G-SEC WORKING PAPER No.11

Japan's Cultural Diplomacy in the Philippines in the Last Fifty Years: An Assessment

Lydia N. Yu Jose [*]

December 2006

Abstract

The cultural diplomacy that Japan used in the 1950s through the 70s did not significantly change the unsympathetic Philippine public opinion about Japan. On the other hand, such cultural diplomacy was not wasted, for it created a cultural capital that contributed to the Filipino elite's understanding of Japan.

The Japanese experience of modernizing without losing the traditional culture in the last half of the nineteenth century and the Japanese economic miracle of the 1960s are part of the Japanese culture admired by the Filipino intellectuals.

The social base of Filipinos who admire Japanese culture became wide in the late 1980s, where came about a public demand for teachers of Japanese language and information about Japan.

The case of Japan's cultural diplomacy in the Philippines in the last fifty years shows that cultural diplomacy does not always produce the desired results; neither does it have results immediately. It is nevertheless a valuable capital that is useful for its own sake and that may become useful for other purposes in due time.

[*] Professor, Department of Political Science, Ateneo de Manila University, Manila, The Philippines

Introduction

Almost all scholarly works on Japan's foreign relations with Southeast Asia say that Japan has prioritized economic relations, especially in the first decades after World War II. Almost all are in agreement that economic diplomacy is one reason for Japan's postwar economic success, but at the same time, it caused tension between Japan and Southeast Asia in the 1970s.

This paper nuances this observation by arguing that while economic diplomacy in the first three decades after World War II (1950s to 70s) failed to win the hearts of Filipinos, Japan's economic development attracted them. Economic development became a source of soft power that made Filipino observers look at Japan with admiration. "Economically developed" became the most frequently mentioned characteristic of Japan, and many were inspired to scrutinize the factors that made it possible. Moreover, many casual observers—and they were more in number than the frequent and close observers, equated the manifestations of economic development, such as the bullet train, elevated highways, cars, and electronic gadgets, with Japanese culture.

Economic development is different from economic diplomacy which for Japan in the 1960s through the 1970s meant aggressive trade with and investment in Asia. Economic development embodies and is embodied in Japanese culture. Economic diplomacy, on the other hand, is one of the strategies employed by states to achieve foreign policy goals. Trade, investment, grants and loans are the usual components of economic diplomacy.

Cultural diplomacy is also a strategy. Its usual components are movies, paintings, literary forms, sculpture, architecture, the state's history, economy, politics,

ideology, foods, costumes, science and technology, values, and many more. Cultural diplomacy is the selective dissemination abroad of such components either for the achievement of certain policy goals such as economic development, mutual understanding, or purely for the sake of cultural dissemination.

The second argument of the paper is that, while Japan focused on economic diplomacy towards the Philippines in the 1950s and 60s, it used several components of culture, such as sports, arts, education, language, and even the members of the imperial family, to win the hearts of Filipinos, and achieve its economic objectives.

The third point that this paper stresses is that since the 1980s to the present, at least so far as Philippines-Japan relations are concerned, Japanese culture reaches the Philippines through unorganized agents such as the Filipino migrants in Japan, more than it reaches the Philippines through the Japanese government's cultural diplomacy. A deeper inter-twining of economics and culture has developed, in that the Filipino migrant workers get attracted to Japan for economic reasons, but in the process, they become unwitting agents of the promotion of Japanese culture.

The paper covers fifty years because this year (2006) marks the fiftieth anniversary of the resumption of Philippines-Japan relations. Within these years, the Philippines and Japan concluded three major treaties, namely, the San Francisco Peace Treaty which restored the relationship between the two countries after World War II, the War Reparations Treaty, and the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation. It is not certain yet if the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA), which Philippine President Gloria Arroyo and Prime Minister Koizumi Jun'ichiro signed in September of this year at Helsinki is a treaty or an executive agreement. The Philippine Senate tends to look at it as a treaty and is therefore waiting for the Executive to submit it to the Senate for ratification, but the

Executive tends to look at it as an executive agreement which does not require ratification.

The paper will use these treaties, as well as the JPEPA as points of reference around which cultural diplomacy will be discussed. This approach ensues from the second argument stated above; that is, Japan used cultural diplomacy to achieve economic goals. And since cultural diplomacy as a component of soft power is about attracting followers and supporters, the paper will identify who in the Philippines got attracted to what.

1. Japanese Soft Power vis-à-vis the Philippines: Soft Economic Power and Culture

Joseph Nye developed the concept of "soft power" in the late 1980s at the time when the United States was perceived to be declining in power. He argued that the United States was far from declining, for it was not only the strongest power in the world in terms of military and economic power, but also in soft power (Nye 2004: xi). Soft power is defined as "the ability to get what you want through attraction rather than coercion or payments" (Nye 2004: x). Nye believes that American culture, from the noble values of democracy and human rights to the more mundane consumerism, sex and violence portrayed in Hollywood movies make the United States seductive to many people (Nye 2004: 12).

Nye does not condemn hard power. He is in favor of using it, when necessary, but in combination with soft power. What Nye condemns is the use of hard power alone, like President George Bush's unilateral attack on Iraq in the wake of the terrorists' attack on the United States on 11 September 2000.

3

Policy, aside from culture, is also a source of soft power. Policy includes economic assistance, scholarships, educational and cultural exchanges, sports, and other diplomatic strategies (Nye 2004: 25-30).

Soft power, Nye says, is available to all states. Even Bin Laden "has soft power for those who believe in the legitimacy of his objectives" (Nye 2004: 2). In other words, as a cliché goes, beauty is in the eye of the beholder.

