989, 1990, and 1991.

The study of Thailand's indigenous knowledge system has received little attention except when the issue of culture and development has been raised in a period of rapid industrialization. In responding to cultural threats stemming from industrialization, there is a new trend toward treating culture from the dynamic perspective of the everyday life of common people rather than from a static and exclusive perspective.

Traditional and folk medicine is of interest to social scientists and health practitioners, although there are still few attempts to elucidate the way in which it changes and its implications for social development. This inadequate understanding of the indigenous knowledge system can be attributed to the limitations of social science in providing a conceptual framework and research methodology.

In attempting to learn about the indigenous knowledge system and to evaluate the possibility of revitalizing it to enable better use of traditional medicine, I studied a village community in central Thailand, Nongyanang, in 1989 and 1990 to assess the status of traditional and folk medicine there. A Buddhist temple in the village that provides traditional health services was the focus of my study. The priest has played a significant role in revitalizing traditional knowledge in this village. Through this study I expect to demonstrate that an understanding of the indigenous knowledge system will provide guidelines indicating how traditional knowledge can be of greater use in contemporary Thai society.

The village

Nongyanang is a rice-growing village and not very prosperous because of its physical limitations. As a

consequence, the village has a long history of migration.

The village is moderately modernized, especially in regard to health care. Modern medicine was introduced to the village quite some time ago and is now well established and popular. It can be said that the modern health care system has almost replaced traditional healing. Yet folk medicine has not completely disappeared, but persists in specific areas. Thus, the village makes use of two different systems, modern and traditional.

Considering its two-hundred-year history, the temple, Wat Nongyanang, is relatively old. But surprisingly, Buddhism has become firmly established in the village only within the past twenty years. It is also interesting to find that in the past Wat Nongyanang was deserted at times for lack of popular support. The main reason was the fluctuation of the population as a consequence of migration.

The temple has been revitalized by the current priest, and this process has paralleled the development of traditional medical practice at the temple. Thus, traditional medicine and the Buddhist temple complement each other in maintaining social status and function.

As in most villages in central Thailand, Buddhism is the fundamental belief system and social control mechanism of Nongyanang. Other belief systems functioning as means of spiritual integration of the community are not as clearly defined as in the north and the northeast.

The supernatural beliefs that once prevailed in the community, such as belief in *phée* and other spirits, do not have a strong function of social integration. These beliefs have gradually disappeared with the death of ritual practitioners. For example, a spirit shrine has been deserted since losing its caretaker. Spirit mediums remain, but because of the influence of the temple they now play a larger role in fortune-telling than in healing.

Traditional healers and Wat Nongyanang

The components of health care generally include nutrition, prevention, cure, and rehabilitation. But healing seems to be the most prominent element of folk medicine in Nongyanang, and it occupies a ma-



Architecture of central Thailand, the region in which Nongyanang is located

major place in the traditional system of knowledge. Thus, folk healers are a quick reference for folk medicine.

In Thailand, despite the wide coverage of modern medical services, there are still folk healers in almost every village. The small district where Nongyanang is located alone has at least five traditional healers, all male and aged; the only remaining female healer is a traditional midwife who no longer practices because of age. Furthermore, the 1984-85 survey of the Office of Primary Health Care reports that eighty-three traditional healers in eighty provinces in the northeastern region were interviewed.

The most striking aspect of traditional medicine in Nongyanang is the temple hospital. Nevertheless, despite its impressive performance, its history goes back only to the early 1970s, not a very long time. The priest has institutionalized folk medical practices within the framework of the temple. Wat Nongyanang has gradually developed an educational function; the priest passes on healing methods to his disciples, who are former patients. The temple has made traditional practice a community concern instead of the domain of individual healers. Sometimes it is hard to distinguish religious from healing ceremonies.

The popularity of Wat Nongyanang has spread beyond the village. Now most patients come from outside the community. This indicates that a search

for alternative health care in fact prevails in Thai society overall.

In this particular case, the personality of the priest, a Buddhist cleric also endowed with the ability to heal, has contributed to belief in the efficacy of traditional healing. The extraordinary character of the priest is so important that the role of the temple in traditional health care may not be maintained after his time.

Change and continuity

Disease and treatment. Folk medicine in Nongyanang has two aspects, healing and general care. The healing aspect is dominated by

traditional healers, because most people's knowledge of the names of diseases, herbal formulas, and medicinal plants, when traced to the original source, is seen to come from healers. Without distinguishing between people's and healers' knowledge, in the course of this study I collected at least sixty names of diseases, twenty-eight herbal formulas, and fifty types of medicinal plants. Certainly this list does not represent the total body of folk knowledge in Nongyanang.

The names of diseases indicate only general knowledge, not necessarily usage. Despite being able to identify names of diseases and herbal formulas, people do not generally use these on a regular basis, and therefore the accuracy of the knowledge is debatable. Only at the temple can the knowledge be verified, because prescriptions are compounded every day and are monitored by the priest and other healers working with the temple.

