The Tokyo Foundation
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Voices *from the* Sylff Community

October 2011

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About the Tokyo Foundation

The Tokyo Foundation is an independent, not-for-profit think tank that presents concrete policy proposals based on a lucid analysis of the issues combined with a solid grasp of everyday life and the reality on the ground. We also cultivate socially engaged future leaders with a broad perspective and deep insight, both in Japan and overseas. We administer two global fellowship programs, one of which is the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund, or Sylff.

The Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund (Sylff) Program

The program was initiated in 1987 to support students pursuing graduate studies in the humanities and social sciences. To date, endowments of $1 million each have been presented to 69 universities and consortia in 44 countries, and about 13,000 students have received fellowships. Sylff is a collaborative initiative of The Nippon Foundation, the endowment donor; the Tokyo Foundation, the program administrator; and the Sylff institutions providing the fellowships.

We Want to Hear Your "Voice"

For news about the activities of Sylff fellows and program updates, as well as communication within the Sylff community, visit the Sylff website at www.sylff.org. We are always eager to receive YOUR contributions to the site. Please contact the Tokyo Foundation at leadership @tkfd.or.jp.

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Voices *from the* Sylff Community

PREFACE

This booklet presents some of the many "voices" in the extensive Sylff community, encompassing 69 universities in 44 countries around the world. Initiated in 1987, the Sylff program has nurtured some 13,000 socially engaged leaders over the past quarter century.

The articles contained herein were originally uploaded on the Sylff website over the past 10 months. Some are the results of the fellows' academic research and social action, including those conducted through such additional support programs as Sylff Research Abroad (SRA) and the Sylff Leadership Initiative (SLI) provided by the Tokyo Foundation, while others are journalistic reports, essays, or the abridged transcription of a lecture. You can see how diverse the community is in terms of nationality, language, ethnicity, religion, and political system!

However, members have one thing in common: They all strive to tackle the complex issues facing the world or their respective countries and communities, displaying high integrity and desire to contribute to the betterment of society. We are very proud of their lofty ideals and outstanding achievements and believe they are making a real difference for our future.

I know that these "voices" represent only a part of our community. I would like to hear many more voices and hope to facilitate communication and collaboration between organizations and individuals who share the same desires and commitments. As globalization sweeps the world, the problems faced in one part of world are often also those confronting many other areas. We believe that these increasingly complex issues can only be solved through initiatives that transcend national boundaries.

It is my sincere wish that each and every one of you will make a difference in your respective countries and beyond. Sylff is a unique community in which the ties formed therein can lead to significant and positive contributions to society. This is one of the main reasons that we at the Tokyo Foundation are engaged in administering this program, and we hope to continue working closely with you to bring about a better world for all.

Hideki Kato
President
The Tokyo Foundation

Voices from the

SYLFF COMMUNITY

October 2011

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September 20, 2011

Can Japan Make the Transition from Nuclear to Renewable Energy?

Lars Gaupset

On a recent visit to Japan to attend a conference in Hiroshima, I started to reflect on the tremendous changes in attitudes and energy policy that Japan has experienced in the months following the Fukushima accident, and I was impressed by the resilience of the Japanese people.

With two-thirds of all nuclear reactors being closed for routine maintenance and none reopening, Tokyo lost a fifth of its energy supply. In any other city, this would probably have led to blackouts and shortages of electricity.

Not in Japan. The government responded with an ambitious plan to save electricity and asked private companies to cut power consumption by 15%. Nearly all companies fulfilled the target, with many of them exceeding it by saving up to 20%.

Extraordinary measures were taken, such as raising office thermostats, switching off lights, cutting down on working hours, and shifting the workweek so that employees took weekdays off and worked on weekends—when electricity demand is generally lower. I spoke to a Taiwanese-American working for a Japanese company who told me that he was forced to take three extra days off during the summer.

The power-saving campaign was also evident when I visited the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in August. A young diplomat informed me that the air conditioning had been switched off in all the rooms except for the one we were using—on an exceptionally hot day in Tokyo! Many of the corridors were left dark. It seemed that bureaucrats and high public officials were also making a sacrifice for the country.

The elevators were switched off at subway stations, and the government ran

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Lars Gaupset Sylff fellow, 2011, University of Oslo. Holds a master of philosophy in peace and conflict studies from the University of Oslo and is currently working for the Development Fund, a Norwegian NGO focusing on supporting small-scale ecological agriculture. Headed a delegation of the Norwegian NGO, No to Nuclear Weapons, that attended the world conference against hydrogen and atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki from August 3 to 9, 2011.

advertisements encouraging people to spend energy wisely. This campaign created new business opportunities for companies producing long-lasting light bulbs. The 7-eleven chain of convenience stores invested 10 million yen in such energy-saving measures as installing 1,000 solar panels and 5,000 LED bulbs in shops and outlets in Tokyo.

The swift response of the Japanese government came as a result of a natural disaster—the earthquake and tsunami—and a man-made one: the accident at the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. It shows that with political will, resources can be mobilized during a crisis that would otherwise not be possible. However, even greater threats to humankind—global warming and climate change—have not been met with the same urgency. Why?

According to psychologists, people tend not to act on threats that seem distant and far off. Politicians tend to think only four years ahead to the next election and are unable to take tough measures to phase out fossil fuels and move toward a renewable and greener future. Only when there is a sense of crisis or emergency—the threat of war, for instance—are politicians willing to mobilize resources and take measures that were considered unthinkable or impossible just yesterday.

The nuclear disaster in Fukushima created a state of emergency in Japanese society and created an energy crisis. This mobilized the efforts of individuals, private companies, and the government to save energy for the good of the nation.

It also spurred Prime Minister Naoto Kan to state that Japan should make the transition from nuclear power to renewable energy, a remarkable statement when you consider that Japan is heavily dependent on nuclear energy. In Germany, Angela Merkel said that the government would phase out nuclear power altogether by 2020. Who would have thought this could happen before March 11, 2011?

Some say that closing down nuclear power plants would be a setback for reaching the goals to cut greenhouse gas emissions, as stated in the Kyoto Protocol. It is true that Germany and Japan for a temporary period would become more dependent on natural gas and petroleum to cover its energy needs. However, as the case of Japan has shown, there is an enormous potential to reduce energy consumption if the public and private sectors work together.

Both Japan and Germany are known for their advanced technology, innovation, and industrial capacity. A coordinated effort to cut energy consumption, combined with massive investments in renewable energy, such as solar, wind, and geothermal, would place Germany and Japan in the forefront of the development of clean energy for the world.

In fact, some would say that few other countries are more suited to make the transition to a renewable age than Japan and Germany. In this sense, a crisis can be turned into an opportunity that would benefit the private sector, the environment, and society as a whole, as energy is scarce and should be used wisely.

It is a win-win situation for everybody, and the best part is that it can be achieved without relying on the dangers of nuclear energy.

What lessons can a country like Norway draw from the experience of Japan? In contrast to Japan, Norway does not depend on nuclear power. The first—and probably the biggest—reason is the rich endowment of waterfalls, as 99% of the country's energy needs are covered by hydropower.

But it is also due to the successful mobilization of the environmental movement in the 1970s, when the government planned to build nuclear reactors. It was at that time that Norway discovered rich reserves of oil and gas in the North Sea. This has led to a prosperous economy and revenues that have been used to finance a generous welfare state.

Most of the oil revenue has been put in a fund to prepare for the financial burden of an aging population. The endowment of natural resources means that Norway has not had to worry about a shortage of energy. The consumption of electricity per capita is one of the highest in the world; a cold, northern climate cannot explain why the consumption of an average Norwegian is higher than our neighbors in Sweden with a similar climate.

Although foreigners are shocked by the cost of living in Norway, electricity prices are relatively cheap when you take into account the high wage levels in the country. The luxury of cheap and plentiful energy has led Norwegians to be careless about their consumption. People often do not switch off lights in rooms they exit from, and it is hard to find a single household in rural Norway without a light on the outside.

While the center-left government talks about saving electricity and developing renewable energy, there does not seem to be any sense of urgency to carry out measures that would bring down energy consumption in private households, industry, and office buildings.

A government-appointed commission on climate change presented its report with more than 15 concrete recommendations five years ago, but implementation has been painfully slow. Does Norway need a Fukushima to wake up and face the realities of a world with a scarcity of energy and a growing population? That would be a horrible thought. But Norway does need to look to Germany and Japan and not lean back on its oil and gas reserves.

In the next decades, oil reserves will shrink and be increasingly more expen-

sive to exploit. Prices will rise and businesses will start looking for other alternatives. If Norway does not jump on the train now and develop the technologies needed to shift to renewable energy sources, we might find ourselves being left behind.

August 29, 2011

Nuclear Environmental Justice in Arizona and Beyond

Linda Richards

Japan is still struggling to contain the radioactive contamination from the crippled Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant. Recently it was revealed that radiation-contaminated rice straw was used to feed beef cattle in Fukushima Prefecture. These beef cows were found to have been shipped to and sold in many parts of Japan. Japanese people are worried about the growing threat from contaminated food.

In the United States, meanwhile, Linda Richards, a Sylff fellow at Oregon State University, has been addressing the issue of nuclear environmental justice and experimenting with conflict resolution for over 25 years in a variety of forums—from the playground and the classroom to the streets—as a teacher, mediator, journalist, park patrol officer, and co-director of a small nonprofit.

She organized a workshop in Arizona in April to address environmental justice for the Diné—the Navajo in their own language—whose habitats have been contaminated by uranium mining for decades. This was the first of two rounds of workshops supported by the Tokyo Foundation's Sylff Leadership Initiative (SLI) project, for which she has partnered with another Sylff fellow, Shangrila Wynn of the University of Oregon. This article presents the highlights of the April workshop.

