

# Japan's Asian Policy and Thai-Japanese Relations

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## 1. Introduction

Thailand, one of the ASEAN Group situated in the middle of the Indochina Peninsular, plays a geopolitically important role. It has been on good terms with Japan since World War II and in the 1980s it attracted attention by its rapid economic and trade relations based on Japanese direct investment in particular. After studying the evolution of Japan's Asian policies, I would like to analyze the Thai-Japanese relationship, its development and possible impacts in the future, from the point of view of Japan's Asian policy. When he visited Manila, the Philippines, in August 1977, Fukuda Takeo, an ex-Prime Minister of Japan, initiated an Asian policy later called the Fukuda Doctrine. In his doctrine, he set a clear target of Japan acting in a strong political role on the international stage. It meant to establish coexistence with Vietnam and ASEAN after the Vietnam War and the reunion of South and North Vietnam. But Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia prevented it from coming true.<sup>1</sup> Fifteen years later, Kiichi Miyazawa put forward in Bangkok the principles of ASEAN-Japan Cooperation in his ASEAN visit in January, 1993. This Miyazawa Doctrine, as it was then called, placed its concentration on Japan's political role in Asia, reflecting Japan's blueprint of the pursuit of political power. To fulfill its goal of becoming a political power, it planned to extend its economic strength to Indochina and Burma, take the reins of East Asia and play an active part in the settlement of Asia-Pacific political and security problems by using Southeast Asia as an entry point and Thailand as an important intermediary. Japan has been adjusting its Asian policies for fifteen years following the changing situation in the Indochina area, and it developed closer ties with ASEAN, as well as with Thailand.

## 2. Japanese economic diplomacy with ASEAN and rapid development of Thai-Japanese cooperation

The Fukuda Doctrine in 1977 emphasized both ASEAN and Indochina. It spoke highly of ASEAN in its effort to gain independence and resiliency,<sup>2</sup> and confirmed its aid and cooperation. It also showed its enthusiasm for granting ¥16 billion and lending ¥20 billion to Vietnam. But, in the last half of the year 1978, the situation turned violent when Vietnam worsened Sino-Vietnam relations by deporting overseas Chinese, joined the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (CMEA), signed a friendly cooperation treaty with the Soviet Union and invaded Cambodia in December 1978, resulting in a 13-year-long internal war in Cambodia. Up to June 1980, when Vietnam harassed Thailand, ASEAN began to make up mind to deal with Vietnam

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together. Japan changed its policies as well. In his visit to China, Thailand, Burma, India and Pakistan in August, 1980, Mashayoshi Ito, a cabinet member of the Suzuki government turned the double-emphasis policy into one that was to strengthen and expand ASEAN-Japanese friendly cooperation as Japan's foreign policy cornerstone. Regarded as a real friend of Japan, Thailand would gain particular aid because it was directly influenced by the Cambodian War and had a great number of refugees. Later on, both Prime Minister Suzuki in January 1981 and Prime Minister Nakasone in his May 1983 visit to Southeast Asia accentuated amiable cooperation with ASEAN. In my opinion, the following four factors caused the change in Japanese Southeast Asia policies :

- 1) The Soviet Union's pushing its power south (the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Vietnam's invasion to Cambodia) threatened Japan's resources, energy bases, investment markets and marine transportation in Southeast Asia as well as in ASEAN and in the Middle and Far East.
- 2) The vacuum left by the Americans' withdrawal required Japan to help ASEAN fill it.
- 3) Strengthening cooperation with ASEAN seemed more beneficial and realistic because Vietnam's future was uncertain and the effects of Japanese economic aid to Vietnam were hard to judge.
- 4) Temporary sacrifice to Vietnam's economic interests was advantageous to improve Japan's image of an "economic animal" and to play a more influential role there in the future.<sup>3</sup>

After all, Japan has since the 1980s made closer ties with ASEAN and promoted economic and trade cooperation. Thailand, located on the front line of the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, was sure to attract Japanese aid and investment.

First of all, Thailand is a main object of Japan's Official Development Assistance (ODA) programme.