The use of traditional medicine in Nongyanang nowadays is more specific than in the past, and is mostly for circulatory and respiratory ailments, skin infections, wounds, and other traditional diseases, such as *grasaya* (disorders causing cachexia and wasting), *sang* (infectious diseases in early childhood), and *pradong* (exanthematous fever). The role of folk medicine is clarified by the current prescriptions at Wat Nongyanang. These are for many traditional diseases, such as muscular and body aches, disorders

of the nervous system, different types of internal and external abscesses, menstrual disorders, leukorrhea, different types of fevers, diarrhea, diabetes, rheumatism, coughs, bone-related diseases and disorders, paralysis, and so on. The most famous cures of Wat Nongyanang are for snakebite and paralysis. The temple is also known for its herbal sauna service.

By nature, folk medicine provides specific treatments for individual ailments and diverse herbal formulas even for the same disease, not to mention the fact that traditional healers may prescribe different formulas for the same disease. This is one of the reasons knowledge passed on to later generations does not seem unified, leading to the problem of gauging the accuracy of folk knowledge. The only valid source of knowledge at present is the traditional healers who still practice folk medicine.

People's health beliefs, once based on traditional knowledge, now include modern knowledge, as well. Sometimes the cause of disease is explained in terms of germs, although this is still misunderstood. In addition, traditional practitioners like the priest do not completely ignore the possibility of alternatives, that is, modern medicine.

While the perception of disease and treatment is changing, certain traditional beliefs persist. Because of the influence of religion, there is still the traditional belief that the cause of chronic diseases leading to great suffering is misfortune and *kamma* (past deeds). Illness is linked to religion through the perception of suffering, and the path toward purification of the mind and contemplation to overcome the consequences of *kamma* and misfortune.

Religious disciplines and rituals are therefore part of the healing process at Wat Nongyanang. Although the priest tries not to involve magic in the healing process, he is often asked by patients to employ astrology and magic water. This is done selectively, however, depending on the psychological condition of the patient.

Other use of magic and incantation is confined to specific cases, such as poisonous animal bites, and to the process of drug preparation. It is observed that incantation is part of the mystification of the healing process that contributes significantly to confidence in its efficacy. Rituals are disappearing, but those that remain are related to the traditional method of ethical control—the master worship ceremony.

General care. While healing knowledge has a reference, that is, healers and traditional texts, knowledge of general health care is simply passed on from one generation to another without any systematic

reference. It is more like teachings for important stages of life, especially for women and children. These teachings are a combination of taboos and behavioral guides.

Extra care for one's health is also available in the form of herbal recipes for long life and improved stamina. These recipes are considered to be a means of traditional preventive care that does not involve vaccination and control of the physical environment. On the contrary, traditional preventive care provides an approach to building strength from within the body, that is, establishing body equilibrium.

Taboos or, in a milder sense, restrictions are concentrated on food for sick people, pregnant women, infants, and young children. Food restrictions have in fact been common in Thai society for quite some time, although they vary by region. The reproductive process is an important aspect of folk knowledge, with special concern for pregnant women and newborn babies.

Nevertheless, the behavioral guides and food restrictions are weakening, since many have been replaced by modern care, especially now that women have started going to the hospital for childbirth. Food restrictions for sick people are still observed in most cases, however, and are often applied in accordance with the use of traditional drugs.

These restrictions have been passed on from earlier generations, usually without any explanation because little is recorded. Distortions of knowledge are likely in some cases. It is believed that these restrictions and behavioral guides were socially constructed and may have been suitable in the past but may not be so at present. In this regard, the community has no mechanism for reviewing and revising the teachings; this part of traditional knowledge is therefore less dynamic than the healing methods of Wat Nongyanang.

Conclusions

It is true that folk knowledge is experiential in nature. The existence of this knowledge is dependent on its usage by the community. The process of passing on knowledge is important, but it is often monitored by the community's usage. The weakness of this experiential knowledge is the great possibility of distortion because socioeconomic and cultural conditions are changing and so is the experience set, and this affects the application of the knowledge set in different contexts of time and space. Thus, revision and reinterpretation of traditional knowledge are important elements in the revitalization process.

Furthermore, the pluralistic health care system naturally adopted by most villages in Thailand contributes to an expansion of the horizon of traditional knowledge. Modern health care is becoming more localized, while folk knowledge tends to have a specific function, yet one essential for a Thai way of living.

Forum on the Japanese Occupation Of Malaya and Singapore

The Forum on the Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore launched its first-year program in April 1993 with a fiscal 1992 foundation-initiative grant from the Toyota Foundation. The objective of this project is to collect and organize written and oral records concerning Japan's occupation of these former British colonies during the Greater East Asia War (1941-45).

Yoji Akashi, professor of international relations at Nanzan University, is the director of the forum. The other staff research associates are Fujio Hara, senior researcher, Institute of Developing Economies (Malaysian economic history); Ikuhito Hata, professor, Takushoku University (military history); Teruhiko Iwatake, former official of the military administration, Malaya; Toru Nomura, professor, Keio University (Malaysian history); Michiko Nakahara, professor, Waseda University (Malaysian history and literature); Koki Ota, professor, Tohoku Women's College (military-administration history); and Akihiro Yoshihisa, archivist, Library of Congress.

An underresearched region

Historiographically speaking, study of the Japanese occupation of Southeast Asia got a late start in Japan, stimulated by Western scholars who undertook such research as early as 1953. Only in 1959 did two former officials of the Japanese military administration undertake a study of Japan's occupation of Indonesia.

