

# ARAB-JAPANESE RELATIONS

MISHIMA SYMPOSIUM

Japan National Committee for the Study  
of Arab-Japanese Relations

ARAB-JAPANESE RELATIONS MISHIMA SYMPOSIUM

## PREFACE

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The Second International Symposium on Arab-Japanese Relations was held at the College of International Relations of Nihon University in Mishima-Shizuoka, Japan, September 9 - 11, 1981 and was attended by some 40 participants and observers, including five Arab scholars. The symposium was sponsored by Abu Dhabi Oil Co. Ltd., IDEMITSU KOSAN Co. Ltd., Institute of Developing Economies, Japan Oil Development Co. Ltd., Japan Foundation, Kuwait-Japan Society, Saudi Arabia-Japan Society, Toyota Foundation and United Arab Emirates-Japan Society, in cooperation with the Nihon University and Middle East Institute of Japan.

The present report contains the papers submitted which focus on either "Mutual Perception-Japanese Image and Arab's Image-" or "Cultural and Economic Relations between Japan and the Arab World". We believe that this report will be very useful to further our joint study project.

Finally, we wish to express our warmest thanks to the above organizations whose generous aids helped make the symposium itself and this report possible.

October, 1982

Shinji Maejima  
Chairman, Japan National Committee  
for the Study of Arab-Japanese  
Relations

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## PROGRAM

274372

### Opening Session and Reception

September 9 (Wednesday), 18:00-20:00  
Mishima Plaza Hotel  
(14-31, Hon-cho, Mishima-shi, Shizuoka-ken.  
Phone: 0559-72-2121)

### First Session: Mutual Perception, Japanese Image and Arab's Image

September 10 (Thursday)  
Mishima Campus, Nihon University  
(2-31, Bunkyo-cho, Mishima-shi, Shizuoka-ken.  
Phone: 0559-86-5500)

Chairmen: M. Safey Abulezz  
Yoshiro Mutaguchi

10:00-11:00 Japan and the Arab World - Images and Relations.  
Hanna Nasir

11:00-12:00 Perception of the Arab World in Japan.  
Yoshiho Maeda

Lunch Break

14:00-15:00 The Image of the Japanese as perceived by Arab University Students.  
Mohammad Issa Barhoum

15:00-16:00 Some Aspects on Understanding Arab Culture.  
Nobuaki Nutahara

### Second Session: Cultural and Economic Relations between Japan and the Arab World

September 10 (Thursday)  
Mishima Campus, Nihon University

Chairmen: M. Safey Abulezz  
Ootori Kurino

16:30-17:30 Recent Economic Relations between Japan and the Arab World.  
San-eki Nakaoka

September 11 (Friday)

10:00-11:00 The Commercial Relations between Kuwait and Japan.  
Abdullah Youssef al-Ghunaim

11:00-12:00 The Economic Development and Technology Transfer.  
Masuo Tomioka

12:00-13:00 Introduction to Arab-Japan Mutual Image and Culture -Personal Experience and Analysis-  
Seif al-Wady al-Romahi

Lunch Break

### Concluding Discussion and Closing Session

September 11 (Friday), 15:00-17:00  
Mishima Campus, Nihon University

Chairman: Michitoshi Takahashi

Rapporteur: Yuzo Itagaki  
Takeji Inoh

## LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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ABULEZZ, M. Safey	Chairman of Geography Department, Faculty of Arts, Kuwait University
AOKI, Kazuyoshi	Professor, College of International Relations, Nihon University
BARHOUM, Mohammad Issa	Professor, Sociology Department, Faculty of Arts, University of Jordan
GHUNAIM, Abdullah Yousef	Dean of Faculty of Arts, Kuwait University
HORI, Tasuku	Director, Library, Institute of Developing Economies
INOH, Takeji	Area Studies Department, Institute of Developing Economies
ITAGAKI, Yuzo	Professor, University of Tokyo
KAGAYA, Hiroshi	Professor, Osaka University of Foreign Studies
KIMURA, Yoshihiro	Area Studies Department, Institute of Developing Economies
KURINO, Ootori	Professor, Hiroshima University
MAEDA, Yoshiho	Professor, Kanazawa University
MATSUMOTO, Hirokazu	Professor, College of International Relations, Nihon University
MIKI, Wataru	Professor, Institute for the Study of Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

MUTAGUCHI, Yoshiro	Senior Writer, the Asahi Shimbun
NAGABA, Hiroshi	Library, Institute of Developing Economies
NAKAOKA, San-eki	Professor, International College of Commerce and Economics
NASIR, Hanna	President, Birzeit University
NUTAHARA, Nobuaki	Professor, Tokyo University of Foreign Studies
ODAKA, Masanao	Councilor, Bank of Tokyo
al-ROMAHI, Seif al-Wady	Director, Diplomatic Training Programs, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, United Arab Emirates
TAKAHASHI, Michitoshi	Professor, College of International Relations, Nihon University
TOMIOKA, Masuo	Professor, Kanagawa University
YOSHIDA, Goro	Professor, Seikei University
- Guests and Observers -	
ABE, Masao	Professor, Tokai University
AZHARI, Khelil	Director, League of Arab States in Tokyo
HOTTA, Kenji	Professor, Nihon University
IZUMISAWA, Kumiko	Library, Institute of Developing Economies
KATAKURA, Motoko	Professor, National Museum of Ethnology
KAWATOKO, Mutsuo	Researcher, Middle Eastern Cultural Center

KOBAYASHI, Kayo	Institute of Developing Economies
KURANAMI, Shoji	Professor, Nihon University
NISHIDA, Hiroko	Professor, Nihon University
OKUDA, Yoshiro	Mayor, Mishima City
QURESHI, M. Naeem	Professor, Quai-i-Azam University
SATO, Hiroshi	Current Affairs Department, Institute of Developing Economies
SEKIBA, Riichi	PLO Office of Japan
SHIMIZU, Manabu	Current Affairs Department, Institute of Developing Economies
TANADA, Hirobumi	Waseda University
WANIBUCHI, Kazuo	Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

## OPENING SESSION

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The opening ceremony was held under the chairmanship of Dr. San-eki Nakaoka. After his cordial thanks to several organizations for their financial support to this symposium, Dr. Michitoshi Takahashi delivered an opening address on behalf of Dr. Shinji Maejima, chairman of the Japan National Committee for the Study of Arab-Japanese Relations. He expressed his hopes that this second symposium could make a great contribution to the mutual understanding between the Arab and the Japanese.

Then Dr. Hanna Nasir of Bir-Zeit University made a speech, representing the Arab participants. After introducing his colleagues, he emphasized that this symposium could map the strategy for further relations between Japan and the Arab world. After his speech, his Excellency Mr. Khelil Azhari, Director of the League of Arab States in Tokyo, made a congratulatory message, expressing his hope that we, Japan and the Arab, should develop cultural and political relations more and more. Then a message of greeting from Mr. Fathi Abdul-Hamid, Director of the PLO office of Japan was announced by Dr. Nakaoka. This was followed by welcome speeches by Mr. Yoshiro Okuda, mayor of Mishima city, and Professor Shoji Kuranami, on behalf of Nihon University.

## JAPAN AND THE ARAB WORLD - IMAGES AND RELATIONS-

*Hanna Nasir*

Over the past decades, there has been many exchanges on many levels between Japan and the Arab World, mostly on the economic and to a less degree on the cultural level. High volume of trade, however, does not touch the average citizen. An Arab asked about Japan, will immediately say "transistor radios, TV, car-amazing economy" and yet hardly know more about Japanese people, their history, their needs, hopes and daily life. I am sure the same is true of the Japanese outlook towards the Arabs. Take me as an example-before I visited Japan last year to participate in a conference on Jerusalem, I had an impression of Japan as a purely business oriented nation - but what I saw in the short time that I stayed there was a culture of deep tradition and sensitivity. This is just an example - what about the millions of Arabs in all spheres of life who know next to nothing about Japan? It is clear that this conference must try to map a course for exchange between these two important worlds at the opposite extremes of Asia.

### 1. Guidelines

What guidelines can we adopt to map out such a strategy. May I suggest two main guidelines which are needed: 1 - sober realism: there are many differences as well as many similarities

between the two peoples. For best results these factors have to be taken fully into consideration. 2 - To benefit from the experience of the Arab World with the other developed countries of the world; to avoid the pitfalls where they have occurred, and to adopt successful policies where they have succeeded.