The workshop began with a documentary film, *The Return of Navajo Boy*, directed by Jeff Spitz, highlighting the problem of uranium contamination in the Navajo Nation. A panel discussion of Diné elders, Spitz, and other experts followed.

The film contains many painful scenes in documenting the life of Navajo elder Elsie Mae Cly Begay, from the early cancer death of her mother and two sons to the day her traditional Native American home, a Hogan, was torn down

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Linda Richards Sylff fellow, 2009, Oregon State University (SLI, 2011). Currently enrolled in the history of science PhD program at Oregon State University. Has taught nuclear environmental justice history; toured the Hanford Nuclear Reservation with the Oregon Department of Energy; collected oral histories of nuclear scientists; and attended the sixty-fifth commemoration of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki and met with the mayor of Hiroshima.

and removed as radioactive waste by government workers. The documentary film explains that more than a quarter of the supply of American uranium was mined from the Navajo Nation, where 20% of Native Americans live in one of the poorest communities in the country. The Navajos were once studied for their low incidence of cancer, but rates of cancer have risen to among the highest in the nation. The importance of the ecology to the subsistence of the Navajo intensifies the impact of the uranium mining pollution left behind by the nuclear industry that continues to contaminate the landscape today.

© Groundswell Education Films

The film also features Navajo elder Perry H. Charley of the Diné College Uranium Education Project and Environmental Institute and the National Academy of Science Committee, who has dedicated his life to uranium pollution remediation and prevention.

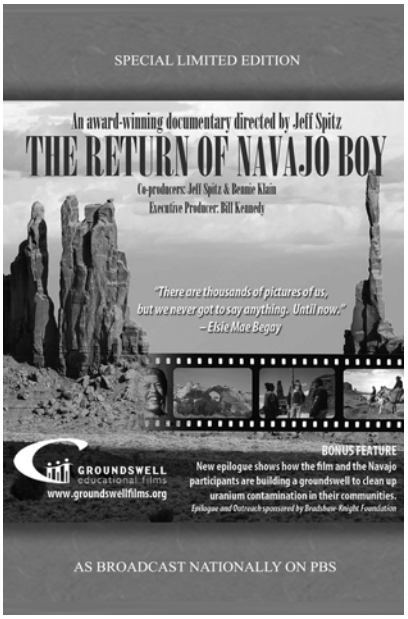
The workshop discussed environmental justice and shared the story of uranium contamination from the perspective of those most impacted by the pollution with more than a hundred environmental history academics, researchers, writers, lawyers, and students. The Diné elders shared their points of view on their generational struggle with uranium mining dangers, including the preventable deaths of hundreds of Navajo miners during the uranium mining boom of the 1950s and current contamination that remains from the mining.

Lori Goodman (founder of Diné Citizens Against Ruining our Environment) explained the history of the 20-year effort to create the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act (RECA) of 1990. Mr. Spitz shared a moving PowerPoint that explained how the film became a groundswell for action on the Navajo Nation and beyond, leading to congressional hearings and eventual cleanup of parts of the contamination. Despite Mr. Charley's compromised poor health, as he had just completed a round of chemotherapy for his radiation-exposure-induced illness, he was a dynamic speaker.

Mr. Charley spoke eloquently of the history of the uranium mining on the Navajo Nation and the resulting deaths of uranium miners and resulting environmental problems. As the child of a uranium miner who died from exposure to unventilated and unsafe uranium mines, Charley dedicated his life to addressing

and preventing further contamination. He brought with him a Geiger counter and a small thread-spool-sized piece of uranium rock encased in double-sealed Ziploc plastic bags. He turned on the Geiger counter and rapid clicks indicating the radiation from the small bit of rock encased in two layers of plastic filled the room. Then he said, "Imagine living where this is thousands of times more prevalent, all around you, as in some areas of the Navajo Nation, for almost three generations."

Samantha Chisholm Hatfield (Siletz-Cherokee, Oregon State University) commented on the clash between traditional culture and Western values and economy. Elsie Mae Begay spoke in her traditional language, which was translated by Charley into English. She spoke of her pain at the contamination of her home, and her appreciation of people who support the Diné. She said that in her culture, the Earth itself is sacred, and contamination of the Earth is prohibited by customs. She said she wanted people to think of the future before taking any action that disturbs the balance and harmony of the Earth. This translates as "walking in beauty way."



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Facilitator Laurel MacDowell (University of Toronto) added the comparative experience of the uranium mines in Canada on indigenous land, and she facilitated the discussion after the film. Questions from the audience ranged from cultural inquiries into the worldviews and beliefs of the Diné to scientific questions about radiation contamination and how to help support contaminated communities. Water was a key element of the discussion, as water on the Navajo Nation is very scarce and valued by the Diné culture as sacred. However, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission last year overturned the sovereignty of the Navajo Nation's 2005 Diné Natural Resource Act that prohibits further uranium mining to grant four in-situ uranium mining licenses. In-situ mining is a process that contaminates large volumes of water to leach uranium from underground. The water for the in-situ mining will be taken from the aquifer used as drinking water for thousands of Navajo people.

The discussants shared that there is still no comprehensive health study of the contamination and no federal funds for the needed abandoned mine cleanup.

Mr. Charley shared his deep despair that the contaminated material is often being placed in unlined containment on the Navajo Nation, and is not being removed from the Navajo Nation as requested.

Informal surveys were distributed before the workshop began. The survey gauged the knowledge of the participants before and after the forum to provide qualitative and quantitative data for future projects and to measure the usefulness of the workshop for participants who stayed for the entire workshop. Thirty people completed the survey, which was a high number considering the workshop spanned two session times, and many people were unable to attend the entire workshop.

Eighteen of the surveys rated the workshop with the highest score of 5 on a scale of 1 to 5, "strongly agreeing" that the workshop film and discussion held great value and information, motivating them to take action. The remaining surveys "agreed" with a rating of 4. Also, 29 of the 30 of the surveys said the participants learned more about Navajo culture and the contamination, despite several audience members having lived on and near the Navajo Nation. Twenty-nine respondents said that they would attend the exact same presentation with the film and the elders again.

Comments on the surveys included "Thank you for bringing us this workshop" on four surveys, and some of the additional positive comments included "This was a fantastic, amazing, awesome workshop!" and "Compelling" and "Great session, Congratulations!" Other feedback we received from the surveys included offers of help for the future and the observation that the workshop could be improved by including a handout of ways that people can help. Orally, Perry Charley and Jeff Spitz directed individuals to the Navajo Boy website to find out additional ways they can continue to participate by learning more.

The panelist also suggested becoming familiar with the situation through new books, such as *Yellow Dirt* by Judy Pasternak and *The Navajo People and Uranium Mining* by Doug Brugge, et al. Other suggestions included contacting Senator John McCain to demand a comprehensive health study and President Barack Obama for funding for abandoned mine cleanup and contacting legislators about the needs of the Navajo Nation.

I was elated by the success of the workshop and the connections made between elders and academics. The workshop drew attention to the fact that the Diné are just one example of the many indigenous communities disproportionately exposed to pollution from resource extraction: 80% of the mining, production, testing, and storage of nuclear material occur on indigenous lands worldwide. However, a review of academic and popular literature on nuclear is-

Perry H. Charley's students at Dine College Dine Environmental Institute working on contamination issues on the Navajo Nation.

sues and the current nuclear power plant expansion reveal the discourse has not taken into account this disproportionate exposure, nor included the history of uranium mining as a part of the safety record of the nuclear industry.

Our workshop succeeded in bringing this situation to the attention of academics who research and teach environmental history.

August 19, 2011

Elections and Political Order: A Cross-National Analysis of Electoral Violence

Masaaki Higashijima and Shin Toyoda

More governments than ever are yielding to international pressure to hold democratic elections, but the results can be discouraging. By analyzing international data on voting and violence over a period of several decades, the authors have reached some startling conclusions about the efficacy of elections in developing and emerging nations.

Since the collapse of the Berlin Wall and the fall of the Eastern bloc, the international community has actively pushed for competitive elections in developing countries. This has led to the rapid proliferation of countries with "democratic systems" in the sense that the holders of public office are filled by means of regular public elections; indeed, by this definition, there are more democracies today than at any other time in history.

Underlying the push for elections were two optimistic beliefs: that they would reduce civil strife by providing a means for peaceful resolution of conflicts within a society, and that they would improve the quality of government by giving citizens the opportunity to replace unsatisfactory leaders. As elections have proliferated, however, these sanguine assumptions have being challenged by harsh reality.

Unintended Consequences

The spread of elections around the world has been accompanied two unintended

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Shin Toyoda Doctoral student, Graduate School of Political Science, Waseda University. Has conducted research under a fellowship from the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science.

consequences. First, elections have triggered violent clashes throughout the developing world. A case in point is Kenya, where the December 2007 presidential election was followed by ethnic violence between supporters of the incumbent and his challenger, resulting in 1,000–1,500 deaths. In Burundi, one of the world's most ethnically divided countries, a democratic presidential election was held for the first time in 1993, and it led to a bloody civil war that ultimately claimed at least 300,000 lives. In Asia as well, post-election violence has frequently disrupted the political order in India and Sri Lanka.

Another unanticipated development is the frequent failure of periodic elections to strengthen political accountability and replace bad leaders with better ones. In fact, there is even evidence that they have served to keep autocratic rulers in power.[1] This tendency has been conspicuous in Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus, and other former Soviet republics. In Asia, Malaysia and Singapore provide examples of countries in which elections, instead of acting as a sanctioning mechanism, have merely legitimized the existing power structure.