According to the Bank of Thailand, the capital of Thailand's first development plan (1961 to 1966) came from loans from the United States and the World Bank. From the second development plan on, Japanese loans replaced the those of the U.S. To the fifth development plan period (1982 to 1986), Yen loans reached \$1,492 million; making up 22.4 percent of Thailand's external loans. Among them non-payment aid including technical aid was \$417 million, 50.3 percent of the foreign non-payment loans. Thus, Japan became the biggest donor to Thailand.<sup>4</sup> Japanese Yen loans further increased during the period of the sixth development plan (1987 to 1991), accounting respectively for 72.8 percent in 1987, 63.2 percent in 1988 and 48 percent

in 1989 of mutual loans. The Yen loans from Thailand's second plan period to the fifteenth Yen loan of ¥81.2 billion, which Japan promised to lend in March 1990, totaled ¥755 billion, comprising 9 percent of the Yen loans. So Thailand became the fourth Yen loan recipient following Indonesia, China and the Philippines. The Yen loans went mainly to 139 infrastructure projects. They were distributed as follows: the transportation sector received 34.5 percent, the energy development sector shared 21.1 percent, communication facilities had 21 percent, irrigation got 7.3 percent, agriculture, aquatic products and reforestation 4.0 percent and education gained 0.8 percent.<sup>5</sup> Though Japanese ODA represents strong business-oriented interests, it has in fact supported Thai infrastructure construction which was needed in agricultural and industrial development and played a positive role in Thailand's economy.

Next, Japanese direct investments have been on a steady rise. Beginning in 1959, Japanese direct investments reached 11.9 percent of Thailand's general assets in 1970s, which made Japan become the No. 1 foreign investor in Thailand. In the early 1970s, Thailand experienced the Anti-Japanese goods movement bringing about the withdrawal of some Japanese enterprises, but Japanese enterprises made a comeback from the beginning of 1980s and increased their investments on a large scale. After the decision that the exchange rate of Japanese Yen would be increased was made in the G-7 meeting in 1985, Japan directed its investment focus on ASEAN. Thailand became Japan's favourite due its stable political situation, steady growth of industrialization and relatively favourable investment environment.<sup>6</sup> In the 1980s Japanese direct investments turned its flow to the export-oriented projects instead of the previous import-substitution projects. It has been taking the lead in foreign direct investments as it enlarged as time went on. Statistics issued by the Bank of Thailand showed that Japanese direct investments to Thailand in 1980 amounted to 902 million Baht (1 dollar = 25-26 Baht), 23.2 percent of the foreign investments and an 72 percent increase over the year 1979. From 1981 to 1987, investment increased by one billion Baht every two years. It came to 3.2 billion Baht, 36 percent of the foreign investments in 1987. Then, the later three years, namely 1988, 1989 and 1990, saw investment jump to 14.6, 18.7, and 27.9 billion Baht in each year, covering respectively 52 percent, 37 percent and 35 percent of foreign investments. After 1991, investments fell a little since it had already gone around all the fields once and the bottle-neck problems marked by lack of infrastructure and technical workers came to stand in the way. So investment in 1991 was 15.6 billion Baht and in 1992 it was expected to be 8.57 billion Baht. From 1986 to 1991, the Board of Investment of Thailand has endorsed 984 Japanese investment projects in total, 423 of which have been put into operation with 124 operated in 1990 and 121 in 1991 with a factory beginning operation every three days.

To sum up, Japanese direct investments are a package of enterprise transfers featuring the combination of capital, technology, managing know-how and the export marketing of their products. It promoted Thailand's progress in export-oriented industrialization and spurred the Thai economic take-off and transition from an

agricultural country to an industrialized one.<sup>7</sup> On the other hand, just as the Thais said, "Whenever Thailand's economy does good, Japan's does better".<sup>8</sup>

Lastly, trade between Japan and Thailand improved.