Nye initially used the concept of soft power in the context of the United States that traditionally has employed all the three powers: military, economic, and soft, in various ways of combination. The most basic formula was to use military might and economic power for the cause of democracy (democracy being an element of attraction). Initially, Nye wanted to argue that in the late 1980s, even though the United States seemed to be weakening in military and economic influence, it still had soft power to get what it wanted. After President Bush's decision to attack Iraq in the aftermath of terrorists' attacks on the United States in September 2000, however, Nye criticized Bush for depending too much on hard power, and thus losing its soft power.

The concept of soft power in the context of Philippine-Japanese relations operates differently, because in the initial interaction between the Philippines and Japan at the turn of the twentieth century, Japan did not use military power, and had only economic power as element of hard power. Unlike the United States, it had very little soft power to lose towards the Philippines. Gradually, in the 1930s, it had to build soft power in order to maintain its economic power in the Philippines, and to justify the use of military power in China. Japan used military power towards the Philippines only during World War II and its occupation of the Philippines (1942-45). After World War II, through Article Nine of its postwar Constitution, Japan adopted the policy of refraining from the use of force to advance its national interests.

In the context of Philippine-Japanese relations therefore, and indeed, in the history of Japan's postwar foreign policy in general, hard power for Japan was only economic power (for the United States, it was military and economic). It must be remembered, however, that Nye identifies economic policy as a source of soft power. There is, therefore, a need to stress the difference between economic power as hard power and economic power as soft power. Economic power manifested in the strength of exports, sheer amount of foreign direct investments, size of gross domestic product and gross net profit is hard power. For example, Japanese economic expansion to the Philippines in the 1920s and 30s became a source of tension between the two. Likewise, in the 1960s, Japanese economic penetration of Southeast Asia earned Japan the ire of many Southeast Asians, and the sobriquet "economic animal" (Sudo 1992:60). Economic power manifested in the fair amount and beneficial quality of foreign aid for the recipient, fair amount and beneficial quality of foreign direct investment in the host country, and fairness of trade practices is soft power. The Fukuda Doctrine of the late 1970s promised to do these. Simply put, therefore is a difference between just being rich and how wealth is obtained and used.

Additionally for Japan, its ability to modernize and industrialize during the second half of the nineteenth century without losing much of its traditional culture made it attractive to the world. After World War II, the economic miracle it achieved became a source of soft power that attracted many developing countries to study Japan. As will be seen below, Japan possesses various potentials for soft power, namely, soft economic power, traditional arts and culture, popular culture, values, its own history of modernizing without entirely Westernizing, and its proverbial ability to quickly rise from the ashes of defeat in World War II. In the context of its bilateral

relations with the Philippines, the question is whether Japan was able to effectively utilize these potentials.

2. Japanese Cultural Assets and Liabilities in the Philippines

In spite of centuries of contact with the Philippines, Japan did not have a cultural policy towards the Philippines. It was only interested in trade, investment, and promotion of Japanese immigration to the Philippines, especially in the 1920s and 1930s (Jose 1998).

A semblance of Japanese cultural diplomacy towards the Philippines began only in the 1930s, and gradually became more active and overt towards the 1940s. It was triggered by a desire to counteract anti-Japanese public opinion about the Japanese invasion of China and public suspicion about Japan's aggressive intentions towards the Philippines, and to protect Japanese trade and Japanese immigration to the Philippines from adverse effects of anti-Japanese public opinion (Jose 1999: 141-144).

The inchoate Japanese cultural diplomacy targeted the Filipino elite, students, and young professionals. Semi-governmental organizations, newspaper companies, and business enterprises invited them for a minimal fee to visit Japan. Tour participants were guided to regular tourist spots, invited to ikebana exhibitions and tea ceremony, and given lectures on Japanese history, arts, and culture.

Japanese lecturers were sent to major Philippine universities to lecture on Japanese economy, history, arts, and culture. Filipino students were invited to Japan to attend student conferences and Japanese students were sent to the Philippines for the same purpose. The student conferences aimed at mutual cultural understanding.

Japan, however, could only offer what it had. In the 1930s, it had a militaristic, non-democratic government. Japanese were, under the constitution, subjects of the emperor. Male-female relationship was hierarchical, with the woman expected to be submissive to the man. Majority of the Japanese were not Christians. Many Japanese were poor, and just like Filipinos, quite a number dreamt of, and did migrate to the United States and even to the Philippines.

Tours of Japan did expose a few Filipinos to architecturally beautiful Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines, but at the same time, it stressed upon the Filipinos that Japanese were not Christians, and therefore were different from them. Very few Filipinos at that time appreciated religious plurality. With the presence of an influential Catholic hierarchy, beliefs and practices that went against Christian beliefs were strongly criticized. Thus, while Japanese intellectuals were proud of the samurai ethics or bushido, and a few Filipino intellectuals had gained a deeper understanding of it, to the Catholic Church in the Philippines, *seppuku* (more commonly known as hara-kiri) was absolutely unacceptable.

Lectures on the emperor system and the relationship between the emperor and his Japanese subjects could have extolled loyalty, but at the same time, it brought to surface the undemocratic and illiberal political system of Japan. By the 1930s, Filipinos had been taught by their American colonizers the values of democracy and political rights.

Still along the concept of democracy and equality, a male chauvinist Filipino could have been attracted to the idea of having a submissive Japanese wife, but such culture nevertheless clashed with the Filipino accepted norm of respect for womanhood and equality of man and woman before the law, no matter how limited its enforcement was during that time. *Madame Butterfly*, an opera by Italian composer

Puccini was translated into Tagalog and serialized in a magazine. This indicates the popularity of the image of a loyal Japanese wife and of committing *seppuku* as proof of loyalty and endless love. Indeed, it was popular among young women of the 1920s and 1930s to don a kimono and have their photo taken in a studio. But *Madame Butterfly* was just a romantic tragedy meant for entertainment and, posing for a photograph garbed in a kimono was just a fashion. Kimono or even the more comfortable *yukata* was not worn by Filipino women everyday.