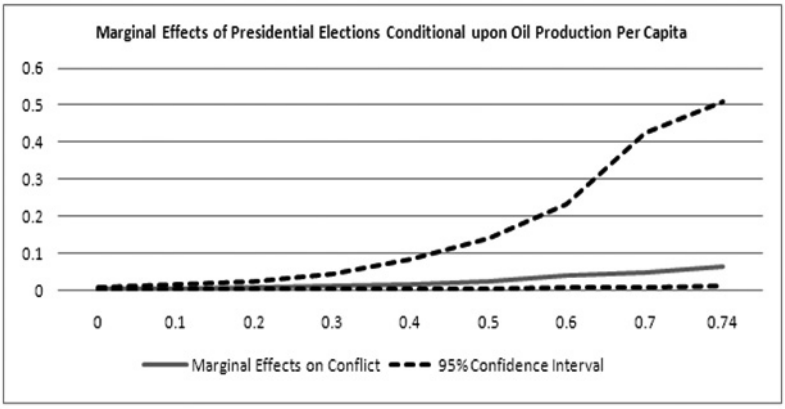
In many cases, then, the very elections that promised to resolve internal conflicts and promote periodic change at the top have had the paradoxical effect of precipitating violence or enabling a small oligarchy to remain in power almost indefinitely. In an attempt to explain this paradox, the authors newly constructed a monthly data set on elections and violent conflicts between 1960 and 2000 in approximately 150 countries around the world and have used that data to examine hypotheses derived from theoretical expectations.

Dangers of High-Stakes Elections

On the face of it, it might seem contradictory that elections can cause violent clashes on the one hand yet strengthen authoritarian regimes on the other. However, the authors theorized that these seemingly irreconcilable phenomena are two sides of the same coin, illustrating the difficulties facing developing countries that choose their political leaders through elections.

Competitive elections are held to determine who will make up a country's government. Those who control the government have the ability to influence the distribution of society's wealth in a variety of ways. Voters tend to cast their ballots for the candidates that will deliver them the greatest benefits. All of this is a matter of course. From here, however, it can be surmised that the more drasti-

[1] Gandhi, Jennifer and Adam Przeworski, "Authoritarian Institutions and the Survival of Autocrats," *Comparative Political Studies*, 40-11 (2007): 1279-1301.



cally an election affects the distribution of wealth in the society, the higher the stakes become, and the more likely it becomes that the election will trigger violence.

The reason is that the losers in a competitive election have only two choices: to accept the outcome and wait for the next election, or to try to overturn the results through violence. Naturally, the losers of an election are more likely to be motivated to overturn the results by violence if those results threaten their vital interests. We hypothesized that this was the mechanism underlying post-election violence.

Our analysis found statistical evidence supporting this hypothesis.[2] The two keys factors were (1) the type of election (presidential versus parliamentary/legislative) and (2) the degree of dependence on petroleum resources. Presidential elections, which directly elect a single person to fill the top executive office in the country, have higher stakes than elections for national assemblies and would thus be more likely to precipitate violence. In oil-producing countries, the oil revenues would further raise the stakes of such presidential elections, since the oil industry is generally state-run (owing to the need for massive investment in fixed assets) and its profits are thus a national resource. Our empirical analysis corroborated these predictions: The incidence of armed conflicts yielding 25 or more fatalities was 0.2 points higher within six months of a presidential election than at other times, a statistically significant increase. When presidential elections were held in oil-producing countries, the incidence rose from 1% to 7%.

This analysis provides a lucid explanation of the violence that occurred in

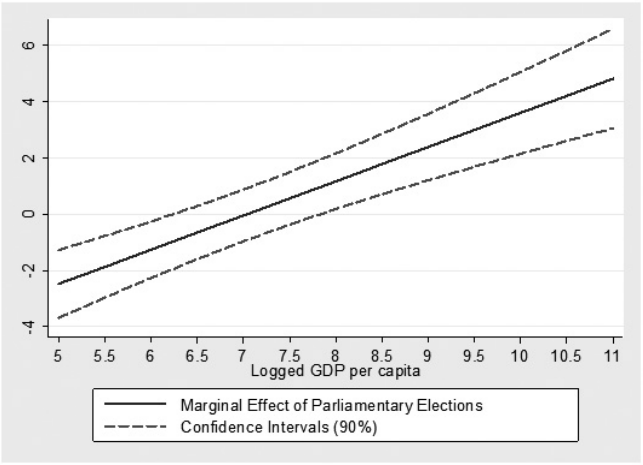
[2] Masaaki Higashijima and Shin Toyoda, "Electoral Violence in Democracies, 1960-2000," paper presented at the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, 2011.

Nigeria in April this year. Although elections for the national assembly were held without major incident, the presidential election a week later triggered violence on a large scale. A presidential election in a country like Nigeria, with its vast oil riches, is precisely the type of high-stakes scenario most likely to lead to a breakdown in political order.

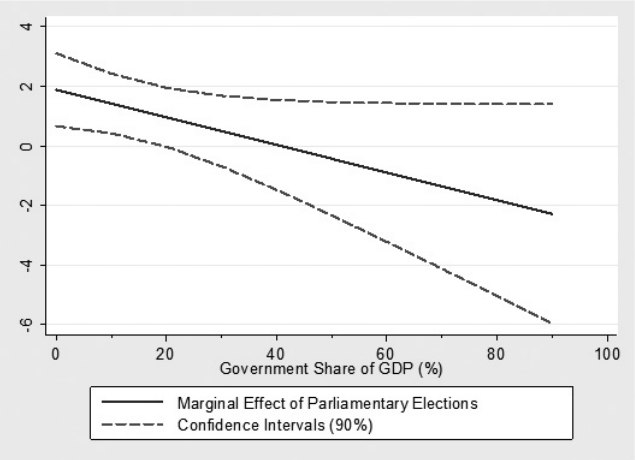
Stability at the Cost of Democracy

If post-election violence is most likely to occur in the wake of elections that can drastically affect the distribution of wealth, one might imagine the problem could be solved by limiting the competition in an election and protecting the losers' vital economic interests. In fact, this "solution" is the mechanism by which autocratic leaders are nurtured and sustained by elections. Recent research suggests that elections in countries with authoritarian regimes actually function to maintain a stable and effective distribution of economic benefits among the society's various interest groups and sectors (including the ordinary citizenry and the elite). By manipulating the electoral system and the rules governing voting, rulers attempt to maintain a stable distribution of wealth among various sectors of society. This helps maintain political stability, but it also keeps the same autocratic regime in power, election after election.

We analyzed the data to better understand this relationship between elections and autocratic regimes.[3] The key factors were (1) the relative value or impact of distribution and (2) the scale of government. With regard to (1), the government's distribution of wealth and resources can be expected to have a disproportionately large impact in countries with a low per-capita gross domestic product. For low-income households survival can depend on welfare benefits or jobs secured through the state. At the same time, in developing countries, where the



[3] Masaaki Higashijima and Shin Toyoda, "Elections and Political Order under Autocracy," paper presented at the Southern Political Science Association, New Orleans, 2011.



economy and the state tend to be closely intertwined, a high-level administrative or political position in government can provide a relatively easy path to economic prosperity. With regard to (2), in countries with large public sectors, autocratic rulers can distribute wealth more widely through patronage. Widespread distribution of wealth makes it difficult for opposition forces to gain traction against autocrats, and as a result, elections tend to become occasions to legitimize and reinforce the existing power structure.

Our empirical analysis supported these suppositions. The data indicates that in countries with a per-capita GDP of about $3,000 or less, elections either have no positive effect on the outbreak of domestic conflicts or even have the effect of stabilizing authoritarian regimes. In countries with a per-capita GDP in excess of about $3,000, by contrast, elections under authoritarian regimes tend to lose their regime-stabilizing effect. We also found that when government spending is in excess of 20% of GDP, there is no statistically significant correlation between elections and the outbreak of armed conflicts under autocratic regimes, but when the government is smaller, elections under autocratic regimes are more apt to threaten political order.

The results of our research suggest that developing countries must walk a fine line in order to achieve stable democratic government. If elections threaten vital interests, the losers may resort to violence to overturn the results. But when governments focus on ensuring the stable distribution of wealth, elections are apt to degenerate into a means of legitimizing and prolonging autocratic governments. In impoverished countries, it is no easy matter to avoid both of these traps.

Today, almost two decades after the end of the Cold War, we are coming to see that the road to democracy is more difficult than we supposed. Elections are a basic prerequisite for democracy, but they are not sufficient. To promote democracy throughout the world, the international community must do more than hold and monitor elections. It must also provide ongoing support to ensure that the losers are not dispossessed and that government power is subject to a well-established system of checks and balances.

August 16, 2011

Witnessing History in the Making

Ethar el-Katatney

It's strange to think I've witnessed history being made. History that my children and grandchildren will study in school.

This week, I saw the man who six months ago used to be the most powerful man in Egypt, and one of the most powerful men in the region, lying on a hospital bed in an iron cage in court. Humiliated in front of the entire world. An 84-year-old pharaoh who lifted his hand up and went "Yes sir, present," to the judge, like a schoolchild to his teacher.

Two days before that I was in Tahrir square, just before it was forcefully cleared out by the military. Where Egyptians from all walks of life had gathered to express their demands peacefully.

So many events and so many emotions. The past six months have passed like a whirlwind. Everyone keeps asking us where do we go from here. What it's like to be here. What things on the ground are like. What Egyptians are feeling.