The result was the publication of *Indoneshia ni okeru Nippon Gunsei no Kenkyu* (A Study of the Japanese Military Administration in Indonesia), which to this day remains a standard work on the subject. This work encouraged younger scholars in Japan and abroad to undertake in-depth study of the Japanese occupation of Indonesia, utilizing well-kept documents in Japan and the Netherlands, with the consequence that the subject has been relatively well studied by scholars at home and abroad.

The same cannot be said, unfortunately, of the study of the Japanese occupation of British Malaya and Singapore, for a number of reasons. First, the Japanese military destroyed a great many official documents following Japan's defeat, and the remainder of the papers were seized by the British army and are said to have been shipped to India, where they were lost and are still missing.

Second, study of occupied Malaya and Singapore has not aroused as much interest among either Japanese or Malaysian and Singaporean historians as has the study of occupied Indonesia among Japanese historians, because the people of postwar Malaya and Singapore still felt a cultural affinity with Britain and were only too glad to erase the nightmarish memories of the wartime Japanese presence. Nor has study advanced beyond research on the "¥50 million Contribution" affair and the Chinese massacres, unfortunate incidents as they are. These affairs have so emotionally monopolized the attention and interest of the public that they constitute to a certain extent a stumbling block to further scholarly research.

Third, until recently Japan has been of secondary interest to Singaporean and Malaysian social scientists. Added to this lack of interest are the language barrier and the dearth of information, which have contributed to discouraging study of the occupation period.

As a result, the years between 1942 and 1945 have remained largely a blank in the contemporary history of Singapore and Malaysia. In short, their prewar history ended in December 1941 and their postwar history commenced in September 1945.

Reflecting these scholarly stumbling blocks, Singaporean and Malaysian scholars have produced few works of serious scholarship on the subject, excepting several honors papers produced as academic exercises.

The scholarly situation in Japan is not much different from that in Singapore and Malaysia. With the exception of several papers of mine, the first of which was published in 1968, no Japanese scholars have attempted to probe this unexplored topic.

There have been some encouraging signs of scholarly pursuit of the subject since the late 1970s, however, as evidenced by the publication of memoirs and field studies, as well as secondary nonfiction works.

In 1981 Singapore's Oral History Department launched a five-year project to record personal memories of more than two hundred Singaporeans and collected wartime documents and photographs from these people. A similar project was underway at the

University of Science, Malaysia, in Penang, some years ago. These projects have yielded first-class sources of information that are useful for research, depending on how they are utilized.

In addition, a number of books have been published in Malaysia, Singapore, Britain, and Australia about the Japanese occupation of the former British territories, though they deal largely with the Malay campaign, the seizure of Singapore, life in Changi Prison, the Burma-Thailand Railway, and the Indian National Army. One extremely interesting book is *The Killer They Called Him a God* by Ian Ward, about Masanobu Tsuji's role in the Sook Ching in Singapore (February–March 1942).

In Japan, as mentioned, there are now a number of secondary works about the Japanese occupation of Singapore and Malaya, but excepting the multi-volume Tokugawa Collection deposited in the archives of the War History Department of the Defense Agency, no major collections of primary sources have yet been discovered. It should be mentioned, however, that the Tokugawa Collection, originally in the possession of former Marquis Yoshichika Tokugawa, who served as supreme adviser on military government to the Twenty-fifth Army, is a gold mine that no interested historian should overlook.

Forum activities

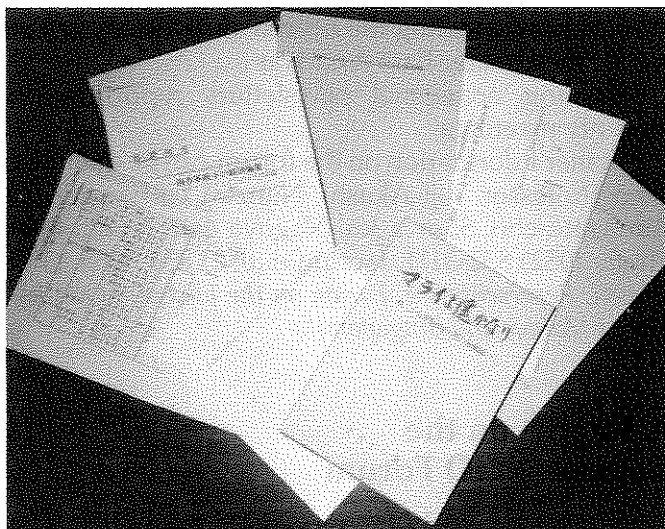
Since its commencement in April the forum has been meeting regularly once a month. At the first meeting forum members invited the directors of the Indonesia and Philippine projects, Professor Ken'ichi Goto of Waseda University and Professor Setsuho Ikehata of Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, respectively, to discuss their forums' research and the planning of their projects.

At the second meeting the forum listened to the personal recollections of Takeshi Kawai, a former propaganda official of the Selangor state government.

The third meeting was a session with three former Kempeitai (Military Police) officers who fought against communist guerrilla forces in Malaya. The forum intends to follow up the Kempeitai's anti-communist campaign by interviewing Major Satoru Onishi and other former Kempeitai officers.

The fourth meeting, scheduled for late September, was to be an interview with a former training officer at a higher normal school for Malayan principals and inspectors.

Beside these group interviews, Akashi and Nakahara individually interviewed several former mili-



Occupation-related documents collected by the forum

tary-government officials, police inspectors, and Kempeitai officers and a journalist.

