

Editors' Note: A New Research Agenda, A New Peace Journal

Launching a new peace studies journal, the editors-in-chief would like to express our deep gratitude to those prominent peace researchers and peace practitioners around the world whose expertise and enthusiasm have made this publication possible. They have participated in launching the *Asian Journal of Peacebuilding* (AJP), either as contributors, executive editors, regional editors, or as editorial board members. And some of them have already served as reviewers of the papers included in this issue.

Special acknowledgment goes to two Nobel Peace Laureates, Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, who permitted her speech to be published in this issue, and José Romos-Horta, who has accepted membership on the journal's editorial board.

The launching of AJP has special significance both in peace studies and in peacebuilding. First, AJP seriously commits not only to promoting traditional topics on conflict, violence, and peace, but also to expanding the scope of peace research at the interface of the humanities and social science. The expansion of the scope is one of the key points that AJP aims to achieve under the auspices of the Institute for Peace and Unification Studies at Seoul National University. In peace studies, a multidisciplinary approach is common. But it is fair to say that individual social science disciplines, such as political science, sociology, psychology and law, have independently dealt with common subjects regarding conflict, violence, human rights, peacebuilding, reconciliation, etc. Disciplines in the humanities—perhaps with the exception of history—have not exhibited keen awareness that some of their subjects may also be considered those of peace research. For instance, literature on famine in Ireland, China, and North Korea may be considered important peace research materials when examining such extreme situations of human suffering in a comparative context.

Second, AJP is concerned with new challenges in Asia, whether they take the form of direct violence or looming dangers. The dual-use of nuclear technology is a dangerous downward spiral threatening the region. Also, we observe that development is not necessarily followed by democratization, and democratization is not automatically accompanied by restoring human rights or reaching resolution to past state violence or ethnic conflicts. Development may bring about new forms of ecological destruction, and democratization sometimes falls into the trap of rigid institutionalization and proceduralism. Despite the globalization effect of interconnecting elements at different levels, the trap of rigidity perpetuates peacelessness and often destabilizes situations, leading to violence

as a means of resolving deadlocks. Furthermore, historical disputes surrounding Japan's invasion and colonization of neighboring states, which were submerged during the Cold War, have reemerged to obstruct inter-state cooperation in the region. Territorial disputes counterbalance deepening cooperative economic interdependence. Open conflict is unlikely to occur in the near future, but the absence of preventive measures and institutions creates a dangerous situation. AJP aims to shed light on such potentially dangerous sources of conflict and to call attention to feasible solutions.

Third, AJP ultimately aims at intellectual intervention in practicing peace and peacebuilding. Above all, AJP intends to expand the space for deepened and shared understanding of the problems under examination. As an example, comprehension of conflicts between ethnic or religious groups requires not only rigorous analysis of the relevant actors' rational calculations, but also close examination of their particular historical memories and wounds. This is so because vicious circles of conflict and violence almost always have singular historical backgrounds. Even in the case of terrorism, a perpetrator's motivation is so complex and historically dependent that a political explanation is not sufficient to account for such indiscriminate brutal action. Next, intellectual intervention involves the promotion of the capacity for reflection and communication between relevant actors and groups. In most cases of cruel conflict and violence in the 20th century, actors and groups criticized the offensiveness and exclusiveness of their opponents, but they did not recognize that their vocabulary and perceptions were filled with similar bellicose and exclusivist traits. The vocabulary that Americans and Japanese used to depict each other during the Pacific War, for instance, was extremely racist and chauvinistic on both sides. Peace education is an important instrument to help promote self-reflection and communication between opposing actors and groups. Finally, intellectual intervention involves the promotion of both healing wounds and elimination of hatred and anger. Peacebuilding is not simply institutionalizing formal structures, but also touching the deep scars of the victims of conflict. This process typically goes along with transformative transitional justice that aims to establish or restore the human dignity of victims and to incorporate the perpetrators into the new social order.

The five research papers in this issue represent diverse aspects of peacelessness and peacebuilding. The first two papers are exemplary works dealing with gradual reconciliation through learning and reflection. Salomon's paper is a penetrating work on peace education, particularly in a region of enduring hostility and antagonism. Admitting the limitations of peace education, in its durability in particular, he highlights alternative ways of restoring its effects, including learning from other cases, such as the process of reconciliation in the Northern Ireland conflict. Palmer's paper presents an alternative experience-based model of reconciliation between two peoples with historical animosity. The traditional cultural forms, including poetry and art, are vehicles for expressing

repentance, and they can ignite promising social movements even without formal organization. For the use of his drawings in this article, Bokunenjin, a 90-year old gentleman, kindly granted his permission.

By contrast, Buszynski's and Chachavalpongpun's papers both deal with disputes over competing territorial sovereignty. Buszynski's paper highlights the sources of conflicting national claims, as well as China's assertive moves, in the South China Sea. The danger is not an immediate conflict between the competing claimants, but the absence of measures and mechanisms to prevent miscalculation. Chachavalpongpun's paper finds the origin of the Thai-Cambodia border dispute in Thai domestic politics, but attributes the protracted nature of dispute to ASEAN's limited role in mediating inter-state conflict in the region. His paper shows the limitations on the role of international organizations in the event of disputes over territorial sovereignty. Finally, Kim's paper exposes to readers the contradictory post-Fukushima phenomenon, particularly the phenomenon of drifting but persisting nuclear power in Japan. Despite the mushrooming anti-nuclear power plant movements, the dominant actors do not back off from the already achieved full nuclear fuel cycle, particularly reprocessing and uranium enrichment.

One research note and two lecture notes are also included. Haberkorn deals with the relationship between transitional justice and documentation, highlighting how the lack or dislocation of the latter interferes with state accountability over past violence. Daw Aung San Suu Kyi, in her lecture delivered at Seoul National University in February 2013, talks about the difficulties as well as the vision in the Burmese democratization process. As to ethnic conflict particularly, the Nobel Peace Laureate emphasizes the promotion of the capacity of communication and healing. She aptly emphasizes this point by saying that since conflict begins with hatred, its resolution must begin from the heart. Meanwhile, in her keynote speech on refugee rights at Korea University in October 2012, Barbara Harrell-Bond, the founder of the Refugee Studies Centre at Oxford University, warns of a global crisis as the number of refugees reaches 800,000, and proposes a government-civil society model of cooperation. In relation to the protection of refugee rights, the most urgent issues include protection of religion-based refugees, strengthening of legal provisions, and the lowering of the legal walls of the hosting countries.

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