

Building Up Trust in Peaceful and Democratic One Asia

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Abstract: Globalization cannot be stopped nor denied. Sometimes it may have not only a positive impact but also a negative one, as rivalry among nations may ensue. Economic and political rivalry leads to break up of the conducive environment of political security. Unresolved territorial claims and boundary disputes may become triggering factors. Superpowers' interference may had to the conflict. The purpose of this article is to explain the possibilities of building up trust in peaceful and democratic One Asia Community by systematically and effectively introducing educational programs to enhance awareness of cultural differences, teach conflict resolution techniques, and promote an ideal of ethical responsibility and unselfishness.

Keywords: Globalization, Democracy, Politics of Education, Trust

INTRODUCTION

A Peaceful One Asian Community may be defined as a condition in which people can enjoy a similar feeling of peace, mutual trust and cooperation no matter of ethnicity, culture, religion, geographic position, ideology, nationality and other primordial ties. Trust represents a fundamental value and should be a strong basis for political economic and cultural relations. As Asian nations grow, the economic revival of the People Republic of China (PRC), in particular, is perceived as worrying and provoking negative responses in various countries, for this economic revival is often accompanied by a revival in military power. One example is the imposition of Air Defence Identification Zone (ADIZ) and territorial claims of 9 dash line in the South China Sea, which is raising the concern of neighbouring countries like Vietnam, Japan and Indonesia. Manoeuvres such the sailing of *Liaoning* carrier through Miyako Strait, Southern Okinawa to Bashi, which separates

Taiwan and the Philippines, and eventually to the South China Sea last 14 Jan. 2017, raised alarms in Japan and Taiwan, who sent aircrafts to keep track of the route of the convoy. Also in January 2017, another Chinese submarine ended its trip in Kinabalu port. Other countries are worried about this for Chinese warships had never ventured as far as Malaysia before. Subsequently, Japan Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has started a series of trips to the Philippines, Australia, Indonesia and Vietnam to explore common responses. In turn, Indonesia's President Joko Widodo has visited Natuna island Air Base, the closest Indonesia air base to the China Sea, twice in less than six months. Diplomatically, this visit may represent a message that Indonesia is prepared for self-defence.

2017 is the 50 year anniversary of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations ASEAN, committed to pursue peaceful relations and strengthen collaboration. East Asian Countries (EAC), such as Korea and Japan, have successfully established strong peaceful ties with other partners such as Indonesia. All members are struggling to solve potential conflicts in the South China Sea. The One Asia Community is helping to promote cultural exchanges between Asia and the rest of the world in order to strengthen peaceful relations.

ASIA AND GLOBALIZATION

In recent decades, the issue of globalization generates great discussion in academic circles (Krasner, 2001: 2). The term refers to the transformation of phenomena, initially personal and local, into global. It can be described as a process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society that functions together (Modelski, 1972). This process is a combination of economic, technological, sociocultural, and political forces (Croucher, 2004). Jagdish Bhagwati (2004) explains that globalization is very often used to refer to global economy, that is, the integration of international economies into the through trade, foreign investment, capital flows, migration, and the spread of technology. However, its impact can be felt in all other areas. For instance, rapid transportation has enabled a greater number of migrations, resulting in reshaped lifestyles, the mixing of ethnic groups, religions, languages, and other cultural aspects.

People perceive of globalization in different ways. It may be perceived as internationalization and an opening to foreign investment. The

growing flow of trade and capital investment, together with foreign migrant forces has been accepted as a consequence of globalization. Government refusal against their presence is being questioned by public opinion, even if its presence may cause social and economic risk to host country. Globalization is also perceived as market liberalization as well as the removal of government-imposed restrictions on movement or migration in order to create “an open space,” or “borderless world economy” (Scholte, 2000: 16). Thirdly, globalization is also contemplated as cultural universalization, the process of spreading people’s objects and experiences worldwide. Fourthly, globalization may be seen as a form of Westernization, (especially in its “Americanized” form). In this sense, it is understood as a dynamic whereby the social structures of modernity (capitalism, rationalism, industrialism, bureaucratic, etc.) spread throughout the world destroying other pre-existent cultures. Fifthly, globalization is also interpreted as form of deterritorialization or as the spread of supra-territoriality by media technologies and transnational markets. Here, globalization entails a reconfiguration of social space, no longer wholly mapped in terms of territorial places, distances and borders. Anthony Giddens has thus defined globalization as “the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa.” (1990: 64)