Moreover, Japanese cultural diplomacy reached only a handful of Filipinos. Whatever beauty and attractiveness that this handful of Filipinos admired in bushido, ikebana, Noh, tea ceremony, and other fine Japanese ways of doing things, were simply irrelevant to majority of Filipinos. To most Filipinos, the cheap and easy to break made-in-Japan toys, bicycles, fountain pens, and low quality facial make-up and hair dyes embodied Japanese culture.

Towards the 1940s, the Japanese government doubled its efforts at defending the invasion of China and explaining its concept of equal sharing of the resources of the world. But in doing so, Japanese speakers unwittingly revealed their values which were not at all attractive to Filipinos. The more Japan's relationship with the West worsened because of the China question, the more the Japanese criticized the United States and American culture and the more they did so, the wider they made the gap between their and the Filipinos' values. The more they contrasted Japanese industry and the *Yamato damashii* (Japanese spirit) with the individualistic and materialistic culture of American democracy, the more the militaristic and totalitarian nature of their culture surfaced. Moreover, Japan's explanations about why it had to invade China struck the Philippine mass media as propaganda because of the gap between Japanese actions and Japanese claims.

Consequently, Japan's attempts at introducing Japanese culture had an ambiguous impact. Ikebana was appreciated, but it did not become the Filipino way of arranging flowers. Japanese disgust for individualism and materialism was an indication of undemocratic culture to some but to others, it meant nationalism and efficiency. A member of the first educational tour in 1935 said, "To me one of the most striking social phenomena in the life of the Japanese people is their willingness to sacrifice individual liberty of action and freedom of thought for the sake of national discipline and collective efficiency …. Perhaps a combination of both …would serve the interests and well being of our commonwealth" (Calica 1935: 106). If others criticized Japanese social values for being different from the Hispanized and Americanized social values of Filipinos, others saw in Japanese values an admirable blend of the modern and the traditional. A journalist wrote: "There seems to be no question that there is today a silent struggle between the ancient and the modern, between the native and the foreign, between tradition and the increasing demand for new things. The ability of Japanese so far to maintain their own culture in the face of advancing modernity reveals the native strength and characteristic individuality of the race" (Farolan 1934: 35). The journalist who wrote this was commissioned by the Japanese Consulate in the Philippines to go to Japan and write about his observations. The same strategy will be employed by the Japanese government in the immediate post World War II period.

The Japanese occupation of the Philippines (1942-45) was the first time the Filipino nation had a first-hand encounter with Japanese culture. Before the war, as mentioned above, Filipinos who had some knowledge of Japan were largely from the elite and those who followed current events in the mass media. But during the Japanese occupation, experience of a culture of discipline, unforgiving punishment

even for minor offenses, brutality, ruling through threats, and cowing the people by sowing fear in their hearts, is a national Filipino experience with only a few exceptions.

Filipinos who still remember the war mostly recall Japanese discipline and nationalism. To them, discipline was manifested in lining up for rides, movie and ration tickets. They saw in the Kamikaze pilots ultimate nationalism. There were those who admired these characteristics and wished Filipinos were as disciplined and nationalistic as Japanese. But there were also those who equated discipline with harshness and cruelty, and nationalism with the major cause of Japanese aggression in World War II. Filipino reaction to Japanese culture during the war was ambivalent and ambiguous as before World War II, but the negative impact during and after the war was more predominant. This will be evident in the difficulties the Philippines and Japan encountered in normalizing their relations after the war.

3. Ratification of the Peace and the Reparations Treaties

The first postwar major negotiations between the Philippines and Japan were over the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the War Reparations Agreement. The Philippine Senate initially did not want to ratify the peace treaty without any agreement on war reparations. Basically, the negotiations revolved around Japan's insistence to pay reparations only according to its ability to pay, and the Philippine demand to be paid for all the measurable damages and losses that it suffered during the war (Yoshikawa 2003). The Japanese and Philippine governments correctly assessed the stumbling block to the ratification of the two treaties as not only mere politicking of the Japanese and Filipino politicians, but the real anti-Japanese mood of

public opinion in the Philippines, and the real desire on the part of Filipinos to avenge their wartime losses and sufferings (Meyer. 1965: 63). The task for Japan, therefore, was to appease the Filipinos.

In the first half of the 1950s Japan could not use its cultural assets as sources of soft power. Anti-Japanese feeling was too strong to be conquered with displays of ikebana, performance of Noh, origami demonstration, and the likes. The Japanese government knew very well they would only be rebuffed. Besides, doing cultural diplomacy was not affordable to Japan that was still re-building from the damages of war.

Japan was further hampered by fears among its Asian neighbors that it might rearm and become militaristic again. These fears were brought about by the United States' request to Japan to build its army in the wake of the Communist invasion of Korea in 1950.

Japanese cultural diplomacy towards the Philippines in the 1950s had few resources to draw from. It was hampered by proximity to World War II. Moreover, using potential resources presented various dilemmas. If it used the attractive fact that it was fast recovering from the destruction of World War II, it would face more demands for bigger reparations. If it used an anti-communist policy, which would be attractive to the Philippines (then fighting its local communist adherents and also being threatened by the international domino effect of communist expansion), it might antagonize China and the Soviet Union and jeopardize future relations with them.

