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Cultural diversity and coexistence in Asia

Amara Pongsapich

Abstract

When the world was divided into capitalistic-democratic and socialist-communist regimes, most states in both camps as well as Third World countries adopted nationalism as a necessary ideology. National integration was perceived as not only necessary but possible only in a homogenous society. In many countries, cultural diversity existed but was not recognized in nation-building processes. After the fall of communist regimes at the turn of the decade, cultural pluralism became obvious in USSR and Eastern European countries. After 1989, in Eastern European countries where diversity was recognized, the concepts of civil society and good governance were promoted. Economic and social globalization make the process of nation building more complicated. National security can no longer be viewed as the most important goal in the nation building process. Because of the negative impacts of economic globalization, social globalization is a process introduced in the international arena as a counterbalance. But after the September 11 incident, fears over national security have returned.

Discourse on sovereignty, culture, tradition, ethnic relations, and national security

After the Second World War, the world was divided into capitalistic-democratic and socialist-communist regimes. Most states in both camps as well as Third World countries adopted nationalism as a necessary ideology. Furthermore, national integration was perceived as not only necessary but possible only in a homogenous society. In many countries ethnic diversity was not recognized; in others it was recognized but had to be managed. Policies adopted for ethnic relations stressed assimilation or integration. When assimilation or integration was not totally successful, conflict arose between majority and minority communities, sometimes leading to overt militant or separatist movements. After the

September 11 incident, the word terrorist is used to label movements that adopt violent means to solve conflict.

In Asia, national security was used to justify military rule in non-communist countries. Thai governments before the Second World War viewed the country as ethnically homogeneous, consisting only of Thai people. Those who were ethnically non-Thai were outside the Thai social structure. They lived as separate groups but intermixed with Thais, having free cultural and economic exchanges. Among lowland groups, cultural borrowing, adoption, and assimilation were accepted, or even welcomed. The question of ethnic differences became important only after the formation of the nation-state, and especially after the Second World War.

In the case of Malaysia and Singapore, the concept of integration was adopted when they established their nation-states in 1954. Both Malaysia and Singapore recognized the co-existence of the Chinese, the Malays, people of Indian origin, and expatriates. At the same time, national security was the main concern of the governments in terms of nation building. Adoption of integration as the ethnic relations policy implied that all ethnic groups were recognized as coexisting in the country. However, in practice, they were not treated equally. In Malaysia, *bumiputra* Malays were given privileges over other ethnic groups. In Singapore, the Singaporean Chinese appeared to have privileges in certain areas. At the same time, expatriates and foreign investors were provided with economic privileges for the purpose of promoting economic development.

After the Philippines were colonized by the Spanish and the Americans, and with the existence of multiple ethnic groups living in the many islands of the country, the ethnic relations policy adopted by the government has been somewhat ambiguous. Tagalog was declared the official national language. Ethnic groups speaking other languages were considered minority groups. Similarly, in Indonesia, after being colonized by the Portuguese and the Dutch, and with large number of ethnic groups living in more than 10,000 islands, the ethnic relations policy of the government was also ambiguous if not confusing. The policy of *panjasila* was adopted by Sukarno right after independence. At the same time, *bahasa Indonesia* was declared the official national language. Non-Muslims who did not speak *bahasa Indonesia* were considered minority groups. All of the countries mentioned above recognized cultural and ethnic differences but, because of the concern for
national security, attempted to build their nations using nationalism as a uniting ideology. However, in the case of East Timor, it is clear that the majority Indonesian Government was not successful in using nationalism as a tool for nation-building.

During the period after the Second World War when many countries were in the stage of state formation, most countries adopted state sovereignty for reasons of national security and as an organizing principles for nation building. The discourse on ethnic relations was built around a dichotomy between majority and minority groups. One culture or ethnic identity assumed dominance over others. A language of the majority group was selected as the official national language, one of the symbols of sovereignty.

As a result, ethnic unrest took place in most countries. One of the problems of adopting the majority/minority group dichotomy is the marginalization of minority groups, sometimes leading to ethnic conflicts which later developed into militant and separatist groups if the governments were unable to deal with the conflicts in a peaceful manner.