In the coming months and years, the forum plans to conduct as many interview sessions as possible, because it is imperative that the forum collect personal memories from people associated with the military government, since many of them are advanced in age and are fast dying, and with them their recollections.

Future activities include the following projects:

- Continuing the oral-history project; one of the planned star interviewees is a former Japanese, now returned to Japan, who fought with the Malay communists from 1945 to 1989
- Discovering new primary sources, including personal memoirs and diaries as well as official documents
 - Sending researchers to Malaysia, Singapore, Britain, and India for archival research and for personal contact with archivists in those countries
 - Publishing monographs, memoirs, and diaries and exchanging them for holdings in archives abroad
 - Compiling a bibliography, an organizational chart, and biographical data
 - Collaborating with other forums and modifying projects that overlap, such as studies of the Indian National Army
 - Investigating the history of the military government in North Borneo, which has been little studied, and also that in Sumatra, which was administered by the Twenty-fifth Army, separate from the Sixteenth Army occupying Java
 - Organizing an international meeting, in collaboration with other forums and foreign institutions, in

1995 commemorating the fiftieth anniversary of the end of the Greater East Asia War

- Issuing occasional newsletters reporting on monthly meetings

Further information on the forum can be obtained from Professor Yoji Akashi, Nanzan University, 18 Yamazato-cho, Showa-ku, Nagoya 466, Japan; telephone (052) 832-3111, facsimile (052) 833-6985. (*Yoji Akashi, Representative, Forum on the Japanese Occupation of Malaya and Singapore*)

A Report on the Ramsar NGO Forum

In June this year the first conference of signatories of the Ramsar Convention to be held in Asia was convened in Kushiro, on Hokkaido, Japan's northernmost major island. The 1971 Ramsar Convention designates endangered wetlands used by migratory birds in signatory nations for protection. Japan became a signatory in 1980.

JAWAN's activities

The activities of the Japan Wetlands Action Network (JAWAN), a nongovernmental organization formed in May 1991, targeted this year's Ramsar Convention conference from the start. In May 1992 JAWAN sponsored an international symposium on wetlands in Tokyo as a preparatory step for this year's conference. And in September of that year JAWAN, the World Wildlife Fund—Japan, and three other NGOs joined forces to form the '93 Wetlands Conference. This network, the first of its kind in Japan, represented a dramatic step forward in the history of the Japanese movement to conserve wetlands used by migratory birds. The Toyota Foundation supported JAWAN's activities with citizen-activity grants in fiscal 1991 and 1992.

The '93 Wetlands Conference, spearheaded by JAWAN, sponsored a Ramsar NGO Forum (actually a series of forums) in conjunction with the official Ramsar Convention conference. Activities began with a forum in Hakata, on the island of Kyushu, followed by one in Tokyo, another aboard the ferry from Tokyo to Kushiro, and finally two in Kushiro. The first Kushiro forum focused on reports on conditions in various wetlands around Japan; the second centered on testimony by representatives of aboriginal peoples, including Japan's Utari (also known as Ainu, a group now found only on Hokkaido), invited by JAWAN.

The crisis facing Japan's wetlands

The national report delivered by the Japanese government delegation at the official Ramsar Convention conference and the reports delivered at the Ramsar NGO Forum differed significantly in their assessment of the state of Japan's wetlands. The latter made it clear that even Kushiro Marsh and Lake Utonai, both on Hokkaido, which are designated for protection under the convention, are seriously endangered by development and that a similar crisis faces a number of tidelands not even mentioned in the government report: Sambangase (Tokyo Bay), Fujimae (Nagoya), Wajiro (Hakata Bay), and Isahaya Bay (the Ariake Sea). At the official conference, too, NGOs testified persuasively about the development-related problems threatening Japan's wetlands, attracting the keen interest of both government and NGO representatives from other countries and stimulating constructive debate.

Aboriginal peoples and "wise use"

The NGO forum centered on aboriginal peoples provided many hints for "wise use" of wetlands. Reports by representatives of aboriginal peoples in Canada and Peru made a deep impression through their emphasis on the importance of the bond between nature and human beings, a bond that too often has disappeared. In all the talk so far about the wise use of wetlands, the concept of wise use has never been clearly defined, and discussion has tended to focus on "use"; these reports pointed directly at the crux of the problem.

Hearing about the way in which aboriginal peoples relate to nature delivered a kind of "culture shock" to Japanese participants, immersed in the affluent lifestyle of a developed country. The way of life described by the speakers reminded us force-



The second Ramsar NGO Forum in Kushiro



Migratory birds at the Isahaya Bay tidal flats, the largest such wetland area in Japan

fully of the rural society, and the bond between people and other living things, of the Japan of the past.

Joyce Ayers of Canada recommended that if we wish to think intelligently about the conservation of wetlands, we should consult aboriginal women. She also called for awareness of the fact that aboriginal peoples everywhere are part of a threatened ecosystem, likened water to the lifeblood of mother earth that nourishes us all, and said that hope is what we would all like to take home with us from the forum.

Alejandro Argumedo of Peru pointed out that protection of biodiversity should be accompanied by protection of cultural diversity. He stressed the importance of sharing the wisdom inherent in the methods of environmental conservation practiced by aboriginal peoples, who have always lived in harmony with nature, and admonished those donating aid and making investments in developing countries to take into account protection of the recipient countries' traditional lifestyle.

