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东南亚与华侨华人研究系列之十六

东南亚与中国关系： 持续与变化

尼古拉斯·托马斯
聂德宁

主编



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Abstract

The international conference on *Economic and Political Development in Southeast Asia at the Beginning of the New Millennium* was held at the Southeast Asia Research Center, Xiamen University in September 2001. This meeting brought together over 70 humanities and social sciences researchers from China, East Asia and other countries. The different papers presented in the meeting discussed Southeast Asian economic and political issues, international relations and the role of overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. Reflecting the international spirit of the meeting papers were presented in both English and Chinese, allowing for a high quality exchange of different opinions between two groups of researchers whose discussions are rarely able to interact.

The papers in this volume are drawn from the English-language papers presented at the conference. Reflecting the different aspects of the programme, this volume first examines the historical issues of the overseas Chinese in Southeast Asia. In discussing the contemporary engagement between China and ASEAN there is often little appreciation as to the extent of time that the two have been co-existing and what the results of such interaction were. The first section of this volume seeks to fill that gap. With that basis the book then moves on to exploring different aspects of political and economic changes in individual Southeast Asian states before shifting focus to examine a number of cross-national issues—ethnic autonomy and corruption—that challenge a number of countries. The volume concludes with an analysis of regional concerns from both Southeast Asian and Chinese perspectives.

The Center for Southeast Asian Studies was originally established in the name of Research Institute of Nanyang, at Xiamen

University in 1956 by China's Central Committee of Overseas Chinese Affairs and Xiamen University, making it the PRC's earliest research institution devoted to Southeast Asian and Overseas Chinese studies. The Center devotes itself to the studies of politics, economy and history of Southeast Asian countries, and issues concerning overseas Chinese. There are 45 staff members, including 35 researchers, 3 translators and 2 administrative personnel. There are 6 professors and 12 associate professors on the academic staff. The Center is jointly sponsored by both Xiamen University and the office for Overseas Chinese affairs of State Council, PRC. Examined and ratified by the Ministry of Education, the Center is one of the one hundred national key institutes for humanities and social science.

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Chapter 1

Continuity and Change

Nicholas Thomas

Introduction

The set of chapters in this volume is an attempt to reflect the various economic and political developments that were taking place in Asia over the last century. The chapters were originally all English-language papers presented at the bilingual Economic and Political Development in Southeast Asia at the Beginning of the New Millennium conference hosted by the Center for Southeast Asia Studies (CSAS) at Xiamen University, China in September 2001. The CSAS is one of China's leading centres for research and teaching on Southeast Asia. This volume is organised into four sections, each of which aims to shed new light on both historical and contemporary events. These sections cover historical interactions between China and Southeast Asia, political and economic developments in individual countries, cross-national studies of ethnic movements and governance challenges as well as transnational issues of concern to all regional countries. In adopting this levels-of-analysis approach to understanding recent developments, it is intended that the complex interplay of socio-political and economic forces operating at the domestic and regional levels will be more readily understood.

Southeast Asia and China

Even though the main focus of the volume is on the contemporary period it is also necessary to have a longer understanding as to how individual countries and populations in Asia have interacted. What is often portrayed as new developments in

cross-national or regional relations often have antecedents going back centuries. Indeed, while a significant portion of contemporary literature considers the endeavours to build a regional community as a recent phenomenon, history reveals a long tradition of Southeast Asia being used as a crossroads for many different societies. In the pre-modern period, for instance, Northeast Asian governments had many well-established networks with their Southeast Asian counterparts well before European merchants and colonising governments “discovered” Asia. An example of this can be seen with the Ryukyu kingdom on Okinawa, which by the end of the 14th century had established complex trading relations with a number of Southeast Asian regimes. Both before and after this period, traders from South Asia had also established outposts throughout the region. As each group of merchants arrived they paved the way for more permanent immigrant groups, who brought new ideas, religions and cultures. Within Southeast Asia the lack of state borders also allowed for populations to move easily between areas of control, further enhancing the scope for interaction and understanding. Indeed, it has only been in the modern period that such movements have been subjected to more formalised (and thus limiting) controls.

The post-war development of East Asia saw several waves of modernity traveling around the region. The first wave was focused on Japan and was triggered by the United States’ need for a strong ally in Northeast Asia—both as a reflection of the broader regional exigencies of the Cold War as well as need to develop a major supply node for its ongoing operations during the Korean War. The second wave spread to Hong Kong, Singapore, South Korea and Taiwan—the so-called four mini-dragons—from the mid to late 1950s onwards.¹ Over next two decades, each of these territories underwent massive economic and socio-political change. In the mid 1980s, a third wave of modernisation began to arrive in Southeast Asia, involving (to varying degrees) Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines and Thailand. This wave was supported by new regional investment patterns, resulting from changes of the international financial environment. As Jones has noted, “Southeast Asia in

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particular became the major beneficiary of Northeast Asian foreign direct investment in the period after 1985", especially after the impact of the 1985 Plaza Agreement and 1987 Louvre Accord caused a rapid appreciation of the major Northeast Asian currencies against the US dollar.² Although this third wave was cut short by the 1997 crisis, common patterns of economic liberalisation and socio-political development that had been observed in the mini-dragons and Japan had already begun to appear.