In my brief paper, I will try to be guided by these points and as I see the situation from my perspective and experience - not as a social scientist, who normally deals with such matters - but as a person involved in education and politics as well. This will be my limited contribution to this conference. In a sense it is inevitable: the very lack of experience I have vis-a-vis Japan is a symptom of the barriers between the two worlds which this conference is trying to bridge.

### 2. Differences and Similarities

A look at the map will immediately reveal the source of many of the problems we face in this conference. The great landmass of Asia separates our two peoples and nations. Japan is a relatively small isolated island set away from the traditional trade routes of antiquity. The Arab world - on the other hand - is a vast stretch of land spread between Africa and Asia, and acting as a hub linking these two continents with Europe. Since time immemorial, traders, armies and travellers have criss-crossed the region, giving rise to an amazing history of cultural and political diversity. Besides these different geographical and

historical backgrounds, not to mention the great difference between Japan, with its lack of resources, and the Arab world with the most important resource, oil, there is the difference in the state of development. The Arab world flourished in the middle ages giving rise to a great civilization which then faced a dark period of decay. Only now we are struggling, against many fierce odds, to rise from this level. Japan's experience is quite different, and it is at this moment perhaps at the peak of its development, rivalling the worlds largest and best economies and technologies. Any relations between such different groups must be difficult: on the one hand Japan must be aware of the temptations of power - the very human weakness of thinking that might is right. It is a subtle and unfortunate idea that has spoiled the relationship between the Arab world and the West- this is the experience of imperialism. Fortunately Japan has no such history of direct imperialism, but it must be aware of other hidden forms of the same historical disease - e.g. economic imperialism.

Fortunately there are many similarities between the two peoples and cultures: We are both vaguely oriental, or at best non-western; our cultures are based on ancient traditions- primarily on a religious basis- which permeated our lives. Also it has been remarked that both the Japanese and the Arabs are deeply emotional: the difference is how we show these emotions. The Arabs are extroverts, dreamers, interacting on the level

of the individual man to man. The Japanese are perhaps much more practical, organizing themselves into groups to achieve their realistic aspirations. The hand is the symbol of the Japanese, whether it is the hand of the craftsman or engineer or even the karate expert. The Japanese seem to function in a practical tangible way in harmony with their surrounding. For the Arabs, the eye is a much more apt symbol: from the eyes of the Arab astronomers of the desert who gave Arabic names to the stars (still in use in the West today), to the eyes of Zarqa' El-yamama, the Arab poetess who was famous for keen vision, to the eyes of the poor Arab children, looking for future hope they can only dream about.

A hand without vision is useless - a mere tool that works automatically just for the sake of production, with no sense of the reason it is working; is this not the danger facing Japan? An overheated productive economy invading the world without an integrated vision of Japan's place in the world? An eye without action, on the other hand, shows the problems of the Arab world - a burning vision for independence and development, but without concerted action to achieve these goals. Clearly Japan and the Arab World can learn a lot from each other.

### 3. Arab World Relations with the West: How Relevant is it to Arab-Japanese Relations

The Arab World- deep rooted in Eastern culture finds it-



self almost abnormally swayed towards the West. Our mode of life has been heavily influenced by Western attitudes. Our economic system is by large Western and our educational systems borrow heavily from the West. Moreover, most of our high level manpower has been trained in the West. At the same time, score of Western institutions exist in the Arab world, whose primary objective is to expose the Arab world more to the western culture.

Yet, all these influences have not been able to create a healthy and confident relation between the West and the Arab world. Some of the reasons are historical: The Crusades and the resulting occupation of parts of the Arab world from 1096 to 1291 continues to be a sour reminder of the imperialistic attitudes of the West. The Arabs view the Crusaders as a political movement engulfed in a religious cover, and reminds them of a similar present day movement - i.e. zionism.

Other factors which strains relations between the Arab world and the West are purely religious. The Arab world is by far Moslem, and the Christian West has been unable to understand the full significance and impact of Islam- not only as a religion, but also as a social culture that has lifted the Arabs during the early days of Islam from a backward society into a highly intricate and sophisticated one.

True the Arabs at present are in a state of underdevelopment, but the reason is certainly not religious in nature.

Islam was also misunderstood by the western orientalist who were unable to expose its true nature to the West.

A third factor which contributes to the causes of strained relations is a modern political one. The West has associated itself with the arch enemy of the Arab world, namely Israel. Moreover, the West has been unable to conceive the justice that lies behind the Palestinian cause and has been most insensitive towards the political aspirations of the Arabs in general and the Palestinians in particular.

As has been mentioned earlier, Japan has fortunately a clean history in its relation with the Arab world. It has none of the historic residues of imperialism vis-a-vis the Arab world and thus the ground is healthy and well suited for fruitful relations that are based on mutual respect and the understanding of each other's strengths and weaknesses.

#### 4. Practical Matters

Inspite of the presence of oil in the Arab world, yet we as Arabs do realize our present state of underdevelopment. Initiatives for fruitful relations would possibly come more from Japan towards the Arab world rather than in the other direction. At the same time, the Arabs should not expect miracles- because building relations, as well as getting developed is a process that takes more than money. It simply takes time and what is important is to pave the way for such a process. Certain

suggestions will now be made on the practical level:

a) Educational and Cultural: Fruitful relations are best strengthened through educational and cultural means. It is actually surprising to note that Japan - as a developed nation - is not yet involved seriously in the educational or cultural life in the Arab world. The Arab world is full of American, British and German culture centers. But one has still to see one Japanese cultural center. Arab universities have scores of Europeans and Americans on its staff but extremely few Japanese. Arab students study mostly for their higher degrees in the West and few go to Japan.

A program of scholarships for Arabs to study in Japan would be very valuable to bridge the cultural differences. Faculty and student exchange programs are a two way communication channel which also bring the two cultures together. Of course there are now several training programs set in the Arab world by the Japanese industry (eg. maintenance and repair of electronic equipment), but these are usually commercially oriented and have a limited purpose. I am sure the Arab world will look most positively at educational exchange programs. As a person involved in higher education in the Palestinian territories occupied by Israel, I can assure you of our great interest in such an exchange program. Not only will it help us in our educational challenge, but it will have political overtones that can be very relevant for the future.

Because of the military occupation, educational exchange programs in the West Bank and Gaza are not very easy to implement. However such programs have been implemented by national and international organizations and the results have been worth all the efforts taken.

b) Another practical suggestion is the holding of specialized conferences and seminars in Japan and the Arab world for a better understanding of the two cultures. The Jerusalem conference that was held in Japan last year was certainly a step in the right direction and it addressed itself to some of the particular political problems in the area. Conferences on cultural issues would be also excessively valuable and I would like to take the opportunity to suggest a general seminar on Islam to be held soon in Japan, and to be attended by Japanese, Arab and international scholars. Such a conference can give a thorough exposition of Islam to the Japanese people and possibly clear some of the misconceptions about it.

c) A third suggestion is a political one: At present the Arab world is in a major conflict with Israel. Although the problem looks localized, yet it is international in magnitude and several countries are involved, one way or the other in that serious conflict.

At present, the issue seems to be controversial. However, deep analysis of the causes can clearly indicate that the roots of the conflict are rights vs wrongs. The Palestinian, who were

thrown away out of their own country in order to make way for the Jews who suffered on the hands of the West, refuse to pay for the sins of the West. At the same time the Palestinians realize the difficulties of solving the problem on the basis of solely our historic rights. That is why we constantly look at the international world to help in defusing the volatile situation. Of course, Japan could play a vital role in that direction. We do realize the constraints placed on Japan by the USA, but similar constraints have been placed on the European countries and they were able to come up with independent solutions. Japan could possibly do a similar gesture.

At the same time one should realize that such gestures should be a first step towards more positive stands. Let me elaborate on one aspect only. The full recognition of the Palestine Liberation Organization is a step that has to be taken. The significance of the recognition is that it makes it clear who the representatives of the Palestinian people are and with whom one is to negotiate concerning a possible solution. Such a recognition is undoubtedly a necessary condition, but certainly not sufficient towards the solution. Other steps have to follow, but it is extremely difficult to bridge relations with nations, if they do not recognize you. That is why I stress at this moment the importance of full recognition of the PLO. It is only after such recognition that further steps can be taken towards a positive solution of the Palestinian problem.

## 5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have made several observations on the differences and similarities between the Japanese and the Arabs. I have also indicated some of the reasons for our strained relations with the West and given suggestions for healthy and strong relations between the Arab world and Japan.