The wisdom of the Utari is indispensable to conservation of Japan's remaining wetlands, as well. Familiar with wetlands since ancient times, they have always led a life based on veneration of nature as di-

vine and on coexistence with all other living things.

In none of the previous four Ramsar Convention conferences was any attempt made to learn from the wisdom of aboriginal peoples. This time, however, Daniel Navid, secretary general of the Ramsar Convention Bureau, showed keen interest in the ways in which aboriginal peoples interact with wetlands. We hope that representatives of aboriginal peoples will be invited to participate as official delegates in the next Ramsar Convention conference, to be held in Australia in 1996, and that "wise use" incorporating their wisdom will be a major theme.

The future of the movement

The movement for conservation of Japan's wetlands faces an uphill battle, especially since environmental law in Japan lags twenty years behind that in other developed countries and other Asian countries. Unless the Environment Agency asserts itself strongly and sees that legislation requiring effective environmental-impact assessment is enacted swiftly, it will probably be impossible to conserve Japan's remaining wetlands, particularly the four tidelands mentioned above. If action is not taken very soon, the

Isahaya Bay tidal flats, whose three thousand hectares makes them the largest in Japan, will be gone by the time of the next Ramsar Convention conference.

The Japanese people and ranking officials in the Environment Agency and other relevant government agencies must start taking the problem seriously. If they do not study the lessons offered by Japan's history of development and awaken to the importance of wetlands, Japan will be condemned by the people of the world as an utterly undeveloped country in matters of environmental conservation.

The activities, reports, and proposals of Japanese NGOs were incorporated in the Kushiro Declaration and the specific recommendations announced at the close of the official Ramsar Convention conference. These recommendations promise to be a powerful weapon to further Japan's wetlands-conservation movement.

One recommendation calls on the Japanese government to create a "Ramsar domestic committee" that includes environmental NGOs so that conservation of wetlands can be pursued cooperatively. This proposal represents a dramatic advance. If the Environment Agency shows reluctance to implement it on the grounds that it has no binding power, international opinion of Japan, which prides itself on being an economic superpower, will become still harsher. Those involved in the conservation movement, too, must not focus exclusively on an adversarial relationship with the Environment Agency but must engage in constructive dialogue on ways and means of protecting wetlands.

For the time being, JAWAN will concentrate on working for the preservation of Sambangase and the three other tidelands threatened by development. This cause, which we have continually advanced both in formal meetings and elsewhere, we regard as our international duty. We face a daunting challenge indeed. (*Hirofumi Yamashita, Representative, Japan Wetlands Action Network*)

A Report on the Affinity Group On Japanese Philanthropy

The Affinity Group on Japanese Philanthropy, the twenty-eighth such group to be recognized by the Council on Foundations, the umbrella organization for U.S. foundations, met in Dallas, Texas, on April 25 this year in conjunction with the council's annual general meeting April 26-28. I attended both meet-

ings, but this report will focus only on the AGJP meeting.

The AGJP's membership includes Japanese corporations engaged in philanthropic activities in the United States and foundations established by Japanese corporations doing business in the United States (corporate foundations). Its aims are to encourage the professional administration and long-term development of grant-making activities, as well as the expansion of such activities both in the United States and globally.

The theme of this year's meeting was "The Growing Diversity in Japanese Domestic and Global Philanthropic Actions." Unlike earlier meetings, which had focused mainly on the United States, this time the sphere of interest was expanded and nonmembers as well as members were invited to deliver presentations.

In the first session, "U.S. Corporations: Engaging in Giving in Japan," representatives of Sun Microsystems and H. B. Fuller discussed their companies' corporate strategies in Japan and their reasons for undertaking philanthropic activities there. Both speakers mentioned the needs of philanthropic activities in Japan and attempted to define those needs. And both put greater weight on community relations than on grant-making activities. They seemed to feel that in Japan, developing human relations is more significant than donating money. The two companies' actual philanthropic activities, however, are modest: participation in local festivals, employees' open houses, donations to local charities, and the like.

The second session, "The Players in Japanese Philanthropy: Government and Economic Association Giving," centered on reports on the grant-making activities of Keidanren (the Japan Federation of Economic Organizations) and the Japan Foundation's Center for Global Partnership. The Keidanren representative spoke about the Council for Better Corporate Citizenship (CBCC) and the One Percent Club as new initiatives in Japanese corporate philanthropy. The representative of the Center for Global Partnership reviewed the center's history and activities, and stressed that although the center is part of the Japan Foundation, it operates fairly independently. He said that it was his impression that the Center for Global Partnership is progressive but that Japan's other philanthropic activities in the United States are rather passive.

In the third session, "Engaging Japan in Global Issues: The Strategies of America's Large Private

Foundations," conducted during lunch, Peter Geithner of the Ford Foundation presented an overview of the ways in which big American foundations have promoted Japanese philanthropy over the years. He noted that American foundations used to make grants to Japanese organizations but that interest is now focused on encouraging Japanese philanthropic organizations to use their own funds to address global issues.

In this context Geithner listed several specific problems within Japan: the need to find ways to enhance interest in international issues; the need for institutional grants to strengthen the nonprofit sector; the need for professionally trained staff; and the need for support mechanisms for the nonprofit sector, such as tax-exempt status.