Japan used whatever limited resources for cultural diplomacy were available. Sports was one of them. The First Asian Games in New Delhi, India in March 1951 offered an opportunity for the Philippines and Japan to explore sports as a means of patching up the wounds of war (Bitong 1957: 27). Japan garnered the most number of

gold, silver, and bronze medals. This was followed by Japanese and Filipino sports matches in Tokyo, Osaka, and Nagoya, the very first of which was in February 1952 in Tokyo (Takamatsu 1952). Organized by the Japan Basketball Association and sponsored by the Yomiuri Shimbun-sha (Yomiuri Newspaper) with the cooperation of the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Japanese Ministry of Education, and an association of Japanese businessmen, the Firipin Tomo no Kai, the Philippine Air Lines Basketball Team played with several Japanese company and university basketball teams (Japanese-Philippine Basketball Friendship Matches 1952). The aim of the matches was to promote friendship and mutual understanding between the Philippines and Japan (Vargas 1952; Takamatsu 1952). The Second Asian Games were held in Manila in 1953, and the largest group of Japanese was seen in Manila for the first time since the end of World War II (Bitong 1957: 27). Again, Japan garnered the most number of gold, silver and bronze medals.

On the part of the civil society, there were pen pal clubs ostensibly started by Japanese and Filipino students between 1952 and 1953 (Serrano 1952: 48; Serrano1953: 48). In January 1953 four Japanese students came to Manila to attend the first postwar Philippine-Japanese student conference (Bitong 1957: 27). Japanese boy scouts participated in the first Philippine National Boy Scouts Jamboree, held in Balara, Quezon City in 1954 (Jap Boy Scouts 1954: 48).

The Philippine Senate finally ratified the peace treaty and the reparations agreement on 23 July 1956, five years after the Japanese and Philippine governments officially signed the San Francisco Peace Treaty. Sports diplomacy, pen pal clubs, boy scouts jamboree, and student conference did not influence the Senate to ratify the treaties, but they were proofs that Japan did not simply rely on pragmatic economic arguments about why the Philippines should ratify the two treaties. Japan tried

cultural strategies in order to resume friendship with the Philippines. On the other hand, the cooperation given by the Philippine presidents and their advisers towards the ratification of the treaties indicates that they were motivated by pragmatic considerations, but hampered by the anti-Japanese public opinion and considerations about the future of their political career. The realities of the Cold War and the promises of trade, aid, grants, loans, and investments in the Reparations Treaty were the ones that made the Senate ratify the San Francisco Peace Treaty and the Reparations Treaty.

4. Negotiating a Commercial Treaty

The limited results of Japanese cultural diplomacy in the 1950s were evident in the difficulty experienced by Japan in getting the Philippines to conclude with it a commercial treaty.

In the initial years of the implementation of the Reparations Treaty, the Japanese government exerted its utmost efforts to have a commercial treaty with the Philippines signed and ratified. The Japanese government was eager to conclude a commercial treaty with the Philippines because the latter had a stable economy, second only to Japan. On the other hand, Philippine President Carlos P. Garcia wanted the Japanese government to agree to certain adjustments in the implementation of the reparations agreement to enable him to carry out development projects. The Japanese government used this political need of Garcia as a bargaining tool to persuade Garcia to start negotiations for a commercial treaty (Yoshikawa 2003). Garcia gave the signal to begin the negotiations, and shortly after, the two governments signed the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation on 9 December 1960. The Japanese Diet ratified it

in October 1961. From this point, however, political exchange of favors did not work anymore. The Philippine Senate steadfastly refused ratification of the treaty.

In the 1960s and the 1970s, pending the ratification of the commercial treaty, the Philippine mass media expressed skepticism about the beneficial effects of the treaty to the Philippines. Many commentators revived memories of Japanese expansionism before World War II and the Japanese Occupation of the Philippines during the war, as a way of warning readers as to what would happen if the treaty would be ratified.[1] It was evident that twenty years or so after the war, negative memories could still be used to arouse suspicion and skepticism about Japanese intentions.

The task for the Japanese government was to present an image of a Japan that was peaceful, modern, friendly, generous, and trustworthy. And, by the 1960s, such was not an empty image. It was real, and possessed a tremendous potential to win the Filipinos' admiration.

The 1960s Japan was already confident that it could display its economic achievements without fear of being asked to pay huge war reparations. It was determined more than ever to expand markets for its exports and to buy raw materials from its Asian neighbors to feed its manufacturing industry. Hence, if in the 1950s, it was the Philippine economic missions that were going to Japan, uninvited, to observe Japan, in the 1960s, it was already Japan that was inviting journalists, educators, and artists to see the new Japan, and write about it back home.

In January 1966 *Chronicle Magazine*, a weekly, came out with a special on "The New Japan." The cover featured the famous Toshogu Shrine of Nikko. Inside,

---

[1] The critical tone of the commentaries was obvious in their titles: "Must We Have Roads and Peace at the Price of our Self-Respect?" (*Weekly Graphic* 1967: 1-2); "Japanese Economic Penetration" (Alegre 1967:17; 22); "A Second Japanese Invasion" (Almario 1968: 10-12; 72); "The New Imperialism: Japan's Renewed Thrust" (Guerrero 1970: 16-18); "Remember the 'Hayun Maru'" (Barranco 1970: 3; 22).

was an article by Ileana Maramag, associate editor of the magazine, who had been invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to visit Japan. Escorted by a lady officer of the ministry, she toured Tokyo, Kyoto, and Nara (Maramag 1966: 9). Maramag's article, which begins with "Today Japan Views War with Instinctive Dread and Pursues a Policy of Progress through Peace" (Maramag 1966: 6), presented a very positive picture of modern Japan. Another article, "Progress through Education," was written by a professor of commercial law in the University of Santo Tomas, who had also been invited by the Japanese government to visit Japan. The article praises Japan's move to review its educational system and see how it could further contribute to economic development, and urges Filipino educators to do the same. The other articles introduce tea ceremony, Japanese music, Noh, a woman novelist, tiny transistors and satellite transmitters, Toyota car, Hotel Okura, and the Japanese shipping industry with quite detailed information and a fair amount of admiration.