It's easy to spout the clichés: "Well, a transition to a democratically elected government is hard"; "Our political sphere is growing and evolving and developing"; "The military is doing so and so and this is making people worry that such and such won't happen."

But the reality is, it's almost impossible to foresee what Egypt will look like a year from now. Even a month from now. A week, even. As we say in Arabic—*mesh 'arfreen rasna men reglena*—(literally, "We don't know our heads from our legs," equivalent to "We don't know which way is up and which is down").

Life goes on. Our malls are full, we're all watching our favorite Ramadan series, and Cairo traffic is just as bad.

Ethar el-Katatney Sylff fellow, 2009–10, American University in Cairo. Staff, writer, Egypt Today*; winner, Anna Lindh Mediterranean Journalist Award 2009; winner, Economics and Business Award, CNN MultiChoice African Journalist of the Year competition.*

But underneath all that is rippling change. The foundations are shifting, and the goal posts are moving around.

A couple of weeks ago, hundreds of thousands of *salafis*—Muslims who follow a strict interpretation of Islam—showed up in Tahrir square. We had heard nary a peep from them before. Everyone is seeking to capitalize on the revolution—from training companies advertising a "January 25 English diploma" to new multimillion funded television channels with names like 'Tahrir' and 'Jan 25.' I can't keep up with the number of political parties being founded that I keep being invited to. Everyone has become a political commentator. We have elections coming up.

The military is in control and some people are unhappy with their actions. Other people are unhappy with the people who are unhappy with the military. Others don't believe Mubarak should be tried. Fissures and fragmentations along religious and political and economic ideologies coupled with no unified vision can potentially tear the country apart.

It's like a giant that has been sleeping for years and years suddenly woke up. And no one yet knows if this giant is going to build or destroy everything around him. And not only that, the giant has woken up other giants sleeping in the surrounding countries. And they're all looking at him to see what they should do. Everyone wants a piece of Egypt. Egypt is the leader, or role model if you will, to the Arab world.

Egyptians are confused. Around 22% of them are illiterate, and 40% live under the poverty line, unused to thinking about anything except how to eke out their existence. They don't care about politics. They don't look towards the long term. All they see is chaos and uncertainty and that their lives are perhaps even worse than they were before the revolution.

The road is long and bumpy. And it's only going to get worse before—if—it gets better.

But it will get better. I know it will.

August 12, 2011

Japan Is as Strong as Ever

Muhammad Baharuddin Saenong Ilham

No single human being on Earth ever expects a disaster. Yet, great men are those who prepare for the worst and come out better after the inevitable strikes. And no people have a stronger passion for life and resilience than the Japanese.

* * * *

On March 11, I received a call from my wife that a tsunami had struck Japan. Working at a TV station in Jakarta, the capital of Indonesia, my wife got the information more quickly. On the way home from downtown, I noticed that every TV channel was broadcasting the situation, reminding me on the earthquake and tsunami in Aceh.

My wife and daughter (right) with her Japanese-Indonesian twin cousins during their visit to Jakarta.

On that day, I had already planned to get my visa to visit Japan. I was scheduled to visit the city of Nara to participate in the Building a Better Asia (BABA) retreat. Colleagues and relatives questioned my decision. "Do you really want to visit Japan?" They were worried about the aftermath, and more about the nuclear reactor accident.

The moment the tsunami hit, I remembered my friends in Japan, many of whom I met though Sylff and BABA. My wife and I also tried to find news about relatives who live and work in Tokyo, including those who had just paid us a visit several weeks before.

In the midst of uncertainty I reassured myself that the tsunami early warning

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system would give people time to evacuate. In addition, urban planning and management would, no doubt, give citizens an opportunity to flee from trouble.

Abandoning all hesitation and worry, I immediately applied for a visa at the Japanese Embassy. Japan and I are so close; it's the closest connection I have with any foreign country.

When a tsunami hit Aceh in 2004, Japanese aid was among the first to arrive. In an emergency situation, seconds can make the difference between life and death. Moved to help survivors, I decided to participate in post-tsunami reconstruction projects. One was channeling aid from a Japanese fishing community to restore people's livelihoods in coastal areas. Few years back, I had obtained a postgraduate degree in anthropology at the University of Indonesia with the help of the Sylff program.

There was no reason for me to shy away from the call to visit Japan.

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Compared to my days in Aceh, the region has become much more developed now. It has historically been an area of military conflict, from Dutch colonization and the spice trade to the natural resource conflicts of modern Indonesia.

The tsunami unexpectedly created an impetus for peace in Aceh. It destroyed the military installations of both the government army (TNI) and the Free Aceh Movement (GAM) separatist militia. Amid the destruction, both parties could see for the first time that there was no future for Aceh without peace. Conflict had to be settled to rebuild Aceh and make it better. On August 16, 2005, through the mediation of Martti Ahtisaari, the former president of Finland, the Indonesian government and GAM signed the Helsinki MOU ending the 29-year insurgency in this resource-rich province.

The smiling faces of Acehnese children welcome peace and post-tsunami reconstruction. ©Agus Sarwono

Peace made the reconstruction and rehabilitation process much faster. Amidst conflict, there was no certainty for anyone. Now, construction plans could be put into place, and people would know when their home would be finished. There was also much less danger in delivering aid—money, food, and building materials—to tsunami-affected areas, particularly remote ones.

Even then, reconstruction and rehabilitation was very difficult. Due to the legacy of conflict, it was not easy for the Aceh people to work together. Differences in political views between those who had supported and were against independence raised suspicions, resulting in a clumsy start for everybody. To make them work together, donors injected a large amount of money. The cash for work, ironically, acted to preserve cultural egoism and materialistic values. It further led to the demise of social capital of local communities. Had not the government, donors, community leaders, and social workers begun to realize what was happening, people would still be suffering from aid dependency. I strongly believe, though, such dependency would not happen in Japan.

I may not have the opportunity to directly assist the rehabilitation and rebuilding of Miyagi and surrounding areas today. But after visiting Japan, I can confirm what many have already said about how big this country is and how strong the people are in the face of disaster.

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What makes Japan unique is its ability to rise from calamity. Only hours after the earthquake and tsunami, people started looking for survivors, cleaning and repairing their houses and neighborhoods. They sang "Ue o muite arukō" (Let's walk with our faces turned up), known as the "Sukiyaki" song in the English-speaking world, to lift their spirits and seek a better future.

The capacity to work together for reconstruction will be crucial for survivors to remain strong. Without it, people will come to rely on external support. Indeed, the reconstruction effort has brought new hope, instead of long mourning.

Me on the right and the smiling students during my visit to Osaka.

Damage and gloom have been limited to areas affected by the tsunami. However, the information received by people outside Japan has given the impression that the situation is much worse. It's not as bad and dangerous as many people may think.

Away from the tsunami-affected areas, Japan is still as strong as ever. Big cities remain crowded, yet neat and clean. The countryside is as green and fresh as ever. People still

lead their daily lives very normally, full of self-discipline. Each community and group celebrates its cultural heritage proudly, yet respectfully. Even amid the ruins of the tsunami areas, buildings are still sturdy and neat.

Japan is alive and near. So there is no reason for anyone to cancel a visit to Japan. Let us help by flooding the country with visits to cities and cultural centers throughout the country. Let us support them by spreading joy and hope!

June 8, 2011

On Groundedness, Preparedness, and Transitions

Sherilyn Tan Siy

Japan resident and writer on ecological lifestyles reflects on the implications of the March 11 earthquake and tsunami and offers food for thought on how, as Sylff fellows, the disaster should be interpreted.

I have three reflections about the March 11 calamity that hit the Tohoku region. The first is that earthquakes and tsunamis are disasters like no other.

How does one describe the unnerving sensation of an earthquake? My husband was with the Navy, and he would be out in the open sea for weeks at a time. At some point, he says, it becomes possible to get used to the incessant rocking of the ship. This motion can increase due to stormy weather, of course, but you can always look forward to the steadiness of walking on land once you disembark.

This reminded me of going on an amusement park ride—a Ferris wheel, perhaps, or a roller coaster. The fun lasts for a few minutes, after which I could always look forward to steadying myself back on solid ground. This comparison may not be appropriate, but it did get me thinking of the many ways in which we anchor the activities of our lives on the immovable nature of land. It makes perfect sense that dry land in Latin is called terra firma.

Imagine, then, the psychological impact of solid ground trembling and quivering beneath our feet and sending our belongings flying. Imagine when our homes, our secure refuge, threaten to collapse. In another article, I reflected on how the earthquake "literally shook the foundation of our lives." An earthquake is a natural hazard like no other. We do not know when it will strike, how long it will last, whether the rocking will be from side to side or up and down, how strong it will be, or how many aftershocks there will be.

As if earthquakes were not terrifying enough by themselves, they trigger tsunamis that can wipe out everything in their path and alter the landscape. Stripping us of our possessions and decimating everything we've known, tsunamis

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expose our human frailty. When we see photos of people in the afflicted areas scouring the rubble, we grieve for their loss and realize with sadness how small we are in the face of the great forces of nature.

My second reflection is that our best defenses for earthquakes and tsunamis are preparation and prevention.

Immediately after 3/11, my husband (Charles E. McJilton, executive director of Second Harvest Japan, a "food bank" that collects food that would otherwise go to waste and distributes them to people in need) drove up to Sendai. He was so surprised to see that practically all the buildings were still standing. In the following weeks, as he drove to different areas in the Tohoku region to distribute food and supplies, the destruction he saw was largely from the tsunami and not the earthquake. This is truly a testament to the efforts of the Japanese people to construct earthquake-resistant buildings, particularly in the light of lessons learned from the Kobe quake.