The theme of the fourth and final session was "The Players in Japanese Private Foundations: The Emerging Philanthropic Giants?" Again there were two speakers, whose presentations focused on the ways in which program development in major Japanese private foundations or U.S.-chartered foundations established by Japanese organizations differs from program development in the big American private foundations or might differ in the future.

The two foundations represented were the Toyota Foundation and the United States-Japan Foundation. A representative of the Sasakawa Peace Foundation had been scheduled to speak but was unable to participate, which deprived the discussion of a certain color.

My presentation as the representative of the Toyota Foundation emphasized three points. First, most big American foundations are independent foundations, but with few exceptions their Japanese counterparts are corporate foundations. In general, Japanese foundations' grant programs target safe areas, though there are a few exceptions, such as the Toyota Foundation's international grants and citizen-activity grants.

The second point was the way in which funding agendas are set and the extent to which programs are able to respond to rapidly changing world conditions. This is a difficult question for Japanese foundations. The Toyota Foundation, however, is now evaluating its largest program, the Research Grant Program, in search of the best way to contribute as a medium-sized corporate foundation.

Third, Japanese foundations would benefit more from learning from medium-sized American foundations with creative programs than from modeling themselves on the big American foundations, be-

cause the huge difference in endowment size makes it almost impossible for Japanese foundations to look to the big American foundations for a sense of program priorities and other agendas. Nevertheless, there is much to be learned from the big American foundations on matters relating to the basic philosophy of philanthropy. (Yoshiko Wakayama, Chief Program Officer, International Division)

"Know Our Neighbors" Books

Following are brief reviews of three books recently published under the Toyota Foundation's "Know Our Neighbors" Translation-Publication Program in Japan, which supports the translation and publication in Japanese of Southeast and South Asian works of literary, scholarly, and social significance.

Nasamphagu Ca. Ram Shekhal Nakarmi. Trans. Shucho Takaoka. Published in Japanese as *Parunga no Yoake* (Dawn over Palunga). Tokyo: Shinjuku Shobo Co., 1993. 240 pp. ISBN 4-88008-184-1.

This novel was originally written in Newari, the language of the minority Newar people of Nepal. The author, Ram Shekhal Nakarmi, was born in 1939. In addition to novels, this versatile man has written stage comedies and screenplays, and some of his works have been published as comics, as well. He is also known as a film director and an actor.

The languages of Nepal belong to three linguistic groups: Indo-Aryan, Tibeto-Burman, and Tibetan. The official language, Nepali, is Indo-Aryan, while Newari is Tibeto-Burman. Until recently, use of all languages other than Nepali was restricted. The Newars, however, are the indigenous and dominant people of the Katmandu Valley, where the capital is located, and it is they who shaped the civilization of this region, now designated one of the world's great cultural repositories.

With the advent of democracy in 1990 language use was liberalized. The Newari movement had consistently pressed for freedom of expression. *Nasamphagu Ca*, first published in 1973 (1093 according to the Nepalese calendar), was a *samizdat* work written as the Newari movement was gathering momentum.

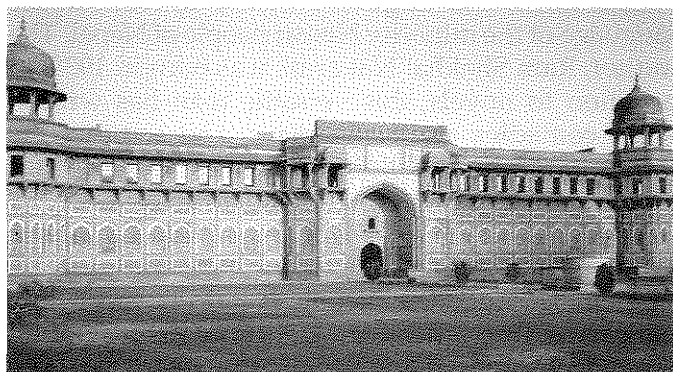
The plot revolves around a brother and sister living in Palunga, a village near Katmandu. The brother is forced to give up his land to a wealthy villager; his younger sister is raped by the son of a village leader and becomes pregnant. In telling their story, the author also provides a dispassionate portrayal of vil-

lage life. Just as the villagers are about to rise in protest against the oppression of the local powers that be, the police intervene, bringing the story to an abrupt close.

The author uses the image of the cock crowing at dawn, however, to symbolize the inexorable tide of events and hint at a brighter future for the villagers. This is a social-protest novel, but the village world described, and the Newar sense of time, will remind Japanese readers of the rural society of old Japan.

Modern India 1885–1947. 2 vols. Sumit Sarkar. Trans. Nobuko Nagasaki, Masayuki Usuda, Nariaki Nakazato, and Toshie Awaya. Published in Japanese as *Atarashii Indo Kindaishi: Shita kara no Rekishi no Kokoromi* (A New History of Modern India: An Experiment in History from Below). Tokyo: Kambun Shuppan Co., 1993. Vol. 1, 368 pp. Vol. 2, 384 pp. ISBN 4-87636-111-8.

When the Tiananmen Square incident occurred in 1989, Sumit Sarkar was one of the first to criticize the Chinese Communist Party. He is also among the most vocal critics of the Hindu sectarianism now tearing



A view of Agra Fort, near the fabled Taj Mahal

India apart. A professor at the University of Delhi, he is the most authoritative scholar of modern Indian history. Far from immuring himself in an ivory tower, though, he engages directly in current events, and this active disposition colors his approach to historical research, as this work attests.