In each of the second and third wave territories economic reform programmes similar to those first implemented by Japan were carried out. These programmes—which were undertaken in different ways by each of the territories—focused on developing economic capacity through a mix of domestic preferences and international targets. The modernising economies first enacted policies to develop their domestic self-sufficiency by supporting industries that could manufacture goods as preferred alternatives to imported products. This policy was known as Import Substitution Industrialisation (ISI). With domestic demand being better addressed by domestic sources, modernising economies sought access into other markets, principally the United States. This entailed a policy shift towards promoting Export-Oriented Industrialisation (EOI) strategies. EOI related policies were harder for many territories to enact as they generally required higher efficiencies along the supply chain to meet other market standards. As the rate of development stabilised, all territories moved towards supporting economic and industrial policies that incorporated a mix of both ISI and EOI approaches.

At the same time as different industrial policies were being enacted, changes to the structure of the domestic industries were also playing a significant role in the modernisation process. Each of first and second wave territories manufacturing sectors completed a transition from high labour, low cost production to low labour, high cost production.³ While some of the third wave countries had begun to develop high cost service sectors and more advanced manufacturing endeavours, this shift was truncated by the 1997 crisis and has only begun to recover post-2001.

However, as these transitions occurred the need for more highly paid and skilled professionals and a greater labour supply created the conditions for the formation of a middle class in each of these territories. In particular, the onset of modernity opened a space through which civil society could better articulate its demands. This space—supported by rising education standards and higher income levels—hosted a variety of groups seeking to achieve social or political reforms. Although the impact each civil society was able to have on its attendant state systems varied across the region, their underpinning social structures all deepened, with more formalised social organisations appearing from a wide set of interest groups.

The economic and social changes helped create the conditions for the development of pluralistic political systems in many of the territories that experienced modernisation. Although it should be noted that some—such as the Philippines and Thailand—already had participatory political systems, others such as Singapore managed to restrict the pressure for greater participation in the political process, nonetheless all of them had greater demands placed on the state structure by their citizens than had been the case in earlier times.

In the post-1997 crisis period new pressures have been placed on each of these territories. These pressures have come from domestic sources as well as other states and international organisations. Demands for greater transparency and accountability in the political and economic processes have been seen in all the crisis afflicted countries as different interest coalitions seek to address the systemic flaws that allowed the crisis to take hold and spread across the region. At the same time, calls for reform have come from ethnic or social groups that perceived themselves as being marginalised during the modernisation period. These tensions have led, in many territories, to a change of political leadership and new social and economic reforms being promulgated. Whether or not these reforms will lead to a new form of Asian governance is still being debated. In the post-1997 environment, states not only need to take into account their domestic constituencies but also increasingly need to consider how their actions are viewed at the regional level.

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Indeed, even as the countries of East Asia were modernising their domestic structures, they were also beginning to work more closely together in addressing issues of common, regional importance. This work began in 1967 when the Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN) was formed. Although ASEAN arose out of a need to act as a buffer against the spread of communism in Asia, its focus was more on common issues (such as economic development) rather than strategic concerns. Indeed, it was not until 1994 that a regional security body (the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF)) was created.⁴

Initially ASEAN comprised only six Southeast Asian states (Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore and Thailand.) In the late 1990s the organisation's membership expanded to include Vietnam, Laos, Myanmar and finally Cambodia. At the same time as ASEAN was realising its long-held goal of representing all ten Southeast Asian states it was also reaching out to develop deeper ties with the three main Northeast Asian states of China, Japan and South Korea. This was partly a natural evolution in the ties ASEAN had been developing since the early 1990s with all three countries.⁵

The 1997 crisis acted as a catalyst for these countries to develop far deeper and broader linkages than had previously been envisaged. The crisis showed that as much as regionalisation had positive connotations, the closer ties also carried risks. In this instance the risks far outweighed the capacity of individual states to address. While all the affected countries requested the assistance of international organisations such as the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), there was also a sentiment that the reforms called for by these two bodies did not appropriately reflect the needs of the different countries. As a result, a more "East Asian" approach would be necessary in the future if the regional countries were to again avoid such crises.

Reflecting this approach the states of Northeast and Southeast Asia began to work more closely together. In 1999 during an informal summit in Manila all 13 heads of government came together

for the first time to undertake a range of new collaborative programmes. Although these collaborative efforts were initially focused on economic and financial issues they have since broadened to encompass almost every policy area within a state's purview. In looking to the future, these expanded ties could be the precursor to an East Asian Community, one that would rival—if not exceed—the European Community in political, economic and strategic power.