According to statistics of June, 1992 issued by Thailand Development Research Institution,<sup>9</sup> Thai-Japan trade valued \$529 million in 1967 when the ASEAN was just established. It reached \$14.4 billion in 1990, 27 times more than in 1967, in which imports from Japan expanded by 64.8 times and exports to Japan increased just by 11.9 times. So Japan is Thailand's biggest trade partner. However, Thailand has a small part in Japan's trade activities. Thailand's import dependency on Japan has remained in the range of 31.4 percent and 37 percent, while its export dependency has tended to slow down, falling from 25.5 percent in the 1970s to 17.4 percent in the 1990s. Even more, as Japanese direct investment enlarged greatly, Japanese captive exports in Japanese-funded enterprises and its captive import of materials the Japanese-funded enterprises needed, such as machinery parts and raw materials, took a lion's share in Thailand-Japan trade.<sup>10</sup> For example, in 1990 consumer products imported from Japan accounted for 51 percent of the total consumer products imports, intermediates taking 56 percent and capital goods sharing 62 percent in their respective exports. In the meanwhile, products of the Japanese-invested enterprises were 40 percent of Thailand's industrial product exports.<sup>11</sup> The unbalanced trade structure within which Thailand exported agricultural products and other light industrial products, and imported capital goods and intermediates, resulted in Thailand's long-time trade deficit. As a supplier of capital goods and intermediates, Japan plays a positive part in promoting Thailand's industry and exports, but it does very little in importing Thai industrial products. Harada, an official in Adjustment Bureau of Japanese Economic Planning Department, admitted that, when comparing with the U.S. and European countries, Japan should make further efforts to contribute to developing countries' progress of industrialization by way of expanding imports.<sup>12</sup>

Over all, the ASEAN-Japan economic and trade relation is a cooperation integrating governmental developing aid, non-governmental investment and trade.<sup>13</sup> It has upgraded Japan's series economy that means to transfer the serialized manufacturing and selling system to ASEAN. It also pushed ASEAN's economic take-off in 1980s (Thailand began to realize its two-digit yearly increase from 1988 and it lasted for three consecutive years), and improved ASEAN's economic strength as well as extended and fortified the Japanese economic scope. Therefore, it made it possible for Japan to continue to play a guiding role in the ASEAN economy and to become the core of the Asian economy.<sup>14</sup>

### 3. Thailand's Important Role in ASEAN-Japan Cooperative Aid to Indochina

#### (1) The background of ASEAN-Japan cooperation in developing Indochina

In the 1990s, the peace progress in Cambodia improved with the end of the Cold War. In the 25<sup>th</sup> session of the ASEAN Foreign Ministers Conference in July, 1992, Vietnam and Laos signed the Southeast Asia Friendly Cooperation Treaty and were accepted as ASEAN observers. This announced the end of long-term confrontation and the beginning of cooperation between ASEAN and Indochina (mainly Vietnam). A background of the 1977 Fukuda Doctrine had helped prepare for cooperation between these two entities. In January 1993, Prime Minister Kiichi Miyazawa gave a political lecture titled New Epoch of ASEAN Cooperation, claiming it was time to strengthen Southeast Asian integration including each country and to develop the overall area. He also promised to aid Indochina with ASEAN and suggested the setting up of a forum for Indochina Development with the purpose of planning coordinated development strategies on the Indochinese Peninsular.

Indochina together with Burma is a broad market rich in resources with their territories of 143 square kilometers and population of 1,000 million. In terms of the Japanese economy this will almost be an uncultivated land. Furthermore, there was an underlying diplomatic strategic significance. One of Japanese aims in managing Asia is to expand Japanese economic domains on the basis of the present flying geese model and to establish a Southeast Asia economic circle under its leadership by means of promoting integrated development of ASEAN and Indochina. Eiichi Furukawa, an official in Japan's Foreign Ministry and a researcher in International Strategy Research Centre of Japan, wrote in a magazine called Economist in February 1993 that world order was being reshaped after the end of the Cold War. He said three different economic systems had already been separately formed in America, the Common Market and Japan. The European Common Market had twelve member states and world increase its number to twenty, and the U.S.A. was joined by thirty-five countries in North and South America. But Japan had no such relations. So he concluded that if Japan wanted to maintain its authoritative status in the triadic economic system, it must have certain areas that could be developed under its control. In this case, the establishment of the East Asia Economic Zone, he believed, would meet this goal. Hisahiko Okazaki, a former Japanese ambassador to Thailand viewed that Japan's future diplomatic stage would mainly be in Asia in order to further strengthen its power and upgrade Japanese living standards. He held that Japan should advance its cooperation with Asia by using its direct investments in order to fortify its economic domains and extend its power to the whole world.<sup>15</sup> Therefore, it is quite clear that the emphasis on Indochina-ASEAN cooperation is put forth with the consideration that Japan will turn Asia into its external basis for its ambition of becoming a political power.