Modern India 1885–1947 is revolutionary on several counts. It is the first general modern Indian history written by an Indian. As an objective history written from an Indian point of view, it represents a major departure from the earlier dominance of British historians. It is also a pioneering work in the importance it attaches to low-caste peasants and their resistance to oppression—an implicit criticism of histories centered on the doings of leaders and high-caste

landowners and research biased toward a particular ideology. Another attractive feature of *Modern India* is its emphasis on local history. Through detailed accounts of different regions the author provides a three-dimensional view of India's rich variety.

As a general introductory text, *Modern India* contains a well-balanced blend of political, economic, and social history. Moreover, because of its innovative approach it is regarded as the most important modern history to emerge from India since independence. This no doubt is why not only the original English edition, published in India in 1982, but also the English edition published in London and the Hindi edition published in India have won such high praise. *Modern India* is sure to have a long life as a basic reference that retains its freshness.

Dekada '70. Lualhati Bautista. Trans. Satoshi Masutani. Published in Japanese as *Nanaju Nendai* (The Seventies). Tokyo: Mekong Publishing Co., 1993. 280 pp. ISBN 4-8396-0070-8.

This novel was originally published in Tagalog in 1983. The author, Lualhati Bautista, renowned for having been born and raised in the Tondo slum district of Manila, is said to be perhaps the only writer of Tagalog literature who can make a living by her pen alone.

Dekada '70, which won the 1983 Palanca Award and sold fifty thousand copies, describes the decade of the 1970s in the life of Amanda, a middle-class wife and mother, and in the history of the Philippines as seen through her eyes. This was a decade in which the contradictions and corruption inherent in President Ferdinand Marcos's "development dictatorship" became visible in a variety of forms, causing many people, especially young people, to erupt in anger. But the reactionary Marcos regime stifled all protest, and the Philippines sank ever deeper into a political and economic quagmire.

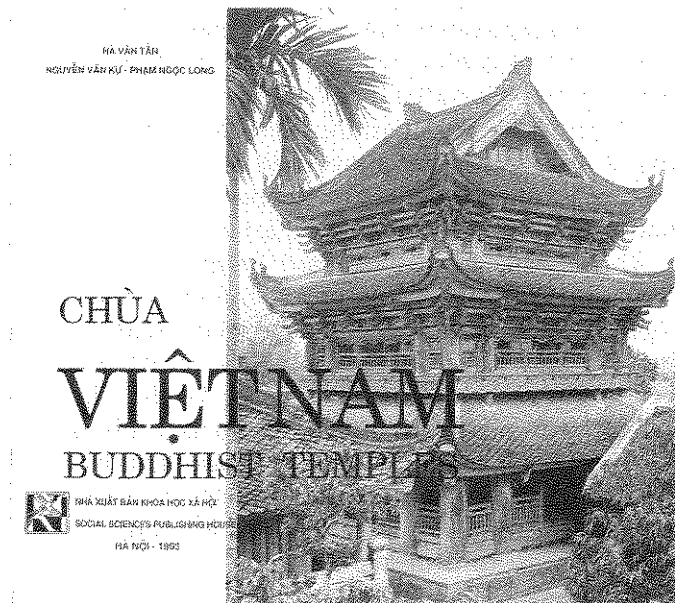
Its deft descriptions of one woman's awakening, of various young people, and of the age itself make *Dekada '70* a masterpiece. The author skillfully uses the character of Amanda to mirror her own experiences and observations, and reveals her wit in the humor that laces the dialogue.

Recent Publications Based on Foundation-Supported Research

Buddhist Temples in Vietnam. Ha Van Tan. Photographs by Nguyen Van Ku and Pham Ngoc Long.

Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1993. 401 pp. In Vietnamese and English.

After Buddhism was introduced to Vietnam around the beginning of the common era, temples proliferated until every village had its own. Many temples, constructed in different periods, utilizing various architectural styles and building methods,



Buddhist Temples in Vietnam

and containing a wealth of statues and other art, are in effect museums of ancient Vietnamese architecture, painting, sculpture, and folklore. Investigation of these temples enables us to identify the characteristics of Vietnamese Buddhism and helps us understand an important aspect of Vietnam's cultural and ideological history.

Today, for a number of reasons, Vietnamese Buddhism is enjoying a resurgence. The number of believers is clearly increasing. Many temples have been reconstructed and scriptures republished. Buddhist rites are not restricted to believers but have spread widely among the Vietnamese people, an example being the Buddhist ceremony praying for the safe journey of the spirit of a deceased person to the Pure Land of Amitabha Buddha.

Buddhist Temples in Vietnam, written in both Vietnamese and English, provides general readers with an overview of Vietnamese Buddhism and its historical development. The book is divided into two parts: a text by an eminent historian and some two hundred photographs of the architecture, ornamentation, Buddha images, and natural surroundings of famous temples throughout Vietnam.

Compilation and publication of the book were supported by international grants in fiscal 1990 and 1991.

Van Khac Han Nom Viet Nam (The Sino-Nom Engraved Texts of Vietnam). Nguyen Quang Hong, ed. Hanoi: Social Sciences Publishing House, 1992. 1,142 pp. In Vietnamese.