Based upon various perception of globalization listed above, it is undeniable that in the last decades the Asia region has been exposed to these processes of acceleration of its economic, political and cultural areas. Until the 1960s, many if not most Asian countries were still in condition of under development, in the sense that there followed traditional ways of life, often still under colonial rule or just coming out of it, trapped in such kind of vicious circle of ethnic rivalries, shortages and poverty, including lack of food, bad sanitation and public health, spreading diseases, lack of education, horizontal conflicts upon resources, and so on.

Although a small number of rich people, high rank government officials, “land-lords” and entrepreneurs, who had been successful in building up political relations with the colonial rule, enjoyed higher levels of education and access to international travel and experience, until the second half of the 20th century the majority of Asian population had only been exposed to the Western world in its colonial format. Until then, the

precarious lives of the rest of the population created generalized fears, suspicion, as well as the lack of resources aforementioned.

After the 1960s, the growing number of Asians who returned from studying abroad or had some political experiences with the West became activists in liberation movements in their countries of origin. The indigenous paternalistic and autocratic regimes of the majority of Asia countries gradually embraced democratic forms of government after the ideals of “*liberte, egalite, fraternite*” transformed themselves into a political tool for independence against the authority of the colonial rule. The backlash is that these democratic values, which in themselves contained spirits of a challenge against domination by the acculturated few, became emotionally provoking for the rest of the population, still in absolute poverty conditions. Violence, instead of consensus, became the preferred alternative, and riots and bloody struggles for power took place throughout Asia. Car burning, torture, rape, massacre and other forms of violence broke out following demonstrations in the name of democracy. Hobbes’ statement in his famous *Leviathan* may be used to describe political life of Asian since early 20th century to 1960s, “Short, Nasty and Brutish.” In the meantime, globalization has made its way.

Indeed, up until now one can easily find evidence that democracy has failed to become solution for the existing socio-political problems as suspicion, dishonesty, selfishness and distrust become generalized in the world. Mobocracy, instead of democracy, might be the easiest way of obtaining power by individuals in society. The management of violence and terror has become the first and foremost socio-political concern across the world. As the world becomes naked in the transparency of media technology, individual lives are under surveillance in social media networks, and everyone, and not only violent groups, can be spied upon. Thus, the transparency brought by globalization allow knowledge about everything and everyone, promoting insecurity all over the world. Chinese military manoeuvres abovementioned, attracted the concern of Japan and other neighbouring countries early this year, and may be just an example. The launching of several middle rank missiles by North Korea as well as the US military-equipment deployed in South Korea may other.

Since globalization cannot be denied nor stopped, for the sake of a peaceful and democratic world, the question arises of how to eradicate its negative effects and build a culture of honesty and trust, which is the foremost purpose of the One Asia Community.

ASEAN: STRENGTHENING SECURITY AND PEACE

Security represents a basic need to human beings. For some time, political security has been understood in terms of military agreements and joint responsibility against external threat in a specific region, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization NATO. The idea of military pact may be covered in this concept, but it may not necessarily mean so. Thus, although, for example, a joint military exercise may be taken bilaterally or multilaterally between country members, essentially it is not identical with a military pact. Furthermore, the concept of political “security” in this context does not necessarily mean a large military force, including troops, aircrafts and warships, lethal weapons, ammunitions and the like. The point we are trying to make is that in spite of military actions and of bilateral relations, the feeling of insecurity and distrust may still remain. The relations between India and Pakistan, Israel and Syria, or North and South Korea may be just some examples.