I have tried to steer away very clearly from the vital issue of oil. This I conceive is a very complex issue which unfortunately could be used as a weapon. I prefer to think of it as a lubricant for human relations. Besides, oil is basically a transitory commodity: very soon it will be depleted. What we should strive for are the values that make us better human beings.

## PERCEPTION OF THE ARAB WORLD IN JAPAN

*Yoshiho Maeda*

(1)

The role of education in making a national image is very great. It is all the more so in Japan where since the Meiji era the compulsory education system has spread out more rapidly and perfectly than in any other countries in the world.

So, at first I will consider historically and by stages how Japanese school textbooks have dealt with the Middle East or Arab world. The first reason for it is as follows. In Japan from the early times of 1903 to the end of World War II all the school textbooks were compiled by the government, therefore by this approach, we can make it clear what kind of knowledge about the Middle East or Arab world the government intended to implant in the coming generation. The second reason is that by this approach the historical background of the contemporary Japanese people's perception towards the Middle East or Arab world will become apparent.

I begin my consideration by establishing four periods. The first period is from the early part of the 20th century to the end of World War II. The prominent feature of this period is the entire confusion or misunderstanding about the Middle East or Arab world. In the end of the 19th century one school textbook said "In Jerusalem there exists the grave of Muhammad,

the founder of the Christian religion", paying attention to the Arabic that has been spreading into the neighboring countries in Orient. Unprecise description such as "the races of West Asia belongs to the European races" stood out prominently in the first national school textbook of 1903. In 1918 just after the end of World War I, in spite of the predominant description about Europe and America, one textbook said "In Asia there are no independent countries except Japan and China. The greater part of Asia are territories of European countries". With regard to the Middle East or Arab world only the Suez Canal was referred to.

The second period is during World War II. The prominent feature of this period is in a word "Return to Asia". In a sense, in contrast with the former period, Asia in general came to be dealt with in great detail. But the fundamental viewpoint was geopolitical in accordance with the invasion into China and South East Asia by Japan imperialism. The school textbook of 1944 said "The peoples of West Asia are Asians but believe in Islam. Soon they will return to their real status as the Asians accompanied by Indian people". This description meant that the Japanese government desired the peoples of West Asia to join in what we call "the Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere" led by Japan. Moreover, the same textbook said "West Asia is the region of highlands and desert" and paid attention to the oil field of Kavkaz in the Central Asia. It also

said "Peoples in West Asia are Muslims who believe in desertlike strict religion of Islam", and not forgetting to point out that they wear the white clothes (probably it means Garaviiya) made in Japan.

What I want to point out particularly in these periods is how "Palestine Problem" was dealt with throughout before and during World War II. So far as "Palestine" is concerned, it always been mentioned, but explained only as the place where Jewish state had existed religiously. "Palestine Problem" having been on the rise since the Balfour Decralation in 1917 was entirely neglected. In 1944 just before the end of World War II it was described that "Palestine" was the Home of Jews. It reveals that the neglect of the Middle East or Arab world is caused by the ignorance of it.

The third period is mainly from the end of World War II to the 60's. The prominent feature in this period is that the world historical viewpoint was introduced by the reformation of the educational system after World War II. That is to say, the viewpoints were of the independence and liberation of the Asian-African peoples. The position and culture of Japan were relatively treated as one of the various customs of Food, Clothing and Shelter or of religions in human societies. Indeed, the formation of such situation was a great advance, but it did not deepen the recognition of the Middle East or Arab world at the national level firstly because of the backwardness of the researches in the Middle East or Arab world and secondly

because of not getting rid of the mechanical application of the government licensed Marxist notions such as "national bourgeoisie" or "comprador bourgeoisie". I must point out, however, that finally in this period, though a little but too late, the full-fledged researches in the Middle East or Arab world was launched on.

The fourth period is after the 70's. The prominent feature of this period is that the national interests in the Middle East or Arab world have advanced phenomenally. But, at the same time in this period a kind of "separation from Asia", that is, the tendency of emphasizing on the Japanese national interest, in other word, "Return to Japan" has begun. One among all the things that I must point out here is that the phrase of "national independence of Asia-African peoples" was disappeared. Instead of it, thought of "Mankind and Environment" or "Population problem and the Resources of Energy" was laid in the center of the civic course and the empty word of "the understanding of international society" and the practical study of languages were emphasized. It was just the pragmatism and the attitude of, as it were, "Enlightened cultural historical view". It means, as one financier mentioned, we should learn not the stream of politics and society but "the maintenance of international peace and friendship" based on the accumulation of the fragmentary knowledge. I think, the Japanese interest for profit, such as "Oil Power" or "Islam Power" has originated in this attitude.

There can be seen no subjective recognition of the Middle East or Arab world based on the historical perception.

(2)

Here I will bring the essential points to light.

First, the understanding of the Japanese people towards the Middle East or Arab world till the 70's was always distorted and not based on the consistent historical background. In contrast with European peoples who have had the profound but quite prejudiced image about the Middle East and Arab world because of their traditionally imperialistic commitment to this region, the Japanese people having been noncommittal to the Middle East or Arab world had poor image in the background of it.

Secondly, it is remarkable that in Japan the Middle East or Arab world has been grasped at any rate as a corner of the "East" or "Asia", different from in the western Europe, and not polluted by bad "virus" of the image "underdeveloped or stupid Arab and Islam world".

Thirdly, these situations have been greatly changing after the 70's. It is sure that the interest in the Middle East or Arab world at the national level comes to be more profound than in any other periods of the past. The connection of the Japanese Red Army with some fedayees of Palestine Liberation Organization made the Middle East or Arab world more familiar to the Japanese people through "Palestine Problem". But, what made

their concern with this region decisive was the problems of energy resources in terms of "Oil shock". In this sense, it may be said that the interest of the Japanese people in the Middle East or Arab world was not originated from the subjective solidarity or sympathy with the friendly Asian countries but from that of the economical interest of Japan itself. In the following I reconsider in detail about it.

(3)

First of all, I bring with the facts. According to the questionair which was conducted in 1980 to the pupils of the 6th grade of the primary school and of the 1st grade of the junior high school, they cited "Iran" as the most dislikable country next to the Soviet Union. The reasons for it were those that Iran only raised the oil price without supplying oil to Japan and took some American persons as hostages. In this very result comes out the civilization-centered viewpoint of Japanese people. Though Iran does not belong to the Arab world, she consists of the Arab world as images of them. Moreover, their reaction to Asia-African countries are expressed by the words such as "lowness of culture", "unfit to live in" and "poverty". This is just the manifestation of the civilization-centered viewpoint.

By the way, the Japanese economical prosperity and independence through the high growth of economy during the 60's promoted the trend of a kind of "Separation from Asia" in

the national interest or from civilization-centered viewpoint. What stopped that trend was the very problems of energy resources. In other words, the Middle East or Arab world urged Japan leaving off "Separation from Asia" to return to Asia by dint of resources energy. The Middle East or Arab world could not help becoming the object of Japan's great interests. The Middle East or Arab world was reflected to them as ambivalence. It may safely be said that the reaction of pupils was the manifestation of this ambivalence. It seems that the secret of the contemporary "Arab boom" or "Islam boom" exists in this ambivalence.

Firstly the ambivalence towards the Middle East or Arab world on the whole at the national level comes to reveal the terrible ignorance and fallacy of the specific and concrete problems caused by the consistent historical poverty of the recognition toward it.

"Palestine Problem" is the typical case. "Palestine Problem" which the Middle East or Arab world holds as the fundamental and historical one is inclined to be underestimated or simplified as the religious confrontation between 'Jewish nationalism' and 'Arab nationalism' without the Zionism problem. So that the Lebanese civil war or the Holy Land Problem can only be perceived on the same context.

As a result of such perception the words like "Arab guerrilla" or "Arab refugees" come to be used without any con-

siderations. In the case of pupils, as mentioned above, it can be easily supposed how "Palestine Problem" reflects to them when the minus images towards the Middle East or Arab world such as "only raising the oil price" is linked with the plus images of the preys to Holocaust or Pogrom which "The Anne's Diary" or "Fiddler on the roof" gives to them? For good or for evil, just because the concrete description of "Palestine problem" has been excluded from school textbooks - it was excluded on purpose by the educational authorities based on the opportunistic reason that the course of Palestine problem is still uncertain - we are free from misunderstanding of it! I dare to call it "the relief through the ignorance"!! These situations, I think however, never be true for pupils only!!