One symbol of social change and modernization of Japan which captured the imagination of the world in 1959 was the marriage of the Crown Prince Akihito to a commoner, Princess Michiko (former Michiko Shoda), breaking an old tradition which decreed that the crown prince could marry only a person of royal blood. The crown prince broke tradition again when he and Princess Michiko decided against having their son to be separated from them and be reared by nurses and tutors.

In November 1962 the Crown Prince and Princess Michiko visited the Philippines. The announced purpose of the visit was to promote friendship and goodwill. The mass media, however, reported that there were speculations that the more important purpose was to charm public opinion into favoring the ratification of the commercial treaty.

In December 1966 the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs donated to the Ateneo de Manila University the first Japanese Studies Program in the country (Report 1969; Memorandum 1966). The donation included the salaries of the visiting Japanese professors and free tuition fee for students in the courses offered by the program. In 1967 the Japan Information and Cultural Center in Manila was established, and became the main source of information about Japan. The center was also given responsibility to screen applicants to the Japanese Government Scholarship, then popularly known as the Mombusho scholarship, and one of the major components of Japan's cultural diplomacy. Shortly after its opening, the Center started offering Japanese language lessons. The Ship for Southeast Asian Youth arrived for the first time in Manila in 1968. It was also in 1968 that the Japanese Garden in Luneta Park was completed.

On the local level, sister-cities between the Philippines and Japan were forged. It is interesting to note that six out of the twenty sister-cities identified by Sato (1994: 199-201) were created in the 1960s and 1970s.The purpose of the Japanese local governments (LGU), consistent with Japan's national policy, was to win the goodwill of the Filipinos. For the Philippine LGUs, they would not lose anything by positively and cordially responding to the offer of friendship and cultural exchanges. These sister cities were the Caba-Oizumi (1964), Manila-Yokohama (1965), Hanyu-Baguio (1969), Pasig-Marugame (1972), Quezon City-Chiba (1972), and Baguio-Wakkanai (1973).

Except for the fact that all these cultural initiatives happened during the period of waiting for the ratification of the commercial treaty, there is no watertight proof that they were launched with the single purpose of enticing the Philippine government to ratify the commercial treaty. Whether there was a direct connection or not, it was

clear that these cultural initiatives did not change the mind of the Philippine Senate. On 2 March 1972, the Senate rejected the resolution for the ratification of the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation. On 21 September, Marcos declared Martial law on grounds of communist threat to the Philippines. He abolished the Senate and the House of Representatives and ruled like a dictator. On 27 December 1973 he unilaterally declared the commercial treaty as ratified.

Before Martial Law, when freedom of speech and of the press was exercised under a democratic government, public opinion was relevant to foreign policy. There was strong evidence that the public was against the ratification of the commercial treaty and the Senate listened to it. The arguments put forward against the treaty were rebutted by equally plausible arguments. If there was goodwill towards Japan, there would not have been a great difficulty to ratify the treaty. That the treaty had to be declared as ratified by a dictator showed that Japan was not attractive to the Filipino public, but was attractive to Marcos.

5. Martial Law and the Fukuda Doctrine

Nine years of Martial Law (1972-1981) and six more years of dictatorial rule since the lifting of Martial law (1981-1986) in the Philippines coincided with the launching of the Fukuda Doctrine in August 1977. The Fukuda Doctrine was meant to dramatically change Japan's economic diplomacy with ASEAN from one of aggressive trade and profit making to doubling of economic aid to ASEAN countries, promoting friendship with ASEAN, and cultivating cultural relations (Sudo 1992). The doctrine was Japan's response to anti-Japanese demonstrations in many ASEAN countries, particularly in Thailand and Indonesia in 1974, as expressions of protest

against Japan's unfair trade practices (Sudo 1992: 71-72). The impact of the doctrine was less dramatic than its announcement (Sudo 1992: 233-234). Economic aid increased, but Japanese trade surplus vis-à-vis all the ASEAN countries generally remained, and the cultural policy was halfheartedly implemented.

The doubling of economic aid benefited Marcos, who carried a program of extensive infrastructure construction, using foreign loans. In terms of amount, the contribution of Japanese official development assistance (ODA) to Marcos' program which in effect helped to legitimize martial rule averaged only 6 percent of the total external debt of the Philippines between 1973 and 1983. The amount was small, compared to the contributions of the United States (8 percent), the International Monetary Fund (19 percent), and the World Bank (11 percent). On the other hand, it was much easier for Marcos to obtain Japanese ODA and to control its use, because of the hesitation of Japan to put conditionalities on its lending. U.S ODA to the Philippines declined in the 1980s, but Japanese ODA increased and replaced the U.S. as the largest aid-giver to the country (Rivera 2003: 525-526).