An analysis of modern states by Mills explains the ethnic unrest which takes place when the ethnicity of a majority group is used to attempt to create a homogenous national entity for the sake of national security. He states:

Camilleri and Falk point to three functions of the modern state. First is the "organization of space." The locus of community is territorial, which is theoretically permanent. Continuity is prized over transformation. Second, the state performs an economic function, supporting property and other rights, providing a medium of exchange, and creating the infrastructure necessary for economic development. Third, the state has had a cultural function, responding to the growth of nationalism by joining culture and politics, although this has not happened evenly. (Mills, 1998: 34).

Thus, it appears that during this period, most governments in Southeast Asia gave priority to the issue of control over territory and state formation, i.e., political functions. At the same time, most governments adopted nationalism as a tool to build a politically and culturally unitary nation.

However, the cultural functions performed by the concept of "nationalism" led to unequal treatment of marginalized groups and gave rise to cultural/ethnic conflicts, the most prevalent human rights issue which cannot be easily solved.
Globalization and the shift in development paradigm

There has been a shift of paradigm in the development literature. The development paradigm during the 1980s and 1990s evolved around the interaction of economic globalization and social globalization. The definition of globalization used in the UNDP Human Development Report (1999) is as follows:

Globalization, a dominant force in the 20th century's last decade, is shaping a new era of interaction among nations, economies and people. It is increasing the contacts between people across national boundaries—in economy, in technology, in culture and in governance. But it is also fragmenting production processes, labor markets, political entities and societies. So, while globalization has positive innovative, dynamic aspects—it also has negative, disruptive, marginalizing aspects. (UNDP, 1999: 25)

In other words, economic globalization is the expansion of capitalism globally, through the spread of multinational corporations and financial institutions, information technology, and consumerism. Social globalization, on the other hand, is about human development, people centered development, and related issues.

The need for a new development paradigm has been recognized for a few decades. The expansion of globalization and its negative impact resulted in a larger income gap between the rich and the poor within the same country as well as between rich countries and poor countries. Exploitation of natural resources is one of the most important dimensions of the negative impact of globalization.

Globalization from above and below

Globalization is not a simple but a very complex set of processes that operate at multiple levels—political, economic, and cultural. Aziz (1999) adopts Richard Falk's distinction between two kinds of globalization: globalization-from-above (GA) and globalization-from-below (GB). The dialectical relationship between GA and GB is demonstrated in the interaction between the different manifestations of globalization—political, economic, and cultural. Aziz states:

Although GA and GB are fundamentally opposed, at one level GA creates the space (and the issues) for GB; and ultimately, GB works against GA. For instance, political GA creates the space for political GB through allowing grassroots social movements some political space for operation as a result of "democratization." These movements whose
collective actions—the formation of transnational linkages and, especially, the articulation of alternative political visions—are essentially political GB, work against political GA and provide its antithesis. Further, I concur that GA is essentially homogenizing and hegemonic in its tendencies whereas GB is inherently pluralistic. (Aziz, 1999: 34)

In this paper, what is relevant is cultural globalization from below. What Aziz means here is "tenacious resistance against the onslaught of Western (imperial) culture." This may take several forms: struggles for cultural survival of indigenous peoples; critique and rejection of Western-based notions of modernity and secularism; and deconstruction of "given universals" that are a function of historical colonialism and imperialism.

Human security and human rights as a basis for coexistence

The concept of human security prioritizes human-centered development. It also suggests indicators which may be used to monitor achievement. The definition of human security presented in the UNDP Human Development Report 1994 states that human security is a people-centered concept which has universal concern whose components are interdependent and easier to ensure through early prevention than later intervention. Furthermore, threats to human security can be considered under seven main categories, i.e., economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political.

In other words, human rights are a component of human security and human development, which is a social globalization process separate from economic development. Therefore, both human security and national security are essential components of nation building.