Secondly, the ambivalence to the Middle East or Arab world comes to make the status quo in this region a fait accompli in international politics. Arab-Israel conflict is regarded only as an object of "peace in the Middle East" which should be settled by the intervention of the big powers. And "peace in the Middle East" can be beautified by the abstract, flowery word of "maintenance of international peace and friendship" covering up the pragmatic viewpoint without considering "Palestine Problem". It was only 15% of those the sophomores of a university that answered "Peace in the Middle East or Arab world cannot be made without solving Palestine Problem". Considering all the things above mentioned, the very ambivalence at the national

level is manifested as the opportunistic and convenient ambiguity in Japanese policy towards it and vice versa.

It seems that 'Arab boom' or 'Islam boom' occurring in contemporary Japan, has one definite meaning as the manifestation of the ambivalence of the Japanese people towards the Middle East or Arab world. Unless the Japanese people subjectively approach to the Middle East or Arab world from the viewpoint of the genuine Asian solidarity and proceed only to the accumulation of fragmented knowledges about the Arab manner, religion, custom and livelihood, then 'Arab boom' finally falls into the "Separation from Asia" and its turn makes an enemy of the third world, I dare not mention, Asia. Recently some prudent Asians frequently warn of such danger. In February 1975 Kim-Jiha, famous Korean poet, made a proposal to the Japanese people. In it he proclaimed "You Japanese support for your lives what we oppose for our lives and trample upon for your lives what we defend for our lives" and urged the daring moral decision of the Japanese people. Kim-gakko, a Korean scholar, preaches that the Japanese people as human being should have the common anger at the inhuman deeds and should have the "justice", not the "profit". Furthermore, in August 1980 Arafat, the Chairman of the PLO, warned as follows: both Japanese government and the Japanese people don't think profoundly enough about "Palestine Problem". They only pursue their own interests in this region, that is interests in oil or profit.

They should respect the "magnificence of human being" and approach to the Middle East or Arab world "on principles". These proposals urge the Japanese people "Return to Asia" their having the principles of "justice" and "solidarity". At the same time they show that the Japanese people cannot understand the "magnificence of human being" or Korean people without understanding that of the people in the Middle East or Arab World. And this is the very core of the "Palestine Problem".

(4)

Finally, I would like to conclude my report by introducing an eminent Japanese ethnologist who espoused in the 1920s the idea of intrinsic solidarity between Japan and Asia.

Mr. Kunio Yanagida stayed in Geneva from 1920 to 1923 as a member of the League of Nations Mandatory Administration Commission. There, he observed the facts that the Japanese delegate opposed the immigration control by the United States and attempted to amend the League of Nations Charter to abolish racial discrimination, but in vain. He pointed out that the righteous Japanese claim in 1920 was not accepted partly because of the egocentric orientation of the Western Imperialist countries, but, at the same time, because of the lack of historic consciousness of the Japanese which demonstrated the decisive internal weakness of the Japanese. He said, "When Japan was regarded as one of the five powers in the world, she was content with the higher status of international hierarchy.



Then Japan resorted to the policies of discriminating countries which were similarly oppressed, seeking after her own national interest. It was this lack of Japanese concern over the future of the Eastern Sea Race that led to this traumatic experience of Western rejection. It is ironic that the very nation which advocated racial equality did not consider the real meaning of racial difference and adversities resulted from it." In his writings he emphasized that the Japanese should change their views on racial discrimination. He wrote, "Bribed by and acting as an agent for the white western civilized nations, the Japanese looked down upon aboriginals and tried to take advantage of them. Such lack of chivalry spirit should be improved."

Furthermore, in 1925 he focused his attention to peripheral countries of the world and wrote as follows: People in tiny islands are desperately in need of help. They should be protected from violent civilization encroaching from the east and the west as well as from Japan.

In 1926, he expressed criticism toward the western ethnological approach saying, "Western ethnology is based on the Christian preoccupation that five different cultures in the world are heading toward a common great principle of Christianity and the each culture is leading or following the other".

These statements of Yanagida, though dated back more than fifty years ago, seem to be still quite relevant today. His

observations urge us to reconsider the current Japanese attitude toward the Middle Eastern and Arabian countries.

**THE IMAGE OF THE JAPANESE  
AS PERCEIVED BY ARAB UNIVERSITY STUDENTS**

*Mohammad Issa Barhoum*

I. Introduction

My academic interest in Japan started when I was studying for my doctorate in England in the late sixties. In a course I took in the sociology of development, Japan was cited as one of the leading technological nations that has not lost its cultural identity through modernization. Coming from a developing nation, I started wondering how the Japanese could do this, and if they did it, why other developing countries cannot? Is it necessary to become Westernized in order to be modernized? Since then, my readings of the subject led me to the conclusion that there is more or less a consensus amongst writers from all fields of interests on this matter. The Japanese model of modernization is rather unique in the sense that it has been able to internalize some everlasting landmarks for coping with the everchanging ventures of life. This success is due to the fact that the Japanese society succeeded from the very beginning to divorce the two conflicting principles of socialization: rationalism which prevailed in the technological sphere, and traditionalism in the morality sphere (K. Tsurumi, 1970, p. 97). Adding to this one more thing, the Ministry of Education in Japan was the organ through which the non-rational ideologies of militarism and na-

tionalism were prescribed for elementary schools while rationalism and liberalism commended to professional schools and universities.

The Arab World has always watched the Japanese experience with interest and admiration. There is a prevailing belief in the Arab World as a whole, that the Japanese have caught up with the Western World without changing their Eastern identity.

The historical image of the Japanese in the Arab World has been reinforced by the mass media with the little information it brings about from time to time. Japan has always been shown as the country of flourishing economy and advanced technology and machinery. However, the display of Japanese goods of all kinds in Arab markets, which are becoming the second major export market for Japan, is good proof of that. The figures on imports of Japanese products over the last decade testify for that. Needless to say, the 1973 war was a turning point in the Arab World development, as well as the Arab-Japanese relations where Japanese industry and know how became very much in demand. As a result of this, the Arab World looked to Japan for much closer ties and cooperation in the process of transferring, adapting and producing technology. The first step that was taken towards achieving such a goal was the establishment of a joint study project on the Arab-Japanese relations in 1978. The major aim of that project was to promote studies on various

aspects of Arab-Japanese relations which might contribute to nurture Arab-Japanese relations in the cultural and academic spheres.

It is noteworthy, however, that more emphasis should be placed upon sociological and psychological studies in order to clarify some of the misunderstandings and misconceptions about each other's societies. For example, the Japanese still think of the Arab in terms of what the Western tourist and the Orientalist think of him. They both have their preconceived fantasies about the Arab World, the Arab and the Beduin's style of life (Patai, 1958, Harris, 1958). An Arab to most of the Western people is a polygamous person who has many wives. I am not suggesting that this is the case in Japan, although I have experienced such things during my stay in Japan. These preconceptions were not surprising to me since unfortunately most of the information about the Arab World is based upon Western literature, which in most cases is either biased or outdated.

After reviewing the literature on the subject I found only a few descriptive studies in different disciplines mainly history, politics and economics in both Arabic and English. Adding to this were few more articles written in the newspapers touching upon the subject. Apart from that, one can say that the subject was never dealt with in an academic manner from a socio-cultural angle. Consequently, our image of the Japanese always depended upon what was made available to us by Western

writers. And so the Japanese stereotype has been that of the Geisha girls and the submissive Japanese wife. This image, however, is not as distorted as is the case of the Arab image as was mentioned earlier.

It is clear by now that the misconception and misunderstanding on both sides is due to the lack of proper channels of communication. In order to fill the gap of information and knowledge about each other the two nations should start working on building a new and realistic image of one another. This can be achieved only when the two nations become the major source of information. The mass media and the research conducted and written by the nationals of both Japan and the Arab World should be the main source for the flow of information. Needless to say, however, that journalists especially in the first stage of building the image, play an essential role. It is worth mentioning in this respect that, according to the information that I was able to obtain, the number of journalists, Arabs in Japan and Japanese in the Arab World, is limited.

## II. The Research

The present study deals with the attitude of the Arab students at the University of Jordan towards the Japanese.

1. Purpose: The main aim of this study is to examine the image of the Japanese in an Arab society. In other words, what image the Arab has of the Japanese.