Chapters

Contemporary literature often portrays these processes of regional and global interactions as relatively recent phenomena. As the next two chapters in this book show, this is an ahistorical view, one that ignores a rich body of material across East Asia and beyond. Chapter 2 explores the role of the Chinese immigrant society in the Spanish Philippines during the late 18th century. This was a complex period—one when issues of race were overlaid with questions of religious affiliation and national loyalties. In setting the scene, Sugaya shows how the Philippines was located at the centre of a booming international trade in goods and silver. Spanish traders shipped local and European goods from Mexican ports that were then traded for silver with Chinese merchants who had been drawn to the Philippines for trade and employment. As the exchange rate for silver differed markedly between Mexico and China, the Spanish merchants were encouraged to increase the volume of the goods traded. In turn this led to a permanent Chinese society taking root in and around Manila, whose numbers, at one point, exceeded those of the colonial Spanish population. Although events in both China and the Philippines independently conspired to reduce the resident Chinese population, their importance to regional and trans-Pacific trading arrangements meant that they filled an essential niche in the life of the colony, one that had to be retained for the economic viability of the colony as a regional trading hub.

Drawing on a number of case studies, Sugaya explores the attempts by successive governors to regulate the behaviour and

Chapter 1

numbers of the resident Chinese through both legal mechanisms and religious incorporation. In particular, the author focuses on the lasting impact of policies initiated under Governor José Bascoy Vargas on the Chinese society with special attention paid to the resulting rise of the Chinese mestizos social class. What emerges is a picture of a dynamic, commercially-driven immigrant society that was gradually able to use its commercial and social networks to transcend colonial restrictions and spread throughout the Philippines, with a lasting impact on the formation of Filipino society.

Chapter 3, by Li Minghuan, on the Tandjoeng archives reviews the behaviour and norms of another overseas Chinese community in this instance in 19th century Batavia. With a backdrop of the importance accorded by Chinese people to funeral traditions as well as their belief of regarding cemeteries as “forever homes”, Li explores the emergence and practices of a local Chinese elite—the Ba Guo Gong Tang (also referred to as the Kong Koan) through their control of the Tandjoeng cemetery. Li’s analysis shows how the Kong Koan’s control of the Tandjoeng cemetery—as the main Chinese “forever home” in Batavia—allowed them to establish a network of schools, temples and other institutions as well as support a range of cultural endeavours, which drew existing and new immigrants into a tight social network. Through an extensive review of the Tandjoeng cemetery archives, Li draws on a number of case studies that highlight the role of the Tandjoeng and other “forever homes” in local Chinese society. The chapter particularly shows the process by which a person would purchase a burial plot, the social hierarchies involved in the size of the plots and the creation of new Chinese cemeteries; and how these and other issues reflected internal immigrant issues as well as the relationship between the Chinese community and the Dutch colonial authorities. From this Li then discusses the role of the Kong Koan in both managing the cemeteries as well as in governing the local Chinese community. The effects of which still resonate through contemporary Jakartan society.

From the historical period the chapters then move into the

contemporary period, with the next three chapters all reviewing recent developments in separate Southeast Asian states. Chapter 4 analyses the decline of the Golkar Party in Indonesia after the fall of former President Suharto. The chapter begins with a political history of post-war Indonesia, paying particular attention to the rise of the one party state. The emergence of a plural political order and the attendant decline of Golkar as the dominant force in the lead up to the 1999 general election are reviewed next. These two sections create the framework for an analysis of the electoral results and their implications for Golkar. Here Suryadinata moves from systemic level analysis to exploring inter-party tensions within Golkar before and after the election. With the subsequent fall of President Habibie, Vice President Megawati Sukarnoputri assumed the office. This was the first time since the 1960s that Indonesia was ruled by a non-Golkar affiliated president. The impact of the Megawati presidency on Golkar forms an interesting postscript to this chapter, one that is essential for anyone wishing to understand current Indonesian politics.

The volume then moves from Indonesia to Thailand. In Chapter 5 Hewison seeks to understand the relationship between the World Bank and the Thai government, particularly with respect to the creation of social safety net programmes within Thailand in the post-1997 financial crisis period. The 1997 crisis affected the regional countries in different ways. In the case of Thailand the fallout from the crisis was exacerbated by the combined pressure from the World Bank and the IMF to undertake a programme of financial restructuring that paid little heed to social and communal impact. Indeed, as Hewison notes, while the World Bank did allocate up to \$ 293 million on social safety net programmes, it put forward \$ 2 billion on liberalisation and regulatory reforms. The main focus of the chapter is the impact of these programmes on wages and employment patterns. Hewison analyses how the crisis further increased overall wages inequality, with greater divisions developing along urban/rural and gender lines. While the reforms may have been needed the lack of attention to the creation or enhancement of social safety nets only made the situation worse for ordinary Thais,