But even more important than superior seismic engineering is the strict enforcement of building codes and general intolerance for corruption. People like Hidetsugu Aneha, the Tokyo architect who cut corners—and costs—by falsifying earthquake-resistance data, are roundly condemned for putting the public's safety at risk. Constructing earthquake-proof buildings is something that cannot be compromised, because an earthquake will eventually expose shoddy structures, such as was the case in earthquakes in Haiti, L'Aquila, Italy, and Sichuan, China. I shudder to think how my own country, the Philippines, would fare in the event of a big earthquake, given the widespread corruption and bribery in the construction industry.

Japan's coastline is dotted with tsunami warning signs, seawalls, and well-marked escape routes. The country has invested in a sophisticated monitoring and early-warning system. We saw this system at work when mobile phones would beep and warnings would flash on TV a few seconds before the tremors were actually felt. People have made disaster preparedness a way of life, keeping bottles of fresh water and emergency rations on hand and knowing how to react and where to evacuate in case of a major disaster.

Despite this, the death toll from 3/11 has been tremendous. The loss of life and property needs to be put in perspective, though, given the sheer magnitude of the earthquake (the most powerful to ever hit Japan) and the strength of the ensuing tsunami. One can only imagine how much longer the list of casualties would have been had Japan not pushed for preparation and prevention.

My third reflection is that there is a renewed sense of purpose throughout the nation.

There is definitely something different in the air these days. Before the earthquake and tsunami, Japan seemed to be languishing—politically, economically, and socially—for decades, and getting out of this rut had appeared almost impossible. It took an earthquake and a tsunami of unimaginable scale to literally shake Japan out of its lassitude. Suddenly, everything came to a halt, and it was impossible to continue with business as usual, as trains came to a halt, rolling blackouts were implemented, and highways were closed to traffic. It was a time for critical decisions.

It is hard to describe how it felt to know that many of my foreign friends have decided to leave Japan. My husband and I discussed the situation. In the midst of all the fear and uncertainty, it was as if we were given new eyes—we saw so clearly what we love about Japan and its people. Through the lens of the tragedy, we saw so much beauty in the country's human and vulnerable side. Especially for my husband, who has lived here for over 20 years, it only served to strengthen his commitment to be of service to the country and the people.

It was not surprising to see a collective outpouring of similar sentiments, such as in "Embrace Transition," an online community on Facebook. Founder Jacinta Hin writes:

> Something fundamental has changed. I am not alone in this. All around me people tell me they feel different. Japan and its inhabitants have been swept into a state of transition. The pre-3/11 chapter is closed and we are moving into a new one where we have yet to arrive . . . By nature, transitions are chaotic, confusing, and challenging, as they throw us into the unknown and force us to make new choices. They tell us that old paradigms no longer work and that we must come up with new ones. They wake us up and summon us to look at ourselves with critical eyes, to explore who we are and how we want to live.

The widespread destruction has given Japan the chance not only to simply rebuild but to do things differently. Perhaps there will be a shift from high-risk nuclear energy to renewable sources of energy. Perhaps the urban-centered development will spread more to the neglected and elderly-populated countryside. With the revitalization of volunteerism among the youth of this country, perhaps their engagement and energy will fuel this transition. Whatever the changes ahead, these are definitely exciting times, and we are fortunate to be a part of it.

March 2, 2011

The Mechanism behind the Egyptian ICT Revolution and Its Connotations

Tatsuya Yamamoto

Hosni Mubarak, who had ruled Egypt for 30 years, was forced to step down in a surprising turn of events that no one could have foreseen. He succumbed to the antigovernment protests that suddenly erupted in response to calls via the Internet. Mubarak's resignation proved to the world that ordinary citizens have the power to overturn a governance structure that had been considered absolute.

The protagonists of the recent revolution were netizens, or citizens embodying the Internet. New information and communication technologies, such as mobile phones and the Internet, came into widespread use in Arab countries from around 2000. Today, particularly in urban areas, the medium of the Internet has become a natural part of everyday life for Egyptian youths, who comprise more than half of the nation's population. Thus emerged Arab netizens.

In the backdrop is the government's zealous policy of ICT development. Over the past 10-plus years, Arab countries have earnestly engaged in ICT development in the hopes of plucking the economic fruits of globalization. Egypt, in particular, which has prided itself as the center of the Arab world, has actively promoted ICT development with the aim of remaining in that position.

Be that as it may, these are countries that have maintained control over traditional media, such as television, radio, and newspapers. By no means have they been indifferent to the possibility that the new medium of the Internet may shake the foundations of the existing regime.

Arab countries have attempted to regulate the Internet by putting up a "net of control" over domestic Internet services. While Egypt did not build a system that enabled as strong a level of control as those of other countries in the region,

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it did set up a department within the secret police dedicated to monitoring the Internet and kept a close watch on trends in Internet use by citizens. It also maintained infrastructure of the sort by which it could easily implement strong controls or shut down Internet access altogether whenever the need arose.

In the early days of Internet use in Egypt, these controls appeared to be functioning effectively. It goes without saying that there was no end of citizens attempting to bypass governmental controls by various means. But the structure of the struggle taking place over the Internet between the government and citizens demonstrated a clear advantage on the part of the former.

The tide turned from around the time that social networking services, represented by Facebook, gained popularity on the Internet. Naturally, Arab netizens were quick to jump on the new services.

SNSs allow users to easily connect with "friends" and "friends of friends." They are characterized by interpersonal networks that grow in a self-propagating manner, although the connections are loose.

Among the Arab netizens, there emerged those who hit on the idea of using SNSs as tools for antiestablishment movements. By drawing on the network of innumerable individuals loosely linked in cyberspace, they reasoned, they may be able to convert that aggregate into antigovernment protests in the real world.

These ambitions became reality in Egypt in 2008, amid heightened popular discontent due to soaring food prices and other factors. Numerous youths responded to calls made through Facebook, and a major antigovernment protest came about. Despite the absence of a clear leader, people converged on the site of the protest as if everything had been previously arranged.

Crowds such as this are known as smart mobs. Smart mobs present a headache to rulers in that they are prone to lead to another phenomenon called emergence. Once an emergence occurs, "What had been locally restricted actions or events trigger a movement or formation of a new order on an unforeseen scale."

What we recently witnessed in Tunisia and Egypt were none other than the "power of the people" that resulted from smart mobs triggering the emergence phenomenon. Ironically, the ICT development efforts that were zealously promoted by these governments had prepared the ground, imperceptibly but steadily, for "people's revolutions" utilizing ICT.

Existing systems of government-initiated Internet control are unlikely to prove effective in thwarting moves of this kind. Blocking entire SNS sites is one of the few measures that could be taken. In fact, Syria, Tunisia, and the United Arab Emirates actually took steps to block Facebook for a time, but they later

withdrew the measures in the face of a public backlash. The upshots of all this were the political upheavals in Tunisia and Egypt.

Similar situations exist in other Arab countries as well. Today every country in the region has its share of Arab netizens, and the grounds have been laid both for the appearance of smart mobs and for their setting off an emergence.

Loose connections between individuals alone are not sufficient to bring about political change. But when these loose connections synchronize with the surging waves of popular discontent and tie in with strong passion or sympathy—as happened with the video of a Tunisian youth who burned himself to death—those waves have the potential to exceed the threshold and precipitate an emergence.

In that respect, the "ICT revolutions" of Tunisia and Egypt should be seen as being no more than a beginning. After all, both the structures that generate popular discontent and the mechanisms that triggered the revolutions remain intact without having reached a fundamental solution.

May 16, 2011

Sound, Science, New Technology, and Emerging Nations

Monte Cassim

The following is an abridged transcription of the Special Lecture delivered during the Sylff Administrators Meeting held in Beppu, Oita, in November 2010. The full proceedings of the meeting, which attracted approximately 100 Sylff administrators from 62 Sylff institutions in 40 countries, can be accessed from the Sylff.org website.

I am passionate about the Asia-Pacific era. When I first came to Japan 38 years ago, many Asian countries still had curfews at night, and there were many military dictatorships. But now, it's become the growth engine for the world economy.

I think science and technology can help the emerging nations of Asia and the rest of the world meet the challenges they face. These emerging nations confront

profound global issues that are quite different from those that Britain, for example, faced during the Industrial Revolution. In the past, you could just be concerned about your own country or your own locality, but you can't do that anymore. Whatever emerging nations do today is going to impact someone else, and whatever someone else does is going to impact them. So they have to partner with others. And in that sense, Sylff is a microcosm of the kind of communities we should create in the future.

The emerging nations hold the key to the future. They are consuming global resources at a voracious rate, and this is going to have a great impact on the Earth's environment. They are thus both the harbingers of opportunity and the source of threats that we have to deal with in the future.

One such threat is a global health and demographic crisis. The emerging na-

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tions are no longer saddled only with infectious diseases; they must now cope with more expensive, lifestyle-related diseases like diabetes, stroke, and heart attacks. As for the demographic crisis, countries like Japan complain that there are too many old people, while countries like Cambodia might say there are too many young people.

Global terror and armed conflict are, in many ways, the reverse of the global financial crisis. If sustainable livelihoods are not available, people are going to walk into the hands of someone who is less ethical about the way they do things.

The Asia-Pacific area is growing dynamically by conventional economic indicators, but it is also endangering the lives and futures of all of us. The first thing we should look at is our way of life. We are consuming in one year today what it took the Earth a million years to secure as fossil fuels.