2. Methodology To achieve the above stated goal a questionnaire consisting of 27 statements was constructed on the basis of the Likert scale for measuring attitudes. Data was gathered in May 1981 by four research assistants who were supervised by the author. The sample of investigation consisted of 200 young males and females between the ages of 18 and 23 enrolled fulltime at the University of Jordan. These students were randomly selected from different levels at the University and were informed of the importance of the research and were therefore urged to be honest in their responses. Questionnaires were completed and returned to the research assistants who classified the responses on a five point scale ranking from 1 strongly agreeing to 5 strongly disagreeing.

3. Findings The findings of this research were grouped under seven main headings. Each one represents one or more cultural traits in the Japanese society.

3.1 Conservatism and traditionalism: Few questions were asked about the Japanese as being conservative and traditional.

In response to the statement concerning religion, about half of the respondents agreed to the statement that the Japanese are religious. Table (1) shows that over one third of the total sample were not sure of their responses. No significant difference was shown between males and females in their responses, except for that of the undecided category where males formed two thirds of the responses in that category. This

Table (1)

Percentage distribution of sample according to sex and attitude towards Japanese as being traditional

	Strongly Agree			Agree			Undecided			Disagree			Strongly Disagree			Total Number	%
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T		
Religious	3.5	7.0	10.5	17.5	21.5	39.0	21.0	14.0	35.0	6.5	5.5	12.0	2.0	1.5	3.5	200	100
Adheres to Customs	14.5	23.5	38.0	28.0	26.0	54.0	5.0	2.5	7.5	-	0.5	0.5	-	-	-	200	100
Respects Old People	9.0	20.5	29.5	25.5	18.5	44.0	12.0	10.5	22.5	1.5	0.5	2.0	0.5	1.5	2.0	200	100

might be attributed to the fact that female students at the University of Jordan come from a higher social strata than that of the male students. Their educational background, therefore, might be broader than that of the males (Barhoum, mimeograph, 1981).

As for the adherence of the Japanese to his customs, Table (1) shows that the great majority of the respondents supported the statement. Here, once again, the female percentage was higher than the males in the case of the agreement category which might be explained in the same terms of the difference in social background.

With relation to the statement on the respect for old people, about 75% of the respondents agreed that the Japanese

respect old people. The remainder, distributed evenly between the two sexes, were not sure as Table (1) shows.

3.2 Familism: The Japanese are known for being family oriented people. For that reason, few statement were put forward to the respondents to get their reaction. On one of these statements, concerning the Japanese being loyal to their family, over one third of the responses were in disagreement. The majority of the undecided category respondents were males. This might be attributed to the same reason stated above which contributes to a great extent to the lack of information in this matter on the males' part.

Table (2) shows that the majority of the respondents fell in the category of the undecided in response to the statement that the Japanese wife likes to have as many children as she can. The same table also shows that female respondents who disagreed with the statement were double that of the males (13% to 6%).

With regard to the statement that the Japanese woman is loyal to her husband, it seems that the respondents were more informed about this matter. The majority (about 85%) were in agreement with the statement, with some difference between males and females, where females showed greater support for the strong agreement category.

Table (2)

Percentage distribution of sample according to sex and attitude towards Japanese as being family oriented

	Strongly Agree			Agree			Undecided			Disagree			Strongly Disagree			Total Number	%
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T		
Loyal to family	5.0	6.0	11.0	10.5	18.0	28.5	14.5	14.5	29.0	17.5	9.5	27.0	1.5	3.0	4.5	200	100
Inclination of Wife to have Many Children	3.0	4.5	7.5	16.0	10.0	26.0	18.0	24.5	42.5	6.0	13.0	19.0	1.5	3.5	5.0	200	100
Loyalty of Wife to her Husband	15.5	26.0	41.5	22.5	20.5	43.0	7.5	4.5	12.0	1.0	1.5	2.5	1.0	-	1.0	200	100

3.3 Nationalism and belongingness: At the beginning of this century Arabs were much impressed by the great skill and heroism that was displayed by the Japanese in the Czarist Russia-Japan war. This is what made the famous Arab poet Hafez Ibrahim, compose his poem 'Demise of Japan' in which he praised the Japanese for their loyalty and strong sense of belonging. Since then, this is given to school students to memorize as a clear symbol of both nationalism and patriotism.

Few statements were put forward to the respondents to measure their attitudes on this matter. As for the question of loyalty to the Emperor, the majority supported this view as is shown in Table (3). A good proportion of the sample was undecided, which might be attributed to the lack of information on both sides, male and female. In the same table, it is shown

Table (3)

Percentage distribution of sample according to sex and attitude towards Japanese as being nationalistic

	Strongly Agree			Agree			Undecided			Disagree			Strongly Disagree			Total Number	%
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T		
Loyal to the Emperor	11.5	16.0	27.5	20.0	22.0	42.0	10.5	11.5	22.0	4.5	1.5	6.0	1.5	1.0	2.5	200	100
Proud of Being Japanese	15.0	28.5	43.5	25.0	14.0	39.0	7.0	8.5	15.5	0.5	1.0	1.5	0.5	-	0.5	200	100

that the majority of the respondents (82.5%) were in support of the view that the Japanese are proud of being Japanese. Only 15.5% were undecided and were distributed almost evenly between both sexes.

3.4 Business orientation: The Japanese are famous all over the world for being successful businessmen. They have this reputation in the Arab World as well. For testing this theory two statements were formulated and put forward to the respondents.

The great majority as can be seen in Table (4) supported the theory. Only a small proportion were undecided about the Japanese as being successful businessmen. With relation to the statement that the Japanese are capable of conducting successful commercial deals, it was found that over two thirds of the respondents were in agreement. For those who were undecided

Table (4)

Percentage distribution of sample according to sex and attitude towards Japanese as being business oriented

	Strongly Agree			Agree			Undecided			Disagree			Strongly Disagree			Total Number	%
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T		
Successful Businessman	14.5	16.0	30.5	22.0	27.5	49.5	7.5	5.5	13.0	2.5	3.0	5.5	1.0	0.5	1.5	200	100
Successful in Commercial Deals	10.5	12.0	22.5	26.0	24.0	50.0	9.0	13.0	22.0	2.0	3.0	5.0	0.5	-	0.5	200	100

the percentage was rather high as is shown in Table (4).

It is worth mentioning in this respect that the success of the Japanese commercial relations is evident in the huge number of Japanese products sold in the Arab markets in general and the Jordanian market in particular. Cars, machines of all kinds and electronic devices are sold in large quantities.

3.5 Work orientation and morality: It is a well-known fact that Japan has achieved a lot in the technological sphere without losing its cultural identity as far as its customs and morals are concerned. Non-rationalism and traditionalism still characterizes the behaviour of the Japanese individual in the field of morality.

It is shown in Table (5) that the great majority of respondents thought of the Japanese as being sincere and honest in their work. No difference was found between males and females

Table (5)

Percentage distribution of sample according to sex and attitude towards Japanese as being moralistic and work oriented

	Strongly Agree			Agree			Undecided			Disagree			Strongly Disagree			Total Number	%
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T		
Loyal to Work	12.0	16.5	28.5	31.0	24.0	55.0	4.5	10.0	14.5	1.0	1.0	2.0	-	-	-	200	100
Creative	26.5	34.5	61.0	17.5	14.0	31.5	3.0	1.5	4.5	1.0	2.0	3.0	-	-	-	200	100
Ready to Sacrifice	12.5	17.0	29.5	25.0	26.0	51.0	9.0	8.5	17.5	1.5	-	1.5	-	0.5	0.5	200	100
Ambitious	16.5	15.5	32.0	23.5	28.5	51.0	6.0	6.0	12.0	0.5	2.0	2.5	1.0	1.0	2.0	200	100
Honest	5.0	6.5	11.5	22.5	22.5	45.0	17.5	22.5	40.0	1.0	0.5	1.5	1.5	0.5	2.0	200	100
Punctual	7.5	10.5	18.0	22.5	16.0	38.5	16.0	23.0	39.0	1.0	0.5	1.5	-	-	-	200	100

in this respect. In the same table it is also shown that only a small proportion were undecided in their responses to the same issue.

As to the Japanese being creative in their work in the field of technology, it was found that the majority of the respondents thought that this was true. Table (5) shows almost full agreement on this matter. Only a small percentage (7.5%) were either undecided or in disagreement with that opinion.