Once the Helsinki Accords put human rights high on the political agenda, it would have been difficult for the West not to side with the forces of democracy and human rights. Aided by the new electronic media, the issue of human rights was globalized. Global political change put human rights much higher on the political agenda at the end of the twentieth century. Discussion on the concept of human rights cannot avoid the debate on two issues.

Universalism. Believers in universalism hold that human rights are basic rights, natural rights, and universal rights. They argue that we all have rights by virtue of our common humanity. Individuals have certain kinds of rights as members of particular communities, but human rights belong to all humanity and do not depend on the legal and moral
practices of different communities.

Communitarianism. Defenders of communitarianism hold that people have rights by virtue of their community and not based on the notion of common humanity. The central claim is that morality is culturally bound and values can only be grounded in tradition. Individuals do not possess inalienable rights but individuals are embedded in a complex network of communal duties and familial responsibilities.

Discourse on culture, civil society movements, and new social movements

In present day Asia, as in Europe in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, there is a crisis in social order and a breakdown of paradigms of social order. Global society needs a new paradigm to describe the social relationships between different organic groups united by ethical and moral bonds and working towards the same unified social order. The western concept of “civil society,” with its two major components of democracy and people’s participation, appears at the institutional level in the forms of Civic groups, organizations, and constitutions. As a phenomenon in the realm of values, beliefs, or symbolic action, it can be observed in the form of civic movements and advocacy activities towards certain ideas and goals (Seligman, 1993).

The concept of civil society recognizes the equality of different organic groups in society, with no discrimination based on gender, class, or ethnicity. While cultural pluralism is an aspect of civil society, it is only one form of ethnic relations. Other forms include acculturation, assimilation, and integration, all of which indicate compatible relationships between ethnic groups. Non-compatible relationship may be seen in civic movements such as militant and separatist movements. In these latter cases, ethnic conflicts may start between minority ethnic groups but develop to become conflict between one ethnic minority group and the state. The minority people may feel and in fact be marginalized.

A distinction should be made between “civil society organizations” and “civic movements.” “Civil society organizations” are organic groups or “civic groups” whose members are bonded together by social relationships working towards the same objectives of maintaining a unified social order. “Civic movements” are activities in pursuit of specific goals which are for the benefit of the “public” instead of
individual group interests. These organizations are separate from the state structure and hence termed non-government organizations. They are usually non profit-making informal groups working for the public interest. Sometimes the term "third sector" is used to encompass diverse forms of civil society organizations which are non-government and non-profit.

In a civil society with ethnic heterogeneity, ethnic organizations can function as non-government organizations to fulfil the needs of different ethnic groups when government fails to do so. In welfare state societies, the government is required to satisfy the need for public goods and social welfare services. In free market societies, demand for public goods is supplied by market systems but where these fail, government must step in to perform this role. However, in heterogeneous societies where demands are diverse, it may be difficult for either the market or the government to supply satisfactory public goods. If both market system and government system fail to provide public goods, civil society organizations then move in to perform this role.

The demand for non-profit production of quasi-public goods is differentiated because people's preferences for such goods are very varied, especially as a result of cultural differences. This diversity is geographically dispersed and most government cannot accommodate these demands. James showed clearly that the differentiated-demand model explains the development of private educational sectors in modern industrial societies. Ethnicity and religion are the two most visible factors differentiating civil society in both developed and developing countries (James, 1987). One could then expect the size of the civil society sector in a country to vary directly with the degree of religious and ethnic diversity in the population.

In summary, civil society organizations can perform political and cultural functions for marginalized ethnic groups in cases where these groups need support in terms of social services and political back-up. However, promotion of ethnic civic groups may lead to fragmentation of society instead of integration. Multiethnic civil society activities and issue-based movements are less detrimental to national security.

Social globalization is a social transformation towards the achievement of people-centered development. Development processes taking place in the Third World have led to wider income distribution gaps, greater social inequality, and social disintegration. The concept of human-centered development is offered as an alternative strategy to bring about more equity. Strategies must involve activities at the national,
multinational, and international levels.