Watanabe Toshio and other economists in Japan think that cooperative aid is a way to strengthen horizontal relations with countries in a "flying geese model". Advantages are below :

- 1) It can advance cooperation between ASEAN and Indochina, spread ASEAN economic vitality to Indochina and bring the integration of Southeast Asian development.
- 2) ASEAN can provide appropriate knowledge, technology and experience to Indochina as they have undergone the same period of development.
- 3) Though Japan is the biggest money-supplier in Asia, it lacks the capacity of helping the recipients to effectively absorb this huge sum of money. In fact, there are only 1,600 people in charge of ODA. In addition most Japanese aid places its attention on hardware aspects in infrastructure construction. Human resources development and technical cooperation are so weak that ASEAN and the "Four Little Dragons" could make up this gap and improve the situation.

## (2) Thailand's role in aiding Indochina

In this case, Thailand might play an important role in cooperative aid to Indochina because of its special location. Reasons are listed below:

- 1) Thailand has a close geographical and ethnic tie with Indochina and Burma. Thais have the largest population on the Indochina Peninsular, scattered in the north of Burma, Vietnam and Laos and mixing with Khmer and Karen. So Thailand, Laos and Cambodia have shared some common cultural background. After Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, Thailand took more than 300,000 Cambodian refugees, and hence have a say in solving Cambodian problems. In addition, Laos' seeking of coastal access must be through the land of Thailand.
- 2) The preferable investment environment has moved to the three Indochinese nations after the end of the Cold War. Thailand with its 15 percent average increase in 1991 and 1992<sup>16</sup> overshadowed its attraction as a cheap labour market. It is natural for external capitals to flow out. Some Thai economists think it is important to better economic cooperation with Indochina in the hope of transferring Thai enterprises to places where cost is low enough to maintain the steady increase of Thai exports and economy.<sup>17</sup>
- 3) Since ancient times Thailand and Vietnam have been competing in their political and economic fields on the Indochina Peninsular. Vietnam got the upper hand after World War II, but it didn't last long due to its hegemonism. Thailand then took its turn. Thai economic growth since 1970 made the Thais more confident about themselves. In the late 1980s, the Prime Minister in power, Chatichai, made a call

to change the Indochina peninsula from a battlefield into a market place. Thus, Thailand began to improve its trade relation with Indochina, enlarge its investments to Laos and Cambodia to make Thailand the financial centre of the Indochina Peninsular and promote the formation of a Thailand-centred Baht Economic Circle.<sup>18</sup>

Based upon all these factors, Thailand will play an important part in the ASEAN-Japan cooperative aid programme.

### **(3) Roles Thailand plays in cooperative aid to Indochina**

The cooperative aid conducted by Japan and Thailand usually falls into the following five patterns.

- 1) The first method is to establish in Thailand Japanese-aided agencies for the purpose of training Indochinese technical and managing personnel or set up a Japanese International Exchange Fund to draw people in Indochina to study or research in Thailand. For example, Japanese-funded institutions such as the Japanese Studies Center East Asia Studies Institute of Thammasat University, Thai Youth Centre, Thai Cultural Centre, Asian Health Keeping Institute of Mahidol University, Khon Kaen Technical Development Institute and King Mongkut Technical Institute are set up for this purpose. It is reported that there are more than 1,000 Indochinese studying in Thailand per year under the Thailand Aide Programme.<sup>19</sup>
- 2) The other pattern is to sent technicians and experts to work in Indochina. Thais are considered the most suitable trainers due to similarities in culture and customs, particularly in the case of Laos because of their similar languages. Thailand will be expected to play an active part in Cambodia's revival. Thai technical experts and Japanese Youth Overseas Cooperation Group will collaborate on professional training in rice and dry rice plantation, livestock and public sanitation of the refugees who returned from Thailand and war veterans in the Japanese-funded agricultural Development Centre, 40 kilometres from Phnom Penh.<sup>20</sup>
- 3) The next pattern is to help and promote Thai investment to Indochina. Since 1986 the Four Small Dragons have supported Thailand and ASEAN's development by direct investment. Though Thailand is qualified to develop in Indochina, lack of capital and experience require Japanese help. Thailand took the lead in investment by inputting money on 93 projects totaling \$134 million in Laos and 52 projects valuing \$700 million in Cambodia in 1992. But investment in Vietnam is just \$62 million, taking 12<sup>th</sup> place though this is expected to improve in the future.<sup>21</sup>
- 4) The fourth form is to relate Thai territory development to the development of Indochina. From the 1970s the road network in bordering areas of Thailand, Indochina and Burma has been gradually built, promoting border trades. In its 7<sup>th</sup>