Table (5) shows that the majority of the respondents were in agreement with the statement that the Japanese are ready to sacrifice and go through hardships to accomplish what they want in their work. A good proportion could not decide on this matter as is shown in the same table which is evenly distributed

between the two sexes. Needless to say, the Japanese culture puts much emphasis upon the importance of success. The individual is always expected to achieve his goals with some help from his family only in the early stages of socialization.

Most of the respondents as is shown in Table (5) gave a positive opinion on the statement concerning the Japanese ambition. The percentages for both the males and females were equally distributed as is shown in the same table. Only 12% of the respondents were undecided.

With regard to the morality question, on the whole the respondents thought of the Japanese as people of good morals. Table (5) shows that over half of the respondents supported the view that Japanese are honest people in dealing with others. On the other hand, a high proportion (40%) of the sample were undecided on this matter which might be due to the lack of information.

With relation to punctuality, it is shown in Table (5) that a high percentage of the respondents (41.5%) were undecided and the females' percentage was higher than that of the males. In spite of the fact that this proportion is high, the percentage for those who supported the statement was almost 60, which shows a favourable attitude.

3.6 Rationalism: Social scientists in general and sociologists in particular give certain characteristics for what is called traditional and modern society. These characteristics are more ap-

plicable to the individual's behaviour and the way he reacts and relates to others. In this research, some statements were put forward to the respondents to get their reaction on the subject.

With regard to the independence of the Japanese person the majority of the respondents (85%) were in agreement on this point. No significant difference was found between the sexes in this respect as is shown in Table (6).

In response to the statement concerning the Japanese as being rationale in his spending, it was found that the percentage of those who supported the view has reached 70.5. Whereas, the percentage for those who were undecided was relatively high (22.5%). The percentage was even higher for the second item, that the Japanese is a cultured person (26.5%), but still the percentage for those who gave their agreement to the same statement was high (65.5%). As for the last statement in Table (6) considering the Japanese as being a practical person in his outlook to life, it was found that over three quarters of the respondents answered yes, whereas 18% gave undecided answer. The females' percentage for the positive answers was higher than that of the males. The difference might be attributed to the same theory which was mentioned earlier on in the discussion.

### 3.7 Submissiveness and other characteristics:

Few statements were put forward to the respondents in order to get their impression on the concerned issues. The

Table (6)

Percentage distribution of sample according to sex and attitude towards Japanese as being rational

	Strongly Agree			Agree			Undecided			Disagree			Strongly Disagree			Total Number	%
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T		
Independent	15.5	12.5	28.0	24.5	32.5	57.0	5.0	7.0	12.0	2.0	0.5	2.5	0.5	-	0.5	200	100
Rational in Spending	6.5	7.5	14.0	27.5	29.0	56.5	7.5	15.0	22.5	3.0	3.0	6.0	1.0	-	1.0	200	100
Cultured	7.0	7.5	14.5	23.0	28.0	51.0	13.5	12.5	26.0	2.5	4.5	7.0	1.5	-	1.5	200	100
Practical	9.5	11.0	20.5	23.0	32.0	55.0	10.0	8.0	18.0	4.0	1.0	5.0	0.5	1.0	1.5	200	100

first statement is concerning the Japanese as being a contented person. As is shown in Table (7), 51.5% of the sample were in agreement, whereas 28% were undecided. No significant difference was found between the sexes as is shown in the above mentioned table.

With relation to being submissive, only a small proportion (13.5%) of the sample agreed to that as is shown in Table (7). The percentage for those who disagreed was 56.5%, whereas the undecided category percentage was relatively high (30%). This finding confirms the high image the students have of the Japanese people which is evident all the way through in the data analysis. In response to the following statement concerning the calmness of the Japanese person, 70% of the respondents agreed to that. Both sexes were equal in this respect. For those who



Table (7)

Percentage distribution of sample according to sex and attitude towards Japanese as being submissive and other characteristics

	Strongly Agree			Agree			Undecided			Disagree			Strongly Disagree			Total Number	%
	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T	M	F	T		
Contented	6.5	3.0	9.5	19.0	23.0	42.0	19.5	8.5	28.0	10.0	9.5	19.5	0.5	0.5	1.0	200	100
Submissive	2.5	-	2.5	5.5	5.5	11.0	16.0	14.0	30.0	18.5	26.5	45.0	5.5	6.0	11.5	200	100
Calm	7.5	12.0	19.5	25.5	24.0	49.5	7.5	10.5	18.0	7.0	5.0	12.0	1.0	-	1.0	200	100
Clever	11.5	15.5	27.0	19.5	23.5	43.0	10.5	13.5	24.0	4.0	1.0	5.0	0.5	0.5	1.0	200	100

were undecided, the percentage reached 18.

The last statement deals with the cleverness of the Japanese. It is shown in Table (7) that 70% of the respondents were in agreement with only a small difference shown between the sexes. However, the percentage of those who were undecided about the validity of such view reached 24. This relatively high percentage in this category indicates to some extent as was the case in other items previously discussed, a lack of information on the respondents' part.

### III. Summary and Conclusions

Analysis of the data showed an overall positive attitude towards the Japanese people amongst the Arab students of the University of Jordan. It was also shown that in general there

was a difference between males and females in the undecided category. The difference was attributed to the varied social background between the sexes, where females tend to come from a higher social strata than that of the males. This in itself gave them ample opportunity to be more cultured than the males.

In certain areas like technology, business and economics, findings of this research revealed a consensus in the responses to the statements concerned. Whereas, in other areas that are connected with socio-cultural aspects the undecided responses to the concerned statements were high. This does not suggest by any means that the image was negative on these issues, on the contrary, it is still considered to be relatively high. The plausible explanation that was given for the difference between the technology, business and economics responses on the one hand and the socio-cultural responses on the other, is the lack of knowledge in the latter field on the respondents side. This lack of knowledge is expected because most of the students did not have the chance to enhance their knowledge beyond the school level. However, what is offered in school curriculum is insufficient and sometime outdated. In view of these facts, there is no way that such information will be capable of forming the right kind of image of a modern nation, or any nation for that matter.

In conclusion, the last finding concerning the existence

of a knowledge gap in the Japanese image calls for action to be taken by both the Arabs and the Japanese to fill it. This can be done through different channels, most important of which is the mass media which should play a leading role in the process of building the modern image of both nations. The mass media is no doubt capable of introducing the two cultures to one another in an unbiased way if it is done correctly. Another channel, which is equally important as the first one, is exchange and research programs. The latter should be conducted mainly by the citizens of each nation. Needless to say that this will help enhance the knowledge of both nations about one another and will ultimately lead to a much better understanding of each other's culture. This comes at a time when both nations need each other and depend on one another more than ever before. The talk about the transference of technology, which is becoming fashionable nowadays, becomes meaningless if factors such as the socio-psycho-economic-cultural factors are not taken into consideration and calculated for in the transference process. The success of the latter process is largely determined by these factors. Hence, understanding the cultural background of both the lender and the borrower of such technology will no doubt facilitate the process and eventually shorten the time needed for development of the necessary skills. For this purpose, research in the socio-cultural area should be encouraged and supported. This research paper is only a modest contribu-

tion and a first step towards building up the new image of both nations. It is my firm belief that it is only through scientific research that such goal can be achieved.

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## SOME ASPECTS ON UNDERSTANDING ARAB CULTURE

*Nobuaki Nutahara*

### Foreword

Much has been debated on understanding other cultures, and significant suggestions have been given to those instructive results. I would like to add a little mainly from my experiences I had during my research on Arabs and Arabic. For convenience' sake, let me divide my talk into four parts as follows. First, on preparatory studies required to produce an academic work of high level, second, on the necessity of translations, third, on literature as a means of understanding, and finally on some issues observed in understanding other cultures.

#### 1. On preparatory studies

Once I heard someone says that at least ten years of preparatory study of the Arabic language and culture is necessary to produce an academic work of high level. We Japanese must start almost from nothing by learning Arabic, history, social surroundings, Islām, and so on before concentrating on the specific theme. Even a single subject is not easy; Arabic language among others is particularly such a tough barrier that it so often crushes research worker's will. Let me speak briefly about the present state of Arabic teaching in Japan, since I have been working those ten years in this field. I was one of

the first ten students who began to learn Arabic in the newly born Arabic department at Tokyo University of Foreign Studies in 1960. It seems as if we were in another world when we recall that time. Undoubtedly many aspects of the previous situation have greatly improved since then, such as teaching ability, texts for Arabic grammar, efficient exercise-books, dictionaries etc. Especially the appearance of Arabic grammar in Japanese has immensely shortened the time required for the acquisition of the basic knowledge of grammar. I can say, from my experience, that 40 hours are enough to accomplish all the process of giving the fundamental grammatical knowledge, which enables students to embark into the ocean of the written Arabic. Of course students encounter quite a lot of hardy obstacles in their first voyage, but with their firm will and steady motivations, with the help of efficient texts for beginners, and with teachers' proper assistance, the difficulty of Arabic will be greatly reduced, and I am sure that not a few of students are able to carry out their original intentions.