Both in Europe and in Asia, the end of the Cold War and the destruction of the wall dividing the communist and capitalist countries brought about many sociopolitical changes. The most important political changes observed in every country are the change in the role of the state. Military or autocratic rule is no longer required for the survival of the state. Globalization also increased the exchange of all kinds of information. Multinational corporations became powerful and economic competition unavoidable. In addition to concerns over "national security," the governments of all nations have to pay attention to international trade security as well. Most governments find that internal control is as important as international negotiation. The shift from "governing" to "governance" is a realistic solution. Rigid government structures became obstacles to modern forms of management. There is a need to de-bureaucratize and de-regulate.

Civil society movements and new social movements

Civil society movements and new social movements are different. Habermas (1981) re-introduced and gave new emphasis to the concept of the New Social Movements and during the past two decades the concept has developed into concrete reality. Andre Gunder Frank and Marta Fuentes (1989) state that "New" Social Movements are actually "old" but have some new features. These new characteristics are visible in anti-globalization movements and activities. Two points of emphasis are made. First, in the New Social Movements paradigm, the definition of "politics" has moved beyond traditional limits encompassing the nation-state, government, political parties, etc. Second, the New Social Movements need to be viewed as "resistance movements" and "civil disobedience," not directed against any particular nation-state or government, but against transnational identity. Individual identities are maintained but only as part of the larger transnational movements. The demand is for more space for ordinary people, reduction of the gap between the government and the people, and more humane government.

There is a shift from representative democracy to dialogic democracy in the process of social movements. This allows for public discourse and negotiation. The New Social Movements work towards reinterpretation of democracy. In the liberal theory of democracy, the concepts of personal rights and social justice frequently come into conflict. Giddens (1994) introduced the radical democratic theory which is more dialogic and responsive to plural conditions. Based on the concept of civil
disobedience, the New Social Movements argue for the legitimacy of illegal political action.

New Social Movements differ from civil society movements of the past. Voluntary organizations, non-profit organizations, or even nongovernment organizations are community-based or civic groups which cooperate with government and are depoliticized. In contrast, the New Social Movements are a politicized civil society with concern over public issues and not merely the well-being of certain disadvantaged groups.

Therefore, New Social Movements are an alternative way to create political space to replace conventional representative democracy and traditional concepts of government. They do not merely replace "government" with "governance" but bring social justice to global society. The anti-globalization New Social Movements are supra-national entities with a high degree of changeability, adaptability, and flexibility. They provide political space for negotiation with other supra-national structure and at the same time allow for a certain degree of negotiation with the nation-state as well.

Different forms of civil society cultural movements and actions

Since individual organizations have lost power to advocate issues on their own, it is essential that network support be provided to empower individual organizations to perform within their own territory. Based on the concept of mobilization and the perception that greater cooperation could benefit all organizations in civil society, networking among organizations became very strong. One of the first networks created in Asia was the United Nations University Southeast Asian Perspectives Network. It was established in 1985 in West Java, Indonesia, at a workshop attended by members of various organizations engaged in development programs at the grassroots level, as well as some academicians. They emphasized grassroots development activities under local initiatives. They felt that there was too much concern with economic development. They established advocacy programs for natural resource management, human resources, community-based development, and institutional development. The People's Plan for the 21st Century Campaign (PP21) and People's Forum were two other networks established in the 1980s.

The responses of peasant groups in Southeast Asia took different forms. Civil society groups developed different coping strategies. In reaction to government's paradigm of development and natural resource
management, "Alternative Means" of development were proposed. Alternative agriculture, alternative energy, alternative medicine groups are recent civil society groups with networks across many countries in Southeast Asia. Recognizing cultural diversity allows actors to see things differently. In case of conflict over natural resource management, compromise solutions may be reached through negotiation. By allowing for diversity in perception and cognition, and recognizing the different levels of social order and competing moralities, it is possible to achieve linkage between different social systems and levels of social order despite structural discontinuities based upon differences of normative value (Lowe and Ward, 1997: 270).

Rural and agrarian movement of grassroots and community-based civil society organizations: conflict over development paradigms.