The Association of Southeast Asian Nations ASEAN, established in 1967 in Bangkok, is based on the principles of amity, external non-intervention, peaceful conflict resolution, non-violence, effective cooperation among the member states. It is not based on military pacts. ASEAN is primarily concerned with principles of security and mutual trust. Initially the country members consisted of only 5 countries: Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia and the Philippines. Nowadays ASEAN member countries have doubled in number, including Laos, Vietnam, Myanmar, Cambodia, and Brunei Darusalam. The Bali Concord (24 Fe. 1976), ASEAN successfully resulted in Treaty of Amity and Cooperation in Southeast Asia (TAC)

Structurally, ASEAN has been constructed upon three main pillars, ASEAN Political–Security Community (APSC), ASEAN Economic Community, and ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community. No political conflict between members has occurred since its inception. Therefore, there exists optimism among members that the three pillars have a good prospect to remain successful in the next future. In the short run, ASEAN will be politically more cohesive, economically beneficial, culturally united and territorially integrated. Every country member has a strong commitment to hold and develop the principles set up with the establishment of ASEAN, and they are all strongly committed to realize perpetual peace.

While in the past years relationships among ASEAN country-members have been more peaceful and cooperative, it must be acknowledged that the potential disputes between them, particularly in relation to territorial claims and boundaries, remains. For example, there are territorial disputes between Indonesia and Malaysia, both in North Kalimantan and the Melaka Strait, disputes between Malaysia and the former kingdom of Sulu of the Philippines in Sabah, and the problem of territorial boundary between Thailand and Cambodia.

Moreover, the complicated potential disputes in South China Sea may break the conducive environment of political security in the region. Territorial and jurisdictional disputes continue to strain relations between China and other countries in Southeast Asia, risking military escalation. In recent years, satellite imagery has shown China's increased efforts to reclaim land in the area by physically increasing the size of islands or creating new islands by piling sand onto existing reefs in order to set up new ports, military installations, and airstrips, particularly in the Spratly Islands¹. On July 12, 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague issued its ruling on a claim brought against China by the Philippines, ruling in favor of the Philippines on almost every count. Having signed the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea, which established the tribunal, China has not accepted the court's authority.

In November 2013, China already announced that it was introducing air traffic restrictions in the East China Sea Air Defense Identification Zone ADIZ no matter the destination. Other countries like Vietnam, Brunei Darusalam or Malaysia saw as going beyond the territorially acceptable. Although the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague determined that China has no legal standing to set up this kind of ADIZ, China believes in its right to do so. President Xi Jing Ping stressed that "China cannot accept the decision of the Hague."²

Another example of the worrying situations taking place in Asia is the unresolved conflict between North Korea and South Korea, a situation that might become triggering factor to more complicated multilateral war in the region, dragging superpower clike China or the United States. Military maneuvers including the launch and testing of middle-rank missiles by North Korea in March 2017 indicate how dangerous the potential conflict could be.

ASEAN has been relatively successful in maintaining political security and peaceful solutions without being trapped in wars or military pacts.

Its goal and that of the One Asia Community is to extend these aims by means of educating in cultural differences, conflict resolution, respect and mutual trust.

CONCLUSIONS: EDUCATION AND POLITICAL POWER

Against the negative aspects of globalization, education can become power to overcome suspicion, and build up mutual trust and cooperation. Technically, education can be seen in different perspectives. It can be defined as the process of facilitating learning, or the acquisition of knowledge and skills, but also reinforcing habits, values and beliefs. Under the guidance of educators, it can take place in formal or informal settings and include methods such as directed research, discussion, lecturing and so on, all of which can be directed to the promotion of cooperative principles and peace values for social harmony.

Accordingly, in a similar spirit to ASEAN, the One Asia Community seeks to create means for transnational educational exchange between Asian nations as well as with the rest of the world for the sake of building up trust in a peaceful democratic world. Many scholarships in the form of mobility grants to institutions and individuals are offered in an attempt to build up trust in a peaceful and democratic One Asia.

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Notes

¹ www.cfr.org/global/global-conflict-tracker/p32137#!/conflict/territorial-disputes-in-the-south-china-sea

² www.telegraph.co.uk/news/2016/07/13/china-declares-right-to-set-up-air-defence-zone-in-south-china-s
<https://www.google.co.id/search?q=paracel+islands+map&espv>

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