With the downfall of the Marcos dictatorship, followed by the assumption to the presidency of Corazon Aquino in 1986, there was a great deal of optimism about the future course of Philippine democracy and development. Bilateral trade with Japan increased in volume, but the balance of trade continued to be in favor of Japan. Expansion of Japanese ODA to the Philippines was a welcome development for the new administration that had to face the responsibility of carrying out economic and administrative reforms, including payment of huge foreign debts incurred by Marcos. In July 1989 Japan joined nineteen countries, the Asian Development Bank, and the International Monetary Fund in forging an agreement that came to be known as the Multilateral Aid Initiative (MAI), locally known in the Philippines as the Philippine

Assistance Program (PAP). In the case of Japan, MAI was significant because it agreed to let the World Bank monitor the Philippines' compliance to the conditions of Japanese aid, except for regular Japanese ODA that continued to be managed bilaterally (Rivera 2003: 529).

For ASEAN as an organization, the Fukuda Doctrine, despite its limited impact, was a turning point in its relations with Japan because of the Japanese official commitment to give importance to ASEAN and to be more proactive in supporting ASEAN's economic development, political stability vis-à-vis the Indochina problem, and forging closer cultural relations. However, for a particular country like the Philippines, it was unfortunate that this important change in Japan's foreign policy happened at the time that the Philippines was not under a democratic government. It was also unfortunate that Japan, under the principle of separating economics from politics, did not discriminate against a dictatorial and corrupt rule. Japanese aid, loans, and investments entered the Philippines, but Marcos had the sole power to decide where to use the loans and the aid, and to which crony to grant the contracts. As a result, Japanese ODA and investments got tainted with corruption. To date, an objective accounting of Japanese economic relations with the Philippines under Martial Law has yet to be made. Through the MAI, however, the Japanese government was, to a certain extent, able to correct its ODA policy, by agreeing to let the World Bank monitor the Philippines' management of ODA.

6. Elite and Popular Attraction to Japan

In the 1960s and 1970s Japan accumulated huge capital through its labor intensive industrialization. Japan had achieved an economic miracle. In 1968 Japan

commemorated the centennial of the Meiji Restoration, inspiring the holding of various conferences on Japanese modernization and publication of books on the topic by American scholars. Intellectual leaders and students looked up to Japan as a model of non-socialist, non-violent modernization. In Asia, the impact on the Philippines must have been most tremendous, because of the easy access by Filipino students and professors to American publications.

Japanese modernization was soft power to Philippine government officials and intellectual elites. So were Japanese arts like ikebana, the performing arts, literature, origami, and films. Wives of department secretaries usually graced Ikebana demonstrations and exhibits (Japan Bulletin 1977 February: 25-26; 1982 February: 4; 1982 July: 4). Cultural performances and films were held at the Cultural Center of the Philippines and the Film Center, to which members of the high society, the diplomatic corps, professionals, businessmen, and students were invited. Literature and origami were taught to high school teachers (Japan Bulletin 1982 May: 9-10; 1983 May: 20).

But the majority of Filipinos had remained oblivious of developments in Japan and the world. Even university students did not display great enthusiasm for Japan. The Japanese Studies Program in Ateneo attracted only a handful of students. So bad was the student turn-out that classes about Japan were not economically viable. As a result, the university, despite the general recognition that Japan was an important model of modernization for the Philippines, hesitated to invest on faculty development and on an undergraduate degree on Japanese Studies. In 1979, the university president wrote: "The basic goals of a strict Japanese Studies Program for majors is out of the question for the Ateneo de Manila. It is not possible to get the students for this, nor are we willing to make the investment of time and money that such a specialized program would require" (Memo 1979). No undergraduate degree

on Japanese Studies was established, but the university continued offering Japanese language along with other foreign languages such as Spanish and French. Elective courses on Japanese history, politics, economics, and foreign relations were also retained. They were usually small classes of a dozen students at the most.

Filipino popular attraction to the rich, industrialized, and modern Japan began only in the 1980s. The factor that propelled it was the high value of the Yen. Many Filipinos, attracted by the good exchange rate of the Yen vis-à-vis the Philippine peso, went to work in Japan. Migration of Filipino workers to Japan began in the 1970s, but it was in the 1980s that the number of registered Filipinos dramatically increased from over 6,000 in 1981 to close to 50,000 in 1991 (Ministry of Justice Homepage). Moreover, by mid-1980s, because of the high cost of domestic labor brought about by tremendous economic growth, many Japanese companies relocated to Southeast Asia, in search of cheap labor. Japanese direct investments abroad surged and began to be significant in the Philippines in the late 1980s (Tecson 2003: 464 – 475). Possibility of employment in Japanese companies after graduating from college became a strong motivation to take up Japanese language and Japanese culture as elective subjects.

A number of schools offering Japanese language outside of the university opened around the same time, catering to all sorts of people, male and female: those who wanted to work in Japan, those who had business with Japanese, those who worked or wished to work in Japanese companies, those who were married to Japanese, those who wanted to study in Japan. The economic gap between the Philippines and Japan helped in bringing about the Japayuki-phenomenon, increase in the number of students who wanted to study in Japan, and increase in the number of Filipina-Japanese marriages.

One undesirable result of the attraction of Filipino workers to Japan is the practice of some workers to continue staying in Japan despite the expiration of their visas. Other undesirable results are cases of maltreatment of the workers by the employers and recruitment agencies. They have caused frictions between the two countries, but there is no evidence that these problems have diminished the attraction of Filipino job seekers to Japan.

Thus, while the late 1970s is the turning point of Japan's policy towards ASEAN, as envisioned by the Fukuda Doctrine, for the Philippines and Japan, the turning point was the late 1980s. This means, the vision of the Fukuda Doctrine began to show obvious results in the late 1980s. The Filipino middle and upper class who had some admiration for Japanese culture, particularly its history of modernization and economic success were joined by the lower class who were attracted to economic opportunities in Japan. It was in the 1980s that Japanese popular culture, such as food, karaoke, manga and anime, began to be appreciated by the lower working class. It may be argued that these aspects of Japanese culture still have not reached the poorest of the poor Filipinos, but compared to the 1950s through the 1970s, Filipinos knowledgeable about Japan and appreciative of things Japanese were less elitist.