The idea of "moral economy" discussed by James C. Scott in 1986 is a modernist counter to Max Weber, rejecting the "protestant ethic" and "spirit of capitalism" which bring about modernization and industrialization. Farmers have traditionally seen themselves, and been seen by others, as guardians of the natural environment harnessing nature to meet society's needs for food, water, energy, and other necessities required for livelihood. Resistance to the "spirit of capitalism" takes many different forms which Scott (1988) calls "weapons of the weak." But farmers are confronted by regulatory officials armed with bureaucratic powers and with a new form of moral authority. Farmers and civil society groups who prefer participatory, human-centered development strategy come into conflict with regulators who adhere to rational bureaucratic development processes.

Philip Lowe and Neil Ward (1997) studied conflict over farm pollution in Britain. They maintained that the dichotomy between nature and society was a false dichotomy adopted by most modernists. The interlocking dichotomies and their morally prescribed boundaries between natural and unnatural, identity and social behavior, become fixed as a social structure. Farmers who see themselves as guardians of the environment identify themselves with natural morality, and perceive regulators as imposing a different human and societal morality. The task of the researchers is to identify where claims about morality are made and to ask how is the moral order constructed and how is this order then imposed upon others.

Financial and economic crises in Asia are overt manifestations of the negative impact of economic globalization and growth-centered
development, the paradigm adopted by most nations prior to the advocacy of human-centered development. Even developing countries which had achieved rapid growth were vulnerable to crisis. Existing international mechanisms have not been able to deal with these crises effectively. On the contrary, multilateral financial institutions such as the IMF made the situation worse. The growth-centered development paradigm is no longer appropriate, as is evident in the imbalances and asymmetries in the international economy. Gaps between developed and developing countries have been widening. Income levels of developing countries still lag behind those of developed countries. The growth-centered policy created competition among nations causing disadvantaged nations to lag even further behind on the development path. Within each country, globalization and growth-centered development have marginalized certain groups, specifically those in agriculture and manufacturing sectors which cannot compete in export markets. International trade lead to exclusion of certain groups and widening of the gap between rich and poor.

After the Second World War, most countries adopted strategies for increasing production, intensifying use of natural resources, and developing infrastructure to bring about economic growth. Globalization has been one outcome of these strategies. Other outcomes include unwise use of natural resources, poorer quality of life for certain groups of people, and social inequity. Rejection of globalization was seen in the form of communism and socialism.

Networks of consumers' associations, organizations working on sustainable development, and natural resource conservation groups have been established and maintained through regular exchanges of activities. Movements against dam construction are very strong. Local and foreign civil society groups link together to exchange information on specific dam construction projects. They pool financial and human resources to help organize demonstrations or mass rallies. For example, techniques used in the opposition to the Sardar Sarovar Dam on the Narmada River in India were transferred to Thailand to help the protest against the Pak Mun Dam. Along the same lines, civil society groups in Thailand have been able to stop or postpone construction of many of the dams planned by the authorities.

Prior to the World Bank and IMF meetings in Bangkok in 1992, a People's Forum was planned to protest and convey to participants the message that the international financial institutions should not support construction of infrastructure projects which have a negative impact on
environment. Participants were invited to visit the Pak Mun Dam, which was supported by a World Bank loan, in order to study its negative impact. As a result, the World Commission on Dams was established to review some of the projects supported by the Bank. The report came out after two years of intensive research in the field (World Commission on Dams, 2000).

Environmental groups are now fighting for natural resource conservation, arguing that some resources such as forest areas should remain undisturbed. During the 1980s, forestry projects and forestry masterplans were proposed in many countries in Asia. Civil society groups protested without much success. They claimed that such masterplans would face the same dilemma as Brazil’s Tropical Forest Action Plan, a scheme for tropical forests based on a model for evergreen forests in northern Europe. They stressed that biodiversity was much more essential for tropical forests and called for a ban on monocropping of trees. Civil society groups also believed that the promotion of tree plantations would result in the supply of softwoods to paper mills and hardwoods for furniture factories, both oriented toward world consumption, particularly in wealthy countries. The project would benefit rich countries while poor countries would sacrifice their natural resources.