There are new technologies that have brought our countries closer together. These are what I call mega-infrastructure systems: international ports and airports, computer and telecommunication systems, and logistical systems. They are giving us tremendous opportunities, but we need to be able to manage them against cyber terror attacks. We've got to manage them against pirates.

In the Asia-Pacific era, for the first time in human history the majority of the world's population will be shaping the world's order, unlike during Pax Britannica or Pax Americana, when a minority set the values that others either accepted or were forced to accept. This is not going to be easy, however, because 60 percent of the world's population is not likely to be homogeneous. So, the new order will have to accept diversity.

I am not an expert in social systems. I am a simple natural scientist. But I do think we have to deal with a very rapid transformation of everything around us. This means we need to make quick decisions, but our social systems aren't responding rapidly enough. So when we look at government structures and social systems, we need to take into account the rapid transformation in science and technology. If our social and political systems aren't dealing with it, I would urge, like Hegel, that that systems of rule be respected only as far as they continue to provide for human need.

We must be very careful not be exclusionary, however. The emergence of terrorist groups is largely the result of exclusion. How do we create inclusive societies, and I think the core lies in the way we as educators deal with our students. If we can make caring, sharing human beings come out of our education systems, then we should be able to solve this problem of exclusion. So, education I think is the key to making a caring, sharing community of people.

Now I am going into my comfort zone, which is science. I have always

wanted to see if we can't create an Asian community of scientists, and I am going to spend the rest of my life trying to do this. My definition of Asian science is that it must never be chauvinistic. Science must pursue the truth. For me, an Asian scientist is a person who was born and is working in Asia; a person who was born in Asia but is not working in Asia; or a person who was not born in Asia but is interested in working in Asia. This covers just about everyone.

The science in Asia, though, has some strengths and many weaknesses. There is a great deal of indigenous knowledge and wisdom, for example, but they are not necessarily at the forefront of our decision making. We lack rigor in our observation and analytical skills because a lot of modern science is reductionist, and by nature the people in this region are holistic in their values. It has nothing to do with them being bad scientists. They are always caught in this conflict between reductionism and holism.

Now, many of Asian science's outcomes today are what I call end-of-the-pipe technologies, which offer solutions to specific problems. Examples include wastewater treatment systems and air pollution systems. The other type is called "black swan" technologies, which are technologies that come out of the blue. I prefer to call them stuff-out-of-the-blue because it will give the term "SOB" a more favorable connotation.

Reductionism leads to many good devices, but we have to integrate them into systems, and Asian science is weak in this. We have a lot of knowledge floating around, but we need to link that with the wisdom in our communities. And to do that, we must strengthen Asia's science infrastructure. We don't have journals of the stature of *Nature* or *Science* in this region.

Now, Japan has a tremendous amount of technology. It has a very good program called Innovation 25, which by cabinet decree allocated money for breakthrough, futuristic technologies. Many developing countries can't afford to spend on technologies of tomorrow. They need practical solutions for today's problems. But if developing countries and developed countries can come together, very much like the way the Sylff community is built, then as you become a developed economy, you can put aside more for the next century.

Let me give you some concrete examples. Japan, as you know, is known as a country which has a long cultural history and tradition, and it has an ethos of discipline, hard work, and knowledge not for its own sake but for how it impacts on others. Traditional Japanese values have a lot to offer to the new world order. Japan has a lot of science, particularly applied science, and they can solve a lot of the world's problems.

Japan has also made a tremendous contribution to peace and prosperity with

its development assistance programs. So how do we use Japan's strength as a culturally profound nation, as a science and technology leader, and as a contributor to world peace and development? How to use Japan? Japan in a sense, I think, is the key to mobilizing a lot of what is good in Asia.

Japanese technology is largely end-of-the-pipe, but it can be inspiring. Dr. Masaru Kurihara's reverse osmotic filter can transform seawater into potable water with very little energy. The amount of water that is drinkable is 0.1 percent of the world's water resources. The moment you start using the 96 percent that is in the sea, we will change the water equation. So, Professor Kurihara's technology, although it started as a pollutant cleaning filter, can perhaps transform the way we look at water resources in the future. It's a breakthrough technology although it's end of the pipe.

Professor Hiroshi Shimizu and his colleagues have developed a motor for an electric car called Eliica. Now, I like fast cars and I have always shied away from hybrid vehicles. But, with the Eliica maybe even I will end up using an electric car. This car has been designed by Ferrari's chief designer and is faster than a Porsche. The important thing is that although it started as a technology to prevent emissions of carbon dioxide and nitrous oxides, it's become a breakthrough technology. The secret is that the motor is in the wheel.

When you have a motor in the wheel, all you need is a small control box, so this may radically change the shape of cars in the future. The first cars, if you recall, were quite similar to the horse and buggy, but they're not anymore. And a similar kind of transformation is going to happen in personal mobility and with smart-grid electrical systems powering these things; they might be like elevators going horizontally and vertically.

Professor Teruo Okano has developed a stuff out-of-the-blue technology called cell-sheet reengineering. He cultures single-layer cell sheets in a Petri dish. The reason he can do it and we couldn't in the past was that every time we tried to pull the cell off, you damaged it; and when you damage it, it loses its value. He placed heat-sensitive protein under the sheet so that when it is cooled, it becomes hydrophobic and lets the cell go; when it's at room temperature it is hydrophilic and sticks.

This cell sheet can be placed on a damaged cornea or a damaged heart. A patient who had been on a heart-lung machine for four years was able to get up and lead a normal life eight months after this treatment started. I don't know what the drug companies think about it because it is transforming the pharmaceutical industry. There'll be tremendous resistance to these things, but it will change things in the end.

Professor Okano conducted his trials in the EU and in Japan. The trials were successful, but the Japanese government refused to give him permission to start regular treatment. What happened in the meantime is that the French government built a hospital for him and by the end of the year he started regular treatment in France. I asked Professor Okano about this, and he said "For many years I thought Japanese science must be for Japan, but now I think Japanese science should be for humanity."

That is the key. Use Japanese science for humanity. Japanese science has been insular, but its physicists and its chemists have come out of the shell and have started winning Nobel Prizes.

Now, one of the things I do is regenerate biodiversity. Japan has a few thousand plant species. But there are hundreds and thousands times more in the rainforests, and we only know about 6 percent of the visible flora and fauna. This diversity represents our bio-factories. The Asian region has some of the most biodiverse environments, but it is also losing them at the fastest rate.

How can biodiversity be regenerated? I just use nature's strength. I look for what I call "keystone species." In the case of the rainforests it's the giant fig. You can create a food chain that will sustain the diversity of life in the rainforest. Once you get them in the right place, the diversity returns almost magically.

I wasn't sure whether I could replicate this elsewhere. In my calculation it takes 40 to 60 years before full biodiversity comes back. I'm 63 now, and I'm not going to be alive when this biodiversity comes back. So, I wanted to do it faster somewhere else and I went to the coral reefs, and I found that you could do it within four to six years. So, you see, the key is finding somewhere where you can see the results because then it inspires you to do more.

Finding the keystone species is a hunch. It's not normal science. It's just sensing the forest until you find the key. The task requires someone who can understand the forest holistically. This is why I am saying there is a very symbiotic relationship between holistic knowledge and reductionism. Often the understanding of things holistic comes from understanding our social and cultural systems, not just necessarily from looking through microscopes.

Lastly, I would like to go to my pet passion because that I think is going to be the area that you might find most interesting, as it brings the social sciences and the natural sciences together: How climate change affects the taste of wine.

In one of our first investigations, we found that the major wine-producing regions are between a 10 and 20 degrees Celsius band. With climate change, this band is going to move. We studied the location, the growing conditions, climate and environment and found that it is sensitive to these transformations of time.

What is the real scientific significance of climate change? Until the Industrial Revolution, the concentration of carbon dioxide was about 280 parts per million. This kept our biosphere in stable equilibrium. Shortly after World War II, after about 200 years of industrial activity, the figure rose to 320 ppm. Today, the concentration is between 380 and 390 ppm.

One of the biggest future generators of climate change is water vapor. As sea temperatures rise, water will evaporate, and this is going to accelerate global warming.

The point at which the glaciers and permafrost will melt is 450 ppm. The influx of cold water into the sea will change the deep oceanic currents, which are our climate-stabilizing conveyor belts in the seas. This concentration is going to be reached much sooner than we think. We are now increasing our greenhouse gas emissions at roughly 2 ppm per year. Even if the pace remains constant, we'll reach 450 ppm in only 35 years.

How can we prevent this? We'll have to apply mass mitigation technologies in the most polluting sectors like power, transport, and steel. A second approach is carbon capture and sequestration, an area in which Japan has good technologies.

Imagine the impact of climate change on our agricultural system, which employs a tremendous number of people around the world. There would be mass unemployment and chaos. This is the true significance of this research, since the grape is an extremely good biosensor. What you find using grapes and wine should be applicable to Sri Lankan tea or Oita rice. If we can get the methodology right and share it, it would be fantastic.

This research involves having very sensitive sensors embedded in the soil, trapped around the plant, and open to the skies; this information is gathered on a real-time basis, making agriculture a much more precise science than it was before. This precision, moreover, is affordable. This year we are looking at the growth of grapes; next year we'll look at winemaking, and the year after that we'll be looking into the food culture around wine.

So far, we've had many heartwarming encouragements. People have asked if they can use the technology for growing mangoes, rice, and tea. It's overwhelming when you have a big public response to a crazy idea, and that's what drives scientists.