The late 1980s was a turning point in Philippines-Japan relations in still another sense. Dissemination of Japanese popular culture by the returned Filipino migrant workers in Japan parallels the cultural diplomacy conducted by the Japan Foundation, whose projects and activities mainly attract Filipino students, professionals, established intellectuals, and mass media. What college students learn about Japan in the classroom and activities sponsored by the Japan Foundation perhaps differs from what a neighbor of a Filipina entertainer in Japan learns from the stories of the entertainer when she comes back to the Philippines.

How the gap between elite and popular attraction to Japan impacts on the attractiveness of Japan to the Philippines, has not been tested yet. It is clear, however, that the Philippine government appreciates Japan not only as the second biggest source of ODA, investments, and trade, but also as a destination of thousands of Filipino workers every year, who regularly send much needed remittances to their families back home.

As a result, the Philippine government has become an important supporter of Japan in international affairs. The impact of Japan's soft economic power on the Philippine government was seen in the support given by the Philippines to many of the Japanese goals in the United Nations and regional organizations. In 1995 the Philippines withdrew its bid for a nonpermanent seat in the Security Council in favor of Japan (Villacorta 2003: 587) The Philippines supports Japan's current bid for a permanent seat in the Security Council (Villacorta 2003: 588). In the ASEAN, the Philippines supports Japan's participation as a dialogue partner.

7. The Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement

Since the ratification of the commercial treaty, the Philippines and Japan have not signed any treaty of significance until the signing of the Japan-Philippines Economic Partnership Agreement (JPEPA) on 9 September 2006 in Helsinki. Unlike the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the Reparations Treaty, and the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation, which were rigorously debated and opposed by public opinion, the JPEPA did not see much public discussion. In rare mention of it in newspapers, objections focused on unequal benefits that the Philippines and Japan would get from the agreement. But the criticisms were expressed without any

reference to World War II or a hint of anti-Japanese sentiment. On the contrary, the critical remarks seemed to target the Philippine government more than they targeted the Japanese government. The political opposition and the Fair Trade Alliance, a multi-sectoral NGO, criticized and still criticize the Philippine government for lack of transparency on the details of the agreement (PDI 16 June 2005:B-6; 17 June 2005: B-1). Several weeks after the news of its signing in Helsinki, several dailies carried news that through the agreement, the Japanese government will export without tariff hazardous materials to the Philippines (PDI 26 October 2006: A-1, A-13; Philippine Star 26 October 2006: 1; 11). The Philippine Senate, in response, urged the Philippine president to submit to the Senate the agreement for scrutiny.

While bilateral free trade is provided for in the agreement, it takes secondary importance, at least from the point of view of the Philippine government, to an understanding that enabling laws of the agreement would allow the entry of Filipino information technology (IT) workers, nurses, and caregivers to Japan. Before these new type of workers can enter Japan, they will have to learn the Japanese language, and show proof of proficiency by passing the Japanese government's Japanese language proficiency test. Such a requirement certainly is necessary to assure efficient performance, but there is more to it. The requirement would open an opportunity for the Japanese government to push the learning of Japanese, and thus, further promote its wider use in Asia, if not the whole world.

The signing of the JPEPA signifies the deepening of the inter-twining relationship between economics and culture, which began in the late 1980s. JPEPA embodies the close relationship between economics and culture more than the earlier treaties between the Philippines and Japan. Fifty years after the resumption of Philippines-Japan relations, the two states signed a treaty that attests to the fact that

economic needs of Filipinos create opportunities for Japan to promote Japanese culture, especially Japanese language. In the 1950s through the 1970s Japan tried to use cultural diplomacy to achieve economic goals; in the 1980s through the present Japan's economic stature and capability are the ones reinforcing the spread of Japanese culture. The agents are not just Japanese, but Filipinos as well.

Conclusion

The cultural diplomacy that Japan used in the 1950s through the 70s did not significantly change the unsympathetic Philippine public opinion about Japan. Negative memories of World War II lingered and the mass media often referred to them as a way of illustrating their objections to the San Francisco Peace Treaty, the War Reparations Treaty, and the Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation. The treaties were finally ratified not as a result of Japanese cultural diplomacy, but because of pragmatic considerations, such as the prospects for grants, loans, trade, and investment.

This shows that soft power in the form of cultural diplomacy is not as potent as soft economic power as far as Japan's ability to make the Philippines do what it wishes it to do is concerned.

On the other hand, the cultural diplomacy that Japan launched in the 1950s through the 1970s is not wasted. It exposed the Filipino upper and middle class to the high brow Japanese culture. Such exposure was not the factor that made the Philippine Senate ratify the treaties, but it was nonetheless a cultural capital that contributes to the Filipino elite's understanding of Japan.

The Japanese experience of modernizing without losing the traditional culture in the last half of the nineteenth century and the Japanese economic miracle of the 1960s are part of the Japanese culture admired by the Filipino intellectuals. This should be distinguished from the aggressive economic diplomacy Japan embarked on in the 1950s through the 1970s, which earned the ire of Southeast Asians, including the Filipinos. There were no violent protests in Manila, as there were in Bangkok and Jakarta, but this was mainly because the Philippines was under Martial Law.