development plan (1992 to 1996), Thailand is trying to develop its northeastern areas. Some Japanese non-governmental organizations are planning a comprehensive development project in Indochina and trying to get government support. This project seems likely to be combined with Thailand's 7<sup>th</sup> plan. For instance, the construction of bridges, railways and highways connecting Thailand, Laos and Cambodia mainly lies in the reparation and expansion of highways connecting Bangkok, Phnom Penh and Ho Chi Ming city. The extension of the Bangkok-Nongkhai railway to Vientiane in Laos, the railway renovation between Bangkok and Phnom Penh, the bridge building between Nongkhai and Vientiane, Nakhonphanom and Thakhet, Savanna Khet and Mukdahan are underway. Japan proposed building a 650-kilometer highway from Nonkhai to Chonburi crossing the northeast of Thailand with investment mainly in infrastructure constructions like industrial water resources, electricity, communication and industrial cities along its line. Chonburi, the destination of the highway is planned to be an international industrialized city.<sup>22</sup>

- 5) The last pattern is that of cooperative investigation and research on the feasibility of projects in Indochina. The Mekong River Investigation Committee with its headquarters in Bangkok is the largest project at present, and will be under the joint control of Thailand, Laos, Vietnam and Cambodia. It was set up in 1957, suspended its activities in 1975 due to the withdrawal of Cambodia, and resumed work in 1992. It was targeted at investigating electricity, irrigation, drainage, navigation, drainage areas management and water supply conditions of the Mekong River areas. Japan, one of the twenty-five money sources of the committee ranked second. From 1957 on, Japan sent people to work there and now has two permanent experts there. The Japanese International Cooperation Association (JICA) undertakes research on feasibility. In addition to the Japanese sent by Japanese Comprehensive Companies, 25 percent of the positions in the association are specified as open to foreigners. Some Japanese economists suggest to let more foreigners take part to expanding their scope of investigation.<sup>23</sup>

In short, the special location of Thailand made it become a Japanese logistic base for the Japanese attack on Vietnam and Malaysia during World War II, while now turned it into a gateway of Japanese economic expansion into Indochina. This location had a role in introducing a market economy to Indochina where Thailand will play a prominent role in cooperative aid along with Japan.<sup>24</sup> Thailand will have a full part in the settlement of Cambodian refugees and veterans, the establishment of their homes, training of technical and managing personnel, developing trade with Laos and Cambodia, and promoting their economic development. But to Vietnam things are quite different because of their long-term hostile relation. There is a big gap between the two countries in social welfare, ideology and national characteristics. Thailand still distrusts Vietnam, while Vietnam will never give up its ambition in Indochina through hard work and acute insight. Furthermore, Taiwan, Hong Kong and France took an earlier step in

investment there. Western countries like the U.S. and Japan will increase on a large scale their money input since the U.S. government announced on 2<sup>nd</sup> July 1993 to allow international financial institutions to lend money to Vietnam, a sign of a turning point in U.S.-Vietnam relations. In this case, some are questioning whether Thai investment to Vietnam would make sense. In addition, competition between the two countries may be more intense with the recovery of the Vietnamese economy.

#### 4. Japan's Political and Security Role in Asia and ASEAN's Attitude

- (1) It is imperative to gain the support and understanding of ASEAN if Japan wants to play an active role in Asian politics and security.