Now, one good project has many, many derivatives. We've been able to predict how the soil and the bio-elements of the soil will respond. We've been able to observe microclimate trends quiet closely, and as a result we've been able to predict frost. Predicting frost is something that will be a great help to any farmer. A crop can be lost in early May if we let the frost come in.

I also found that in our monitored fields we were pruning too early. We were throwing away nutrients while they were still up in the branches. If you wait until it goes down into the roots, next year you'll have a healthier plant, and you'll need less fertilizer.

We also learned when to have water and when not to have water. How can we select new sites, and which varieties of grapes are appropriate for those sites? What is the optimum harvest date?

What I'm saying is that in addition to a long-term vision of adapting to climate change, research must also be useful to people in the short term. And when it is useful in the short term, a community will gather around it.

The prefectures of Oita and neighboring Kumamoto manufacture around 20 percent of Japan's high-end silicon chips. We've got a lot of silicon, but we have no Silicon Valley. Palo Alto is much smaller and less interesting than Beppu, so what makes Silicon Valley tick? It's the young people who come to Stanford, who then go out and set up businesses there. APU has the same kind of vibrancy, so I hoped to create a set of laboratories around us. For four years I went from committee meeting to committee meeting, but there was no investment decision by the time I left here on December 31, 2009. So I turned to private industry.

In February, I found someone who was interested because he wanted to make a research institute for his company. I urged him to make it an open innovation forum where you get lots of ideas and lots of outcomes. And he fell for it. He asked me to give him a proposal, and by April he decided he was going to do it. I think by January next year we can start building. It will probably take seven or eight months to finish it, so by the time our students come back after summer vacation, they will have a front-end digital technologies laboratory.

The laboratories will look at how digital technologies impact on culture and tourism. We're planning to digitally archive the cultural heritage of Kyushu and Okinawa. The scanners that we use won't just give us beautiful pictures but will also tell us what the paints are made of and what the substrate is made of. This is going to change the way museum people look at digital artifacts.

It would have been easy for me to lie down and give up when my trustees wouldn't give me the money. But where would that leave the young people? I want their bright eyes to become brighter because they are the future.

So, this is what drives me. As my colleague said, we get all our energy from the classroom, we must give something back and this is my small contribution to the university that gave me six of the most fantastic years of my working life.

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From Temporary Residents to Immigrants: Some Issues concerning Brazilians in Japan

Aurea Christine Tanaka

Early Years of Japanese Immigration to Brazil

The history of Japanese immigration to Brazil dates from 1908, when the first steamship arrived in Santos carrying the first immigrants to an unknown tropical land located on the other side of the globe. At that time, there was a shortage of labor in coffee plantations in Brazil, and Japan decided to establish an emigration policy to cope with an increasing population and lack of natural resources that could feed their citizens.

Also, the limitation imposed by an amendment to the immigration law in the United States caused the impossibility of Japanese people to immigrate to that country, inciting the search for other places in the world where Japanese could temporarily work and return with enough savings to secure a better life.

These factors contributed to the immigration flow to the American continent, specifically to countries such as Mexico, Peru, Bolivia, Paraguay, Argentina and Brazil. However, life outside Japan was extremely arduous, due to somewhat precarious work conditions in the beginning of the last century, foreign language, different food and habits, among others.

Even though Japanese people had emigrated temporarily, debts related to the long journey from Japan to South America, as well as living expenses, made it hard for them to save enough to return to their original country. Also, World War II and consequently Japan's defeat were critical factors that made them settle and change their status from temporary to permanent residents.

One hundred years later, in celebrating this occasion around the 1990s, the situation was reversed, and Japanese descendants from South America started

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taking the opposite route to work temporarily in Japan, one of the greatest economies in the world, at that time suffering a labor shortage and offering better conditions and salaries, and therefore, perspectives of life.

Japanese Descendants Return to Japan

In 1990 Japan enforced an amendment to the Immigration Control and Refugee Recognition Act to include a long-term resident visa for Japanese descendants who wished to come to Japan to visit relatives and spend time in their country of ethnic origin.

The long-term visa opened a possibility for Japanese descendants to engage in any type of activity, including nonskilled jobs, since there was no restriction in terms of what kind of activities they could pursue during their stay in Japan.

At that time, there was a shortage of labor force in some industrial sectors, and even though the preference for hiring people of the same ethnicity was never openly discussed in public, there was a trend to accept Japanese descendants who could adapt and interact more easily with Japanese colleagues.

Combining the need for labor in Japan and an economic crisis in Brazil and the possibility of long-term visas to stay in Japan, a large number of Japanese descendants decided to try their luck in the land of their ancestors. At the peak of this diaspora, in 2007, the Japanese Ministry of Justice registered 316,967 Brazilian residents (included in this figure are Japanese-Brazilians, non-descendant spouses, and children until the third and fourth generations).

With the recent economic crisis that affected many countries worldwide, causing huge cuts in expenditure and thus unemployment, and also the release of funds from the Japanese government to support the return of migrant workers who did not have the means to purchase a return air ticket, the number of Brazilians residing in the country dropped to 267,456, according to the latest available statistic from the Japanese Ministry of Justice (December 2009).

Being the third largest group of foreigners, most of them unable to speak the local language and having different habits and perspectives of life and culture, it was inevitable that problems would occur.

It is worth mentioning that the first two groups of foreigners living in Japan are of Chinese and Koreans, respectively, most of whom are already integrated in Japanese society, due to the easiness of learning and communicating in Japanese in the case of Chinese and to being born and raised in Japan in the case of many Koreans. Therefore, cultural shocks, language problems, and others are less visible with these groups.

In the beginning of this migration wave, like the Japanese who went to Brazil in the last century, Japanese-Brazilians planned to spend a couple of years in Japan, save enough money to go back and open small businesses, buy real estate, finance their children's or their own studies, and so on.

Both strategies and goals were quite immediate, and the plan was to return to Brazil as soon as possible. However, the lack of experience as business managers resulting in failed entrepreneurship attempts, or lack of knowledge as to where to invest and other unexpected factors forced many Japanese-Brazilians to extend their stay.

Settling Trends: From Temporary Residents to Immigrants

After some years, the pattern of men and women migrating by themselves, leaving their families behind, changed to include spouses and children. Soon later, issues regarding Brazilian children's education, bullying stories, adaptation problems, and others started to circulate, and even though these are far from being completely solved, certain stability has since been achieved.

Asked whether their stay was still temporary after long years in Japan, Brazilians categorically replied that they hoped to return to Brazil. However, as their children started attending Japanese schools, some going on to university, opened small businesses directed to the Brazilian community, to mention few developments, the will to return started fading, and the discourse changed to include plans to go back to Brazil after retirement.

Some signs of this trend to stay can be seen in the increase of permanent visa and naturalization requests, as well as long-term loans to buy real estate. Because of these developments, scholars and the media have been referring to this group of people not anymore as *dekasegi*, which originally alludes to people who leave their home temporarily to work somewhere else, but as immigrants.

This shift in the provisional status of temporary workers to immigrants needs to be accompanied by new analysis and possible change of policy towards this group of foreigners.

Long-term vision and strategies are necessary to address not just current but also future problems. In this sense, the signing of Japan's first bilateral agreement with an emerging country on social security issues demonstrates that there is a concern that involves problematic issues with future impact. Through this agreement, Brazilian and Japanese workers alike may contribute to the social security in the country in which they are currently residing and later count the years of contribution in order to obtain pension and other benefits.

On the other hand, the Japanese government has also been intensifying assistance to foreign workers through its Public Employment Security Offices and Hello Work agencies, by posting announcements for jobs, one of their primary roles, but also offering language courses and training program in an attempt to facilitate employment.

Despite the economic crisis, these measures that aim to absorb this workforce are extremely important, considering that Japan's population growth rate is already negative and it is predicted that it will be one of the countries that will face severe labor shortages in the near future.

Some Legal Problems and Possible Solutions

Although some issues are being taken care of, there are other matters that urgently need attention and that will most certainly have repercussions for the future. One of them is judicial cooperation between the two countries in civil and criminal matters, an issue that has been on the negotiation agenda for quite some time.

It is worth emphasizing that the two areas are equally important, because although criminal matters receive a lot of media attention, particularly in Japan, related issues in both areas affect real people, children, and families in Japan and in Brazil.

Over the past few years, victims' families of crimes committed by Brazilians have been exerting pressure on the Japanese government to negotiate an extradition agreement with Brazil. This is due to the elusion of criminal offenders to that country, where, like others including Japan, extradition of nationals is prohibited, unless special circumstances occur (in the case of Brazil, if the crime was committed before naturalization; and in the case of Japan, if there is an extradition agreement that establishes otherwise).

The only possibility thus left to take offenders to trial is making a formal request to the Brazilian government to prosecute them in Brazil by providing evidence and all other necessary materials.

Notwithstanding the inexistence of a specific criminal cooperation agreement, Brazilian authorities have been cooperating with Japanese authorities so far, but differences in both countries' legislations and penalties are causing some distress. For example, death caused by traffic accident in Japan is punished with prison sentences that may range from 7 to 20 years depending on aggravating circumstances, while in Brazil, if it is an involuntary homicide, the penalty can vary between 2 to 4 years, but if there is aggravating circumstances, it can be in-

creased up until 6 years, together with the suspension or prohibition of obtaining a driver's license. For Japanese people Brazilian law seems to be too lenient. However, unlike in Japan, where there are special facilities for those who commit this type of crime, in Brazil there is nothing similar.

The way in which a society defines and punishes crimes may differ considerably according to its own interpretation and perspectives of life, culture, and values that should be protected or discouraged. However, while criminal classifications and penalties might be different, countries should be able to find ways to cooperate with each other and pursue the task of punishing crimes.