Filipino appreciation of Japan assumed a wider social base only in the 1980s, when thousands of Filipinos sought employment in Japan. To them, the attraction of Japan was basically economic opportunity. These Filipino workers go back to the Philippines and unwittingly become agents of the spread of Japanese culture in the Philippines. The popular culture that they appreciate and bring to the Philippines is different from the high culture that the Japan Foundation promotes. Such difference has not overtly figured yet in the Philippine's foreign policy towards Japan, but the Philippine government recognizes that Japan is an importation destination of Filipino migrant workers, and source of much needed remittances. This, again, is soft economic power.

The turning point of Philippines-Japan relations was the late1980s in terms of the widening of the social base of Filipinos who had some knowledge of Japan, and in terms of the tighter inter-twining of economics and culture. In the late 1980s there was great demand for teachers of Japanese language, and information about Japan. The cultural diplomacy that Japan launched in the decades before the 1980s, and the institutions created, enabled both Japan and the Philippines to meet these demands.

In September 2006 the Philippines and Japan signed the JPEPA, an agreement that is significant for embodying the inter-twining of economics and culture. Filipino

IT workers and caregivers will be allowed to enter Japan, but one of the conditions is a high level of Japanese language proficiency. The Philippines' need for job opportunities is now officially an opportunity for the Japanese government to promote the Japanese language abroad.

The case of Japan's cultural diplomacy in the Philippines in the last fifty years shows that cultural diplomacy does not always produce the desired results; neither does it have results immediately. It is nevertheless a valuable capital that is useful for its own sake and that may become useful for other purposes in due time.

Bibliography

Alegre, Aurelio D. 1967. "Japanese Economic Penetration." *Examiner*. 26 November:

Almario, Manuel F. 1968. "A Second Japanese Invasion." *Graphic*. 22 May.

Barranco, Vic. 1970. " Remember the 'Hayun Maru'." *Examiner*. 25 April.

Bitong, Ernesto T. 1957. "The Japanese are Back!" *Philippines Free Press*. 18 May.

Calica, Pio. 1935. *Japan Footnotes.* [Manila]: publisher not known

Farolan, Modesto. 1934. *Japan at a Glance: Travel Impressions, a Study in Japan-Philippine Relations*. Manila: publisher not known.

"Jap Boy Scouts in National Jamboree." 1954. *Philippines Free Press*. April.

Japan Bulletin. Various dates

Japanese-Philippine Basketball Friendship Matches brochure. 1952. 2-12 February. (personal copy of the author).

Jose, Lydia N. Yu. 1998. "Philippines-Japan Relations: The Revolutionary Years and a Century Hence," in Baviera, Aileen and Jose, Lydia N. Yu, eds. *Philippine External Relations: A Centennial Vista*. Manila: Foreign Service Institute, Department of Foreign Affairs.

Jose, Lydia N. Yu. 1999. *Japan Views the Philippines.* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University Press.

Maramag, Ileana. 1966. "Progress through Peace." *Chronicle Magazine*. 29 January: 6-11

Memo. 1979. Bienvenido F. Nebres, Dean, School of Arts and Sciences, Ateneo de Manila University, to Joseph Pittau and Michael Yanase, 28 August.

Memorandum. [1966]. The Japanese Studies Program, Ateneo de Manila University.

Meyer, Milton Walter. 1965. *A Diplomatic History of the Philippine Republic.* Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Ministry of Justice Homepage (Japan). http://www.moj.go.jp/PRESS/010613-1/010613-1-3.html. Viewed on 1 October 2001.

"Must We Have Roads and Peace at the Price of Our Self-Respect?" 1967. *Weekly Graphic*, 1 November.

Nakagawa, Toru. 1953. "Japan-Philippine Relations." *Fookien Times Yearbook.*

PDI (*Philippine Daily Inquirer*). 2005 June; 2006 October.

Philippine Star. 2006 October

Report..1969. The Director [Haruo Tsuru] of the Japanese Studies Program of the Ateneo de Manila University. February.

Rivera, Temario C. 2003. "The Politics of Japanese ODA in the Philippines, 1971-1999," in Ikehata, Setsuho and Jose, Lydia N. Yu, eds. *Philippines-Japan Relations.* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University.

Sanvictores, Philip. 1993. "A School is Born." *The Philippines-Japan Digest*. Vol. XVIII, No. 1 (February)

Sato, Torao. 1994. *Firipin to Nihon: Koryu 500 nen* [Five Centuries of Filipino-Japanese Relations]. Tokyo: The Simul Press

Serrano, Paquito. 1952. "Japan Uses Her Youth." *Philippines Free Press*. August.

Serrano, Paquito. 1953. "Japan and Her Pen Pal Clubs." *Philippines Free Press*. January.

Sudo, Sueo. 1992. *The Fukuda Doctrine and ASEAN*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Takamatsu (Prince). 1952. Message in Japanese-Philippine Basketball Friendship Matches brochure, 2-12 February. (personal copy of the author)

Tecson, Gwendolyn R. 2003. "Postwar Japanese Direct Investments," in Ikehata, Setsuho and Jose, Lydia N. Yu, eds. *Philippines-Japan Relations.* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University.

Vargas, [Jorge]. 1952. Mmessage in Japanese-Philippine Basketball Friendship Matches brochure, 2-12 February. (personal copy of the author)

Villacorta, Wilfrido V. 2003. "Political Relations between Japan and the Philippines during the Aquino and Ramos Administrations," in Ikehata, Setsuho and Jose, Lydia N. Yu, eds. *Philippines-Japan Relations.* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University.

Weekly Graphic. 1967

Yoshikawa, Yoko. 2003. "War Reparations Implementation, Reparations-Secured Loans and a Treaty of Commerce," in Ikehata, Setsuho and Jose, Lydia N. Yu, eds. *Philippines-Japan Relations.* Quezon City: Ateneo de Manila University.