In the 1990s, the Japanese Foreign Ministry advanced its political policies and suggested in the Diplomatic Blue Print of 1990 that Japan would play a part in all the problems concerning the framework of a new world order at a global level and should play a leading part in the Asia-Pacific area. Opportunities came when the Gulf War and Cambodian peace progress started. Propaganda concerning letting Japanese take its part in politics and security in the spirit of the U.N. decision spread through the whole country. This came true when Japan sent its marine mine-sweeping craft and peacekeeping troops abroad to carry out U.N. tasks. This marked its change from a post-war negative peacefulism to a positive peacefulism dedicated to international peace.<sup>25</sup> On his tour of Southeast Asia in 1991, Kaifu Toshiki stated that Japan would make more contributions to the Asia-Pacific region not only in economic development but also in the political field. After he assumed the position of Prime Minister, Kiichi Miyazawa made it a diplomatic base that Japan would devote itself more to Asia. He also set up a private consultancy named the Consultative Committee for 21<sup>st</sup> Century's Japan and the Asia-Pacific. At the end of 1992, the committee handed in a proposal to the Prime Minister which planned to set up a security system for the control of arms competition in Asia. Kiichi Miyazawa put forth the principle of expanding the Japanese role in political and security aspects as his first of four basic principles of Japan-Asian cooperation policy when he visited the four ASEAN countries in January 1993.<sup>26</sup> As his predecessors did from 1977, he reiterated the importance of the U.S. military presence in Asia, the alliance with America and the determination of not being a military power and regional policeman to comfort the Americans and disperse the doubts existing in the Asian countries. Japanese commentators thought the doubts resulting from historical reasons in the Asia-Pacific regions would impede Japan's steps in playing its part in political and security fields, but Miyazawa seemed likely to overcome this obstacle by his unique restraint and low profile. In this regard, Japan must have ASEAN's support if it wants to realize its goal in politics and security in Southeast Asia.

## **(2) ASEAN's attitude and Thailand's Reaction**

As a member of ASEAN, Thailand is very concerned about security problems. ASEAN voiced its neutrality in Kuala Lumpur in the announcement of the first meeting of ASEAN Foreign Ministers in November, 1971. Things changed a lot in the 1990s in Asia with the disappearance of the Soviet threat, the shrinkage of U.S. power, the existence of unsafe elements and the rising influence of China and Japan. Hence, regional security problems were high on the agenda at the Fourth Meeting of ASEAN Heads in January 1992, the 25<sup>th</sup> Session of Foreign Ministers Conference in July, and the Expanding Meeting for Consultation on Senior Affairs. To sum up all these meetings, Thailand, as well as the other ASEAN nations, holds the following attitudes toward security problems.

- 1) Thailand will carry on the policy of neutrality established in 1971 as its basis for security cooperation. It will set up neutral belts outside the region under foreign power's mutual checks and balance to guarantee no external interference and ensure the peace, freedom and neutrality of Southeast Asia.
- 2) Thailand will peacefully co-exist with the Indochinese countries with different social systems. It will promote cooperation with them on the common framework of Southeast Peaceful Cooperation Treaty.
- 3) Regarding the expanding role of conference ASEAN Foreign Ministers as an important meeting for ASEAN and the great powers to discuss regional security problems, ASEAN expects to make these conferences a regional security talk mechanism in which it will play a leading role.
- 4) ASEAN will strengthen national and regional economic development cooperation in order to improve national and regional resilience.
- 5) Though asking for a U.S. military presence to balance power, Thailand does not hope the U.S. will continue its role of a policeman making arrangements at will. Thailand, together with Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia expressed its willingness to maintain military cooperation with the U.S. and agreed to supply logistics and military facilities (not military bases) for military training.
- 6) Thailand will spend more on its own military development and internal security. It approved its five-year military expansion plan, in which the cost of equipment increased from 6,000 million Baht per year to 8,000 million Baht and the total army force will increase by 50 percent. It disagreed on treating ASEAN as a military ally, but it agreed to maintain multilateral cooperation such as military drills with Indonesia and coordinated actions against violence in bordering areas.

Thailand and the other ASEAN countries changed their opinions about China and Japan. They believe that Japan and China will increase their impact on political and security problems in Asia with the end of the Cold War. During the period of Vietnam's invasion of Cambodia, Thailand developed friendly cooperation with China which lasted for years until the sovereignty disputes over the South-China Sea islands. Since then there has been a growing tendency to view China as a potential threat. So it wants to check and restrain China by the collective efforts of the U.S., Japan and the other ASEAN countries. As for Japan, Thailand asks Japan to continue its economic aid and enlarge its role in politics and security, though it keeps alert to signs of Japanese militarism. On this question, it has a different opinion from the other ASEAN countries.