We may say that we have one way or another overcome the first difficult step for furnishing practical knowledge of grammar in order to begin reading. Thus every year we are to produce not a few Arabic reading population, but in fact with an exception of several persons having unshakable motivation, a great number of beginners seem to lose their enthusiasm. Actually there is a wide spread phenomenon observed among the Japa-

nese students studying in Cairo. What is seen there is that those who have come to be able to read newspapers or magazines in Arabic lose at the very next moment their interest to read. They may read Times or News Week, but never Rōsal Yūsef or Sabāh al-Ḳair to which they are entitled. This dismaying phenomenon is partly due to the contents filled with superficial descriptions, but not substantial and analytical ones, but still more, to the passive attitude of the students. Those students mostly sent by companies are promising youths, so they never fail to fulfil assigned duties to be a novice of Arabic reading population. But problem is that they can not engender a sprout of interest in any of Arabic cultural affairs. So after accomplishing the first step of learning Arabic, they find themselves dejected and in despair. So far as they can't combine their acquired language with their own interest in every day life, languages are doomed to wither without bearing any fruit. This is one of the problems we are facing now and we must take this into our consideration, for I sense here something serious which prevents us from getting close to the Arab culture. It is truly regrettable that the language as a means to produce something ends up only as a means. Here is my prayer that some Japanese will begin to learn Arabic simply to read pieces of Arabic poetry or novels without any other reason. If this kind of atmosphere for the Arabic culture is completed, it may be said that we have advanced greatly in knowing the Arabs.

## 2. On translation

It is inevitable for a culture to pass the period of translation in order to learn other cultures, as many historical examples prove. Egypt for instance experienced the age of translation in the middle of 19th century to reach recent renaissance. Such names as Rifāt al Tahtawī, Butrus Bustāny, Mustafā Manfalūty, Jurjy Zaidān come up to our mind. They played immensely important parts to be a hamzatal-wasl between two cultures. It is no doubt that what they had done have quickened the achievements of recent Arab renaissance and have left a lasting influence whose effect is doing good not only for the present age but also for the coming age too. As for the Japanese culture, we have also experienced a great age of translation since the Meiji era to absorb western culture with amazing greed. It is no exaggeration to say that the best part of our cultural abilities at that time was mobilized for this task and our cultural attainments observed after that was quite an eye-opener. What they have done in this age have founded both manifested and potential footfold to which our subsequent culture owed much to make a marvellous development.

Now let turn our attention to what has been accomplished in the field of translation of Arabic works. We have already several kinds of translations of al-Qurān which have been read by not a few Japanese. We also have several kinds of Alf - laila wa laila, so called Arabian Nights, in translation. Among others,

Dr. Maejima's translation, I may say, is blessed with much more fragrance than that of the original. Ibn Ḳaldūn's al- Muqaddima must be mentioned and some of literary works by Taha Husain, Tawfīq al-Hakīm are also available in Japanese.

Those strenuous efforts done by our predecessors must be continued with much more zeal so that we can produce more satisfactory results. Anyhow it is high time to give a reflective consideration to the situation in translation of the Arab culture.

As I am concerned with literary translations, let me speak a little in this field. A few years ago, one of our publishers ventured to publish ten Arab novels in translation. Many famous Japanese novelists with a great influence on Japanese readers have joined to materialize this project. The following Arab writers like Nagīb Mahfūz, Halīm Barakāt, Mahmūd Diīb, Taiib Sāleh, Gassān Kanafāny etc. have been introduced to our readers. What was the result? To our regret, those works have been generally received with cool reception. I will never attribute this result to the quality of novels themselves, because I am convinced that Taiib Sāleh's "Mausim Hijrat ilā Shamāl" should be accepted with due appreciation by all means. If it was not accepted, the cause should be searched somewhere except in the novel itself. But anyhow what we have experienced discloses the difficulties lying ahead and requires us to confirm our determination to surpass those complexed

obstacles.

When we have a look at another literary field such as English, French, and Germany, translation work is very active and highly levelled from the point of quality. There is a monthly magazine named "World of Translation" where heated and acute debates on translation are exchanged. I am sure those concerned with Arab-literature can learn much from this advanced experience in another languages.

Finally I would like to tell what is occupying my mind in those days. That is, if at least a few of our literary young talents come to the field of Arabic literature, the link between the two literatures will be greatly strengthened and the result coming from there will contribute a great deal to combine Arabic literature with Japanese readers.

### 3. Literary works as a means of understanding

At the beginning of this year, one of the newspapers here has featured serial articles entitled "another world literature". This scheme was intended to introduce the literature of so-called Third World, which has been so far unfamiliar to readers in general here in Japan. Some of the eminent Arab writers' names are seen there such as Taiib Sāleh, Gassān Kanafāni and Mahmūd Darwēsh. To close this series amounting to 30 writers, one of our eminent art critics, Professor Ichiro Haryu has manifested necessities for Japanese literature to learn much from

those newly rising literatures, either in the point of themes or of imaginative power so that Japanese literature may be set free to obtain much more fertile and creative stimuli.

Actually some Japanese writers with consciousness of crisis have been paying shrewd attention to the new movement of the Third World. Concerned with modern Arabic literature, I find myself both among Japanese and Arab writers and have been learning much from both. My major is modern Arabic literature. So let me speak about what I have learned from modern Arabic novels. It has been eight years since I had a chance to study in Cairo. Before departure I consulted with some Arabists here, asking how they evaluated modern Arabic literature and what was the highest literary attainment. The answer I got was disappointingly negative. I may be able to summarize their opinions as follows. Arabs can be proud of their classical literature like Poetry in the age of Jāhiliyya, but never of modern literature. To make sure by myself whether or not modern Arabic literature was worth specializing, I went over to Egypt. The answer found there was definitely "Yes". I witnessed to my surprize the productive literary activities there. I can never forget thrilling joy given by Mahfūz's "Baina Qasrain" among many other exciting novels, which led me to the old Cairo. But al-Ard by Sharqāwy gave me much stronger impression. To appreciate it fully and translate if possible, I ventured to live among fallāhīn in the Nile delta. Meanwhile I realized that I could

not do without their dialects "Āmmiya" since important works written for example by Yūsif Idriīs or Abdel Hakīm Qāsim were replete with irreplaceable Fallāhīn's spoken words. Life experience there was significant to me to know the mode of their living. But one of the most important thing I've learned there is to look at the light of the town or the capital of the country from the darkness of its rural areas. I have found something new whenever I look at Cairo from the Nile delta and Damascus from the Syrian deserts.

If asked to show several excellent Egyptian novels, I'll never hesitate to mention al-Harām by Idriīs, Dimā wa Ṭiin by Yaḥiyā Ḥaqqy, Ṭawq wa Iswara by Yaḥiyā al-Ṭāhir Abdallā, (allah yarḥam) and Insān Ayyām Saba by Abdel Hakīm Qāsim. Of course those works should be evaluated first of all as independent literary pieces. But those important works have at the same time another meritorious aspects which are so suggestive for us to know the dark and hidden parts of the Egyptian mind, especially that of Fallāhīn living as a mass rather than as individuals in the context of their rural society. Those suggestive works greatly made up for what I failed in my efforts to know the inner side of fallāhīn.

In fact I found as a semi-field worker a line drawn in front of me preventing me from penetrating into their inside. So after the strenuous efforts failed, I determined to rely on those writers works to cross over into fallāhīn's inner world.