A clear need of an agreement that addresses judicial cooperation is apparent, not only to speed up the process, in some cases delayed due to the lack of knowledge concerning the appropriate procedures, but most importantly to shape the cooperation according to specific requirements, in suitable and acceptable ways for both Brazil and Japan.

Regarding cooperation in civil matters, there is a simple agreement based on an exchange of notes in 1940. At that time, there were many Japanese residing in Brazil due to the immigration flow that started in 1908 and evidently, there was a need of a cooperation agreement that could assist Japanese authorities to reach their citizens in Brazil, mostly in case of inheritances.

More than half a century later, a large number of Brazilians are now residing in Japan and the same problem has surfaced. The bilateral agreement of 1940 does not address anymore all the issues concerning civil cooperation, although the current exchanges are being based on that document. Procedural and substantial differences in both countries' legislations cause some frictions that could be mitigated with a deep understanding of social, cultural, historical and institutional legacies.

This notwithstanding, negotiations have been ongoing for some years, and certainly there are many aspects that are yet to be distilled, but as mentioned, government officials must keep a clear focus and objective in their minds: legal issues have a major impact on people's lives and could change their children's futures.

Civil cooperation is needed to deal with spouses and children who live either in Japan or in Brazil and are in need of alimony for survival, and with former spouses trying to obtain a divorce in order to marry again, sometimes with a partner with whom they already live in a de facto family situation.

Therefore, a concrete effort toward overcoming differences and preconceived notions is needed to positively influence the settlement of these legal issues, a matter of concern for both governments, but of extreme importance for their citizens.

The author in front of the former Kobe Emigration Center, where Japanese who were about to emigrate to Brazil spent a couple of days before boarding in early 1900s.

It is a matter of creating priorities and making difficult choices as regards what rights to protect. If the fear is a transformation of legal consciousness and eventual social unrest, the solution is not to leave these matters unresolved but be proactive and anticipate the establishment of rules that will address the problems in a systematic and comprehensive way, nurturing legal stability that will only benefit all parties involved. In this sense, it is important to offer a clear sign that both governments are concerned and upholding their citizens' interests by taking the necessary measures to tackle problems that affect their lives.

If the temporary migrants of the past are becoming the immigrants of the future, it is also time to replace the short-term vision when thinking about immediate problems and searching for solutions, look into the future, and the challenging achievements that still need to be pursued.

The history of Japanese immigration to Brazil marked a centennial in 2008. During the celebrations, it was mentioned that the most important aspect of both countries' relations was the human ties that brought Japanese to Brazil and Brazilians to Japan. It is unrealistic and unlikely that these ties will break during the next 100 years and that shall give us all another reason to continue collaborating and joining efforts in accommodating both countries' specific features and interests when looking for solutions to common problem.

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Tradition in the Present: Amazonian Oral History at Schools

Pirjo K. Virtanen

Many Amazonian Indians dream about better possibilities for participating in school education. They want to fortify their own languages and traditions at school but also wish to learn new skills and knowledge, to which access is still limited to the dominant society.

This social action project had the aim to give new tools to a Brazilian Amazonian indigenous people, the Manchineri, for the creation of a publication for their schools in their own language and in Portuguese. Sylff Leadership Initiatives assisted in the accomplishment of this objective, as it offered the Manchineri community the possibility to organize a workshop in order to prepare this publication, provided the participants of the meeting with full boarding, transportation, technology to record and edit the mythic narrations, and also covered the publication costs of the edited material. The final publication was on the history and myths of the Manchineri people.

Participants in the workshop with the representative of the local Secretariat of Education and the Brazilian co-partner.

The Manchineri live in Brazilian Amazonia, in the state of Acre. From the end of the nineteenth century, the Manchineri were forced to work in the rubber industry. Today they live in the largest demarcated indigenous territory of the state, the Mamoadate reserve, and number some 900 people. The Manchineri's language belongs to the Arawakan linguistic family.

The representatives of the Manchineri's organization, Mapkaha, and Manchineri community members had expressed at various times that they would like

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to register their history as an educational material for their schools: Some elders remember well the mythic narratives and the ways the group lived in the past. Now years later, the recording of this legacy became possible by the Sylff Leadership Initiatives. The production of the educational material for Manchineri schools was a collaborative effort between the Manchineri, two Sylff fellows from the University of Helsinki (Pirjo K. Virtanen from Latin American studies and Tuija Veintie from the Education department), and the Pro-Indian Commission (CPI-Acre). CPI-Acre has been a pioneer in creating training courses for indigenous teachers and indigenous agro-forestry and health agents. In indigenous education it has 30 years' experience. CPI-Acre was represented by its coordinator, Malu Ochoa, and the organization's consultant, linguist Edineide Silva, who had previously worked with the Manchineri.

New Tools

Manchineri teachers from different Manchineri villages were invited to participate in the workshop in a municipality close to the reserve, Assis Brasil. They were provided with transportation and full boarding. Manchineris selected their participants for the workshop. The local Secretariat of Education offered a place for the event and some other materials. The workshop was carried out during one week in September 2009. Many other Manchineris were in Assis Brasil at this time of the summer period for their personal visits, such as making purchases, attending to health care needs, and other interests.

Teachers writing the texts.

During the workshop, the participants were introduced to previous material and old recordings that had been produced in past years through the training courses of CPI-Acre. All the participants then discussed the previous material, revised the Manchineri language, and transcribed the recordings. The participants also documented some new narratives by old people present in Assis Brasil through digital recordings that were also transcribed later. The narratives were about the origin of the world and other Manchineri myths. The participants also wrote about stories concerning the foundation of villages and their indigenous territory.

Teachers with more experience worked together with new teachers on revis-

ing the myths, adding some information they thought was missing, and correcting the written form. For each oral history the participants drew a picture. These artworks were used as illustrations for the educational material. The Manchineri contributors compared and discussed actively and enthusiastically the narratives and their oral traditions: what kind of versions they had heard and what was probably missing. They also agreed on the written form of the Manchineri language. This was done together with Brazilian linguist Edineide Silva, who also continued discussions about Manchineri grammar, which was an important contribution to the meeting. In previous courses for teachers the linguist had also designed exercises and reading comprehension assignments with the teachers, and these were included in the manuscript.

Editing the texts and preparing the illustrations.

As the aim of the project was to give new possibilities for the Manchineri to reflect on and document their own history, tradition, and myths, during the workshop the community was given one mini-laptop computer, two digital recorders, and two cameras. All Manchineri teachers and researchers were taught how to use the equipment, how to type, and they were very motivated in learning. The equipment will remain in Assis Brasil in the center of the Manchineri organization, as was decided by the Manchineri themselves. From there, all the Manchineris interested in doing more research or documenting can use them.

The workshop was finished with a closing ceremony organized by the local Secretariat of Education in the auditorium of the local university and attended by the members of the Manchineri community present in Assis Brasil and the town mayor. All the results of the workshop were presented at this ceremony.

Completed Edition of the Material

The name of the book is *Tsrunni Manxinerune hinkakle pirana* (Stories of Manchineri Elders). It is produced by CPI-Acre and the Manchineri's organization, Mapkaha, and published by Sylff of the Tokyo Foundation. The authors and preeditors of the texts are 15 Manchineri teachers and collaborators. They had discussions with 11 elders, in particular, who are the narrators of the publication.

The Manchineri elders, ancestors, and Mapkaha organization have all authorial rights, as decided by the Manchineri.

The completed book has 140 pages. The photographs, selected for the publication from different archives, and the Manchineri teachers' drawings form the illustrations of the book. The chapters are as follows: Presentation, Origin Myth, Traditional Ways of Life, History of the Mamoadate Reserve, Festivities, Myths Narrated by Manchineri Elders, Exercises, and Afterword. In each oral history, the authors wanted to mention the person from whom they had heard the story, as the stories vary from person to person. Moreover, it was acknowledged that the stories always differ in some ways when told orally.

Final editing of the text by the teachers.

In April 2010, the pre-edited work was taken to Manchineri representatives to receive their feedback for the compilation. The texts were once more revised by the Manchineri teachers, who were in a city for a federal training course. After their corrections, the manuscript with all illustrations was given to a professional graphic designer and then taken to a printing house in Brasilia. It took a long time to receive an ISBN number for the book, but the book was finally printed in October 2010. There are a thousand copies of the book, and it is available only for the Manchineri community and the promotion of indigenous education.

Overall Evaluation of the Project

The immediate result of the social action is the educational publication prepared for the nine indigenous schools in the Manchineri reserve. The publication strengthens the Manchineri language and contributes to the standardization of its written form. The material benefits Manchineris in the reserve and in cities.

The project has given a new forum for Manchineri teachers and researchers to discuss their history and traditions. And, there was no lack of Manchineri humor and laughter! The participants were very happy with the opportunity to work on their own traditions in the workshop. They claimed that this was important, because in previous courses or workshops that they attended with other

indigenous groups, they did not have the opportunity to concentrate on their own oral history so intensively.

The project has been important for the Manchineri community as it supports their self-esteem as indigenous people with living traditions. Participation in the workshop has also given the teachers new technological skills for reflecting on and documenting their oral history. The creation of this educational material has helped to valorize the knowledge of Manchineri elders and the oral history of the indigenous people, the first inhabitants of Amazonia.

Cover page of the book.

As Sylff fellows, this social action gave us an opportunity to contribute to society, and it offered us a way to respond to the needs of the indigenous people I had studied previously. Many people contributed to this project, but our warmest gratitude goes to the Sylff program of the Tokyo Foundation.

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