Among the ASEAN countries it is Thailand that kept independent by making use of the conflict between Great Britain and France in their fighting for colonies. During the Second World War it was also Thailand that lost the least in the Pacific War by becoming special allies with Japan to take back French territories. In the early 1970s, there was an anti-Japanese goods movement protesting military autocracy and demanding democracy to resist the Japanese economic invasion. But this later subdued as a result of Japanese demands for participation in Asia politics and security. They are presented below:

- 1) From 1978 to the early 1980s, the Japanese government wanted to disguise its invasions of other countries during World War II by re-editing textbooks. This has aroused great anger and protest in countries like Singapore and South Korea. But according to Hisahiko Okazaki, an ex-ambassador to Thailand, there were no critical statements coming from the Thai government, political parties or journalistic circle. To the contrary, a lot of speeches stating expectation of Japanese participation in Asian affairs appeared in disguise.
- 2) During the Vietnamese invasion to Cambodia, Thai leaders were more and more inclined to accept a Japanese part in this area. Even more, some people said it was advantageous to strengthen Japan's military power to keep the balance in Southeast Asia in a time when U.S.A. was reducing its power there. For example, in the ASEAN-Japan Forum in September 1990, Thai Deputy-Prime Minister Bhichi Rattakul demanded that Japan play a greater political role and implied that Japan's buildup of defense should be encouraged. In January 1981, when Suzuki visited Thailand, Thai Foreign Minister Siddhi Savetsila asserted that Thailand welcomed a Japanese military role in Asia without the fear of a revival of Japanese militarism. Thai Prime Minister Prem Tinsula-nond visited Japan in January, saying that Thailand would have no disagreement if a Japanese military role could contribute to the peace and stability of the Indochinese Peninsular.
- 3) In his visit to Japan in August 1984, Arthit Kamland-ek, the Thai Supreme Commander, showed his interest in buying Japanese arms. Holding to its policy not to export arms, Japan instead promised to train Thai military personnel in Japan. It

is reported that 67 out of 128 foreign students studying in the Japan Defensive University are Thais.

- 4) Thailand showed no negative reactions toward Japan's increased military expenditure, which broke the limit of 1 percent of Gross National Product (GNP), while many Asian countries reacted strongly. An opinion poll said that politicians, officials and university teachers in general supported Japanese military construction and its political role.
- 5) Thailand would not disapprove of Japan's joining in the peace-keeping operation by dispatching its self-defense troops abroad and joining the Security Council of U.N. if Japan acts in line with U.N. resolutions and the U.N. Charter. In order to achieve Asian peace, security and prosperity, according to Thai Prime Minister Chuan Leekpai in his talks with Kiichi Miyazawa, January 1993, Thailand hopes to make a new alliance with Japan.<sup>27</sup>

Hence, generally speaking, many people in the Thai political field would like to understand and support a Japanese political and security role, and even a military role. But as a matter of fact, they would not like to see Japan follow the American example, and practice military interference to guarantee Southeast Asian security, because they acknowledged that Japan will never use its power for the sole purpose of security in Southeast Asia.

Okazaki, an ex-ambassador to Thailand, has written that, if Japan would like to retain its economic impact in the world and keep the present prosperous development, Japan must have formidable military power and cultural influence. In fact, Japanese has advanced step by step its military construction following a policy of a small but excellently equipped and trained military force. Meanwhile it strengthens its cultural infrastructure in ASEAN. As some parts of Japanese culture, such as Judo, Chado (manner of tea service), Ikebana (flower arrangement), Kabuki (Japanese classic drama) etc., are unique, it seemed difficult to use these for political effect. But the combination of these elements together with economic expansion, such as in Japanese goods, technology and managing techniques will be a formidable power that is equal to military power. It would be the power to change other countries' structure and ideology.<sup>28</sup> Social life in Thailand and other ASEAN nations has been more and more effected by Japanese economy and culture. Some even look upon Japan as model and tend to imitate the Japanese or be pro-Japanese. To this extend, there will be an increased expectation of a Japanese political, security and military role in Asia.