The culture of Vietnam, like that of some neighboring countries, has been strongly influenced by the Chinese writing system. Ancient Vietnamese scholars devised a modified Chinese script called Nom. Many texts written in a mixture of Chinese ideographs and Nom are still extant; some date back as far as the seventh century of the common era, very early in Vietnam's history.

These Sino-Nom texts, as they are known, have been preserved until today because they were engraved with a knife or chisel into hard surfaces, such as stone steles, bronze bells and gongs, and wooden boards.

This book provides a detailed description of approximately two thousand such texts, most selected from the more than twelve thousand rubbings of texts on steles, bells, gongs, and wooden boards in the Sino-Nom Institute, Hanoi.

Compilation and publication of the book were supported by international grants in fiscal 1988, 1989, and 1990.

Sim Isan (Isan Sim: Northeastern Buddhist Temples). Wiroj Srisuro. Khon Kaen: Khon Kaen University, 1993. ISBN 974-89031-4-1. In Thai.

In the Isan dialect of northeastern Thailand a *sim* is the ordination hall of a Buddhist temple. This book is the outgrowth of the long-term research on *sim* of a scholar on the faculty of Khon Kaen University, in northeastern Thailand, who specializes in the study of Buddhist temple architecture.

Thai Buddhist temples made use of all the techniques available at the time of their construction, representing the summation of contemporary people's knowledge of architectural design, construction, building materials, and artistic ornamentation. Now, however, the temples of northeastern Thailand are rapidly being torn down because neither Buddhist priests nor villagers are aware of their importance. Through this book the author hopes to heighten awareness of the architectural value of these temples and thus encourage their preservation.

The book was made possible by an international grant in fiscal 1991.

Foundation Grants for Fiscal 1993

At its sixty-eighth meeting, held on September 21, the Toyota Foundation's Board of Directors approved 257 grants, totaling ¥413 million, for fiscal 1993. (The total is expected to rise to ¥475 million when further projects are approved by the Board of Directors next March.) Following is a breakdown of the grants by program.

Research Grant Program: A total of 53 grants, worth ¥190 million, were approved: 25 grants for Category I (individual incentive) research, 19 for Category II (trial and preliminary) research, and 9 for Category III (comprehensive) research. Only 7 percent of the 757 applications were approved. As usual, the grant proposals address a wide variety of concerns under the rubric of the program's key theme, "In Search of a New Society." This is the sixth year in which priority has been given to projects focusing on two subthemes, coping with technologically advanced society and coping with multicultural society.

Grant Program for Citizen Activities: Applications for citizen-activity grants are accepted, reviewed, and approved twice a year, in September and March. In the first period this year 122 applications were received, and 9 grants, totaling ¥15 million, were approved.

International Grant Program: This program awards grants for research projects aimed at preserving and encouraging the indigenous cultures of Southeast Asia and conducted by indigenous researchers. A total of 91 grants, worth ¥105 million, were approved, including 11 incentive grants for young researchers in Southeast Asian studies.

Incentive Grants for Young Indonesian Researchers Program: This program awards grants to young Indonesian researchers for research in the social sciences, broadly defined. A total of 1,144 applications were received this year, and 64 grants, worth ¥15 million, were approved.

"Know Our Neighbors" Programs: These programs award grants to assist the translation and publication of Southeast and South Asian books in Japanese and of Southeast and South Asian as well as Japanese books in Southeast and South Asian languages. Of the 26 grants, totaling ¥54 million, approved this year, 13 were for the Program in Japan and 13 for the Program in Other Asian Countries.

Other grant-making activities: A total of ¥34 million was approved for 14 grants in the Foundation Initiative Grant Program and the Communications-Supplement Grant Program.

About the Foundation

The Toyota Foundation, a private nonprofit, grant-making organization dedicated to the goals of realizing greater human fulfillment and contributing to the development of a human-oriented society, was endowed in October 1974 by the Toyota Motor Corporation.

The Foundation's total endowment is approximately ¥11.4 billion (roughly \$105 million). Chartered by the Prime Minister's Office, the Foundation relies on its endowment income. The decision making of the Foundation, governed by its Board of Directors, is independent of the corporate policies of the subscribing corporation or of any other institution.

Through its Research Grant Program and its International Grant Program, the Foundation provides grants for research and projects related to the human and natural environments, social welfare, education and culture, and other fields. The Research Grant Program is responsible for projects that are conducted mainly by Japanese nationals but also by non-Japanese who can complete the Japanese-language grant application form. Research grants give priority to projects that focus on coping with technologically advanced or multicultural society.

The International Division administers the International Grant Program and such other programs as the "Know Our Neighbors" Programs. The International Grant Program is directed mainly toward the developing countries and supports projects that best meet the needs of their present-day society. At present this program concentrates on projects aimed at preserving and encouraging the indigenous cultures of Southeast Asia and conducted by indigenous researchers. The "Know Our Neighbors" Programs support the translation and publication of Southeast and South Asian works in Japanese and vice versa, and of Southeast and South Asian works in other Southeast and South Asian languages.

The Toyota Foundation welcomes response from readers of the *Occasional Report*. Comments and questions should be addressed to the International Division, The Toyota Foundation, Shinjuku Mitsui Building 37F, 2-1-1 Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo 163-04, Japan. The articles in the *Occasional Report* reflect the authors' opinions and do not necessarily represent the opinions of the Foundation.

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