Protests against monocropped tree plantation schemes or other forms of economic forestry have occurred in most developing countries. Civil society organizations encourage local communities to make their voices heard. Local leaders are identified and activities are organized to stop forest concessions. People’s movements now have sufficient power to exert some influence on the decision-making processes of some governments.

The revival of cultural identity, nationalism and anti-globalization movements

Prior to 11 September 2001, the loosening up of the national security syndrome led to the recognition of diversity, dynamism, and complexity of groups. Changing from “governing” to “governance” allowed governments to relax control and allow different groups to emerge. Civil society organizations were better able to respond to the needs of diverse groups than the government. With limited resources, most governments now realize the importance of civil society organizations. However, the incident of 11 September 2001 has revived fear of being attacked, and provided new justification for governments to
invest in arms and other military requirements for reasons of "national security."

Anti-globalization movements organized by transnational civil society groups

Since international institutions have not been successful in achieving social development goals, civil society groups have taken action into their hands. The critique of globalization has to be carried out globally. Civil society movements have thus been organized across continents.

Firstly, civil society groups criticized the role of international financial institutions and their impacts on human security. Rigid rules and regulations on loans and payments forced most countries to give priority to economic returns and neglect social development issues. Civil society organizations staged rallies at meetings of international financial institutions to express their concerns on the international financial institutions' lack of social concern.

Secondly, the support of international financial institutions for construction of large infrastructure projects has been criticized because of negative impacts on the environment. To fight dams and other infrastructure constructions, transnational civil society organizations have provided support to local organizations. Most governments view such support critically. Most governments fail to understand why international groups should have an interest in local issues. They complain about outside conspiracies and threats to national security. However, it appears that international financial institutions now realize the importance of environmental impact and are evaluating loan programs more carefully.

Thirdly, the role of trade organizations and their impacts on human security issues have also been viewed critically. Civil society organizations feel that trade negotiations between developed and developing countries emphasise economic gains and neglect the impact on the little people. Because of their political and economic superiority, developed countries have had advantage over developing countries in these negotiations, further widening economic disparities.

The above three issues overlap, especially when developed countries bring social development criteria into trade negotiations. The role of international financial institutions and trade-related organizations are interconnected both structurally and financially. Civil society groups therefore choose to bring issues into the open through rallies and protests in order to gain global attention.

Civil society organizations showed their strength outside the WTO
meeting rooms at Seattle in 1999 to indicate to the world that international organizations are being pressured to shift their politico-economic stand towards the new development paradigm outlined above. Realizing the need to pay attention to the human side of development, UNDP and UNCTAD launched a collaborative project on “Trade and Sustainable Human Development.” The objective was to promote development strategies which take into consideration social, human, and environment dimensions of trade. In order for sustainable, human, and social development to come about, national and international institutions must cooperate and agree on development paradigm for the next decade. The UNCTAD X meeting which took place in Bangkok in February 2000 provided some space for civil society groups and allowed them to express their concerns on trade and sustainable development. Some sign of collaborative efforts were made. But the civil society groups were not totally convinced.

Other anti-globalization activities took place at subsequent meetings of the World Economic Forum and WTO. The World Social Forum is a new network established to show the negative social impacts of trade regulations. The role of different international institutions in different spheres has been debated in many circles. The question of whether international institutions and developed countries should put conditions on developing countries in trade negotiations became one of the most important discussion points. International civil society groups have taken the side of developing countries and demanded that social development and environmental issues should be completely separated from any trade negotiations. They argue that the lack of social development and environmental concern are not the fault of developing countries. The developed and colonial countries benefited from the earlier stages of industrialization, and now unfairly wish to impose restrictions and conditions on developing countries, especially as conditions for trade negotiations in the WTO arena. Trade in agricultural products is closely linked to food security, social equity, human rights, and social development.