At present, the world situation and the Asian situation are undergoing changes, but Japan-Thailand and Japan-ASEAN political and security relations have changed little. The first concern Japanese have for ASEAN is to ensure and expand its market, energy and raw material supplying bases and try to manage Asia well as its industrial base. It adjusted its Asian policy trying to play an important role in politics and security.

But the basic elements of its Asian policies still lie in its economic diplomacy dating back 30 years of expanding capital exports, promoting its dominant position in ASEAN and Asia, and making its economy internationalized and globalized. On this basis, Japan will have a cautious, steady and progressive participation in Asian political and security affairs and expand its impact on them under the auspices of the U.N. and other international institutions.



## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> Professor Seki Tomoda: *Gateway to Japanese Diplomacy*. 1988
  - <sup>2</sup> resiliency: Note for the paper written in Chinese.
  - <sup>3</sup> Professor Guo Shao Lie: *The Present State and History of Japan- ASEAN's Relationship*, December, 1983.
  - <sup>4</sup> Dr. Pranee Tinakorn, Dr. Pacharee Siroros: *Japanese ODA and Thai Development*.
  - <sup>5</sup> Osamu Kamibayashi: *The Present Yen Loan and Its Tendency*, August, 1992.
  - <sup>6</sup> Toshiharu Yoshikawa: *Thai-Japanese Relationship 1992*.
  - <sup>7</sup> Professor Toshio Watanabe: *Asia Under Change*, 1992.
  - <sup>8</sup> Dr. Kien Theeravit: *Japanese Investment and Economic Investment in Thailand*, 1991.
  - <sup>9</sup> The Thailand Development Research Institute: *Thailand Economic Information Kit* July, 1992.
  - <sup>10</sup> Hisahiko Okazaik: *Road to Support Big Block*, (*Ajia chotaiken'e no shinsenryaku*) *Yomiuri Monthly*, August, 1992.
  - <sup>11</sup> The Thailand Development Research Institute: *Thailand Economic Information Kit* July, 1992.
  - <sup>12</sup> Tohoru Harada: *Thai-Japanese Trade Relation In The Asian Pacific*.
  - <sup>13</sup> *ibid.* (7).
  - <sup>14</sup> *ibid.* (10).
  - <sup>15</sup> *ibid.* (10).
  - <sup>16</sup> Minoru Makishima: *Bangkok News, Economist*, February, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1993.
  - <sup>17</sup> Dr. Somjai Phagaphasvivat: *Thai-Indochinese Economic Co-operation*.
  - <sup>18</sup> International Cooperation Organization of Japan: *ODA Planning To South East Asia*, November, 1990.
  - <sup>19</sup> *ibid.* (13)
  - <sup>20</sup> Professor Seki Tomoda: *New Character of Aid Policy to Cambodia*, *Diplomatic Forum*, March, 1993.
  - <sup>21</sup> *ibid.* (17)
  - <sup>22</sup> *ibid.* (18)
  - <sup>23</sup> *ibid.* (13)

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<sup>24</sup> *ibid.* (8)

<sup>25</sup> Conference on Japanese Security : *Ten Suggestions on Security Policy*, March, 1993.

<sup>26</sup> Four Principles of Japan-ASEAN Cooperation are :

1. To push security talks forward;
2. To continue economic openness;
3. To commonly advance democracy;
4. To take measures in cooperation with Indochinese Countries.

<sup>27</sup> Chaiwat Khamchoo : *Japan's Politics-Security Relations With Thailand In The Post-Vietnam Era 1988.*

<sup>28</sup> Professor Huang Da Hui : *Historical Investigation On Japan's Internationalization.*

THANMASAT UNIVERSITY  
สำนักหอสมุด

The background features a large, light gray watermark of the Thammasat University logo. The logo is circular and contains the university's name in Thai script at the top and "THAMMASAT UNIVERSITY" in English at the bottom. In the center of the logo is a traditional Thai emblem, the Chakrasimukh, which is a crown-like structure with a central face and multiple tiers.

# หน้าว่าง

สำนักหอสมุด