Anti-globalization and the Cambodian anti-Thai protest

The Anti-Thai outburst in Phnom Penh on 28 January 2003 shocked most Asian observers. Although many analysts agreed that the violence was sparked by the nationalistic electoral campaigns of both Hun Sen’s ruling party and the opposition, it is undeniable that the
causes were not purely political. The attack on the Thai embassy and the violence on the Phnom Penh streets against Thai citizens and their properties happened partly because of memories of past conflicts between the two countries. An article published in The Nation on 1 February 2003 states:

A report that Thai actress, Suvanan Kongying said that the Cambodians must surrender their much-revered Angkor Wat to Thailand prompted Khmer nationalists to defend their pride and identity since this historical site has long been Cambodia's cultural icon, which also asserts a sense of sovereignty and territorial belonging. ...Historically, the Hindu-Buddhist Angkor temple complex was the capital of a powerful Khmer empire covering Cambodia and much of Thailand, Laos and southern Vietnam. The empire, however, entered a period of stagnation and decline when a Siamese army first captured the capital in 1353. The area remained under Thai influence throughout the next five centuries.

Thus, deep in the Cambodian mind, there has been a suspicion over Thailand's expansionist policies. For the Cambodians, the Suvanan Kongying case is the latest in Thai efforts to claim cultural and territorial hegemony. (Laemthong Report, 2003)

The opposition condemned the Cambodian government for being incapable of protecting Cambodian national interests in the face of foreign influence. In 2002, there was a movement against construction of modern Thai-style housing in Phnom Penh to prevent Thai cultural hegemony over Cambodia. However, it is also known that Hun Sen has close connection with Thai capitalists. The expansion of Thai investment as part of capitalistic globalization has threatened the existence of traditional Cambodian culture. This is seen most strikingly in the domination of modern Thai culture in mass media. Throughout the past decade, western and modern Thai culture has penetrated Cambodian society through Thai soap opera, news broadcasts, and music videos. In this process, anti-globalization and the anti-Thai movement became one and the same. At the same time, it is undeniable that anti-Thai nationalism has been used by both the Hun Sen and opposition parties against each other. The sudden revival of Khmer nationalism was therefore a move to stop financial support of the Funcinpec Party by unnamed Thai businessman. At the same time, the movement was a tool to discredit Hun Sen for supporting Thai investors. Most of the looted premises owned by Thai investors were those connected with Hun Sen.
It is clear here that the Anti-Thai movement in Phnom Penh is a "cultural process in global systems." Friedman (2000: 25) states:

Cultural process in global systems cannot be understood without considering the phenomena of hegemony of countervailing identities, of dominant and subaltern discourses. Our starting point, in global terms, must be the center itself, since it is in the geographic expansion of the system that its cultural properties emerge. The cultural complex that appears most closely linked to the emergence of commercially based centers might be characterized in terms of modernity:

a) Modernity—modernism: individualism, developmentalism, society as a collection of atomic units, democracy, alienation, existential vacuum.

b) Integrative transformation of peripheries and identities of dependency.

c) Fluctuations of identity forms and social movements: (i) modernism (including class), traditionalism, postmodernism; (ii) ethnicity and nationalism.

Thus, a cultural social movement combined with nationalism can become a very powerful tool to convey messages of anti-globalization, anti-cultural hegemony, and demand for national sovereignty in the global process.

**Conclusion**

Traditional ethnicity is a kind of cultural identity based on descent. It has been an important issue debated in the discourse on national security, resulting in the sublimation of ethnic and cultural identity for the sake of national security. More recently, cultural and social movements are now seen in different forms, not necessarily closely linked with ethnicity. Class, gender, group, and geographical identity can all be criteria for formation of new social movements. The construction of cultural identity involves the local social context within the larger global system. In the present world, marked by the expansion of cultural imperialism in multicultural systems, resistance movements can take different forms.

As people in different regions practice their own culture, a growing civil society also means a growing pluralism. Local civil society organizations have to solve local problems as well as joining with transnational civil society groups in bringing about a more just and fair
society. Civil society organizations, decentralized governments, good governance, and sustainable development are development objectives desirable in most countries. At the same time, cultural and ethnic differences need to be recognized. There has to be a balance between national security and human security. Coexistence in the global process is a very complex situation with multidimensional issues.

Notes


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