The experience of living in Egyptian villages and the acquaintance with those novels led me gradually to the interest in the Egyptian character. As you know, the debates on the Egyptian character have so far been zealously carried out by the Egyptian scholars and writers themselves in an attempt to identify themselves. One of the most important works in this theme is no doubt Gamāl Himdān's "Šaksīya Misr". Let me summarize what he says. Three fundamental factors are first pointed out as the decisive elements which have contributed to mould the Egyptian character. First, Egypt's physical conditions represented by the river Nile. Second, the inhabitants of the Wadī Nile, namely Fallāhīn and thirdly the rulers of Egypt, who control and distribute the Nile-water for irrigation equally to the farmers. The relationship between the physical conditions and fallāhīn has been a happy and blessed one and this nursed the affirmative side of the Egyptian character. On the other hand, the relationship between the fallāhīn and the tyrannous rulers, as witnessed in history, has been an unhappy and detestable one and this has gradually produced its negative side. Truly the struggle for existence in Egypt has been severe, but it is not due to the harshness of nature as seen in the inhabitants of the desert, but to the harsh exploitation of the rulers. Consequently the inhabitants of the Wadī Nile were forced to endure a life of humiliation for the sake of survival. This way of life has never failed to mould a negative disposition in the

fallāhīn's mind which have greatly been mirrored in the Egyptian character.

What Himdān has pointed out is very persuasive and significant for us in order to deepen our knowledge about this community and fix our theme of research directing for the core of this society. Himdān's indication also led me to such a novel like "The battle in the land of Egypt" written by Yūsef al-Qaīd, for it depicts the problem of the evasion of military service where we can see a dynamic model of the morbid character of Egypt.

I should not have gone too far into minute points on this occasion, but anyhow I wanted to tell the meriterous sides of novels.

Here I can't help but calling to my mind a prominent Japanese writer's saying repeated during his visit to Egypt as a Lotus prize winner. He talked about knowing other country through literary works. Now I've come to appreciate his sayings. His saying was also valid for me in the case of Palestine, because the Palestine Cause has begun to be my concern through Gassān Kanafāny's works. I am sure that literature is always to some of us the most effective and irreplaceable pipe to other culture.

#### 4. On understanding other cultures

This subject inevitably poses the question of cultural

identity of him who is dedicated to understanding a different culture from his own. It may be useful for us to take up a book titled "Reflections on Field work in Morocco", written as an essay by an anthropologist, Paul Rabinow. Here in his book, we can see the common situations which are lying in wait for us, when we try to understand the Arab culture, especially in the domain of researcher's personal experiences. Rabinow being an American, has selected Morocco as his field and began his work from learning Arabic. From the very first, he found himself in profound perplexity, but by passing through this perplexity he came to discern himself as a cultural self brought up in the western culture more clearly. Taking recognition that knowing in the human studies is always emotional and moral as well as intellectual, he has deepened the comprehension of himself by the detour of the comprehension of the other. We may summarize this book as an unique record of encounter of a cultural self with otherness as an another cultural self. Anyhow this essay ends with a very impressive comment that he has returned from Morocco to his home town with a deeper doubt about the very meaning and existence of home than he had before his departure. Understanding other cultures by and large often leads us into unexpected predicaments, from which we can not get out without changing ourselves. It can also be said that understanding other cultures is not only one sided mental performance but surpassingly an interaction and moreover an inter-

pretation by the researcher. This is due to it that the data of the field worker, the materials which the researcher has selected in the field are already themselves his interpretations. Therefore they are quite different from those merely collected data. Rabinow also says as follows; Putting himself between the two cultures, there is no any mechanical and easy means of translation from one set of experiences to the other. The process of translation thereof becomes one of the central arts and crucial tasks of field works.

The researcher selects the place of his work and may do his best to approach the selected culture. We can say that this process is a participation in an attempt to understand. After that he may or may not proceed to the process of involvement. This involvement is sometimes observed to happen taking a shape of "trance", after which he may find himself estranged from his original surroundings. I have not yet experienced the process of involvement, still being in the state of participation. But if my participation is quite essential to my being, I may be able to step forward to the process of involvement in the future.

In case of Rabinow, the informants have played a vital part, for he owed much to them for the sake of communication. After experiencing many figures as informants, he finally encounter in the mountain village of Morocco a character called Muḥammad who is internal to Moroccan tradition. At that time he says "I was for him, Muḥammad a rich member of a dominant civilization



about which he had the profound reservations. To me he was struggling to revive a cultural universe which I no longer inhabited and could not ultimately support". Though they, Rabinow and Muḥammad are profoundly 'others' to each other, but still we can admit a tie inseparable between them. In the end, Rabinow comes to realize what separated two was fundamentally their past and that their otherness is not an ineffable essence, but rather the sum of different historical experiences. This conclusion he finally arrived, sounds like the very sound we hear, when the core of the object is unmistakably hit. Thus the process of understanding other culture leads Rabinow to profound reservation which has been previously showed by a Moroccan, Muḥammad, then he says "There is no primitive. There are other men living other lives" I think we can appreciate this simple but beautiful words as something very suggestive for understanding other culture.

## RECENT ECONOMIC RELATIONS BETWEEN JAPAN AND THE ARAB WORLD

*San-eki Nakaoka*

### 1. Introduction --- A Historical Background ---

In my previous paper submitted to the First Symposium on Arab-Japanese Relations, which was held in Tokyo in 1979, I did present an outline of the study on Egypt's legal system conducted by young Japanese bureaucrats in the early Meiji Era. Their concern to the Arab world, as well as Turkey and Iran, was closely related to their efforts of revising the Unequal Treaty of 1858 concluded by Tokugawa government. That was one of the major concerns towards the Arab world at the first phase of history of modern Japan. In the first phase, we can say, a unanimous feeling, that the disastrous state of things in the Arab world under the European and Turkish rule would be a warning to Japan, was placed at the core of Japanese concern to the Arab world. For example, we can mention some works such as "History of Modern Egypt" written by S. Shiba (Tōkai Sanshi) in 1889.

In the later Meiji Era, that is, after the victory of the Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95, there appeared the second phase, one of the major streams of which was to learn how Great Britain and France administered the Arab world under their rule, in order to employ their technology of colonial administration for Japan to exercise the sovereign power in Taiwan and Korea

just entered under the Japanese rule. Japan had not an experience of colonial rule by that time. Among several works along the line of colonial rule, I will give only the titles of two works here: Fusazô Katô's work, "Egypt as a Model of Protectorate System to be Applied to Korea," (1905) and Hirondo Tomizu's work, "Tunisia and Korea," (1905). And also we can add some other works to them: for example, Eikichi Kamata's "A Financial Situation of Egypt as a Reference Material of Taiwan Administration" published in 1909.

After the First World War, Japanese concern to the Arab world was greatly expanded and diversified. In the third phase, we can point out three major streams of concern: first, an academic concern including the study of international relations, history of Arabs and Islam, languages, etc.; second, a commercial concern in order to find an expanded market for Japanese goods, in particular for textiles; and third, a policy-oriented concern, sometimes directly related to Japan's expansion policy over East and South-east Asia and sometimes sponsored by Japanese military forces. The third one, we may say, represents the stream of the third phase, because it was indicative of a tendency of Japanese political and ideological climates at that time, though there were some works which raised a criticism against such a policy-oriented concern. Here I will give only two names of policy-oriented organizations which were established at the last stage of the third phase: Japan Islamic Association (Dai-Nihon

Kaikyô Kyôkai) headed by General S. Hayashi and East Asiatic Economic Investigation Bureau, (Tôa Keizai Chôsa-kyoku, Kaikyô Han) headed by Shûmei Ôkawa. Besides two organizations, however, we should like to mention some other organization which took a different direction from those two, such as Section of Islamic Research in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (Chôsabu Kaikyô Han) and Research Institute of Islamic World (Kaikyôken Kenkyû-sho) headed by K. Ôkubo.

After a span of time of vacuum in Japanese concern to the Arab world, immediately following the defeat of the Second World War, the fourth phase came on us. The fourth phase will be characterized of the limitation of concern exclusively to an economic one, and the principle, upon which a newly reborn Japan should be founded, is the establishment of a state on the basis of industry and trade. Since the mid-1950's, petroleum has assumed of a position as the most important energy resource for Japanese industry, and the Middle Eastern oil, that is the oil imported from the Gulf area, did a great contribution to perform a rapid growth of Japanese economy. In the fourth phase, however, oil was supplied to Japan through the majors for the most part, and Japan's export, as well as economic co-operation and investment to the Arab world was not so remarkable as is seen in the fifth phase. But we have to add the following fact that in the 1950's and the 1960's several important research organiza-

tions were established and research activities of the existing and newly established research institutions were expanded to various fields, such as Islamic studies, studies of desert and nomadic life, studies of Arab nationalism as well as economy.

As I have not enough time to discuss about all of those phases, I will speak only about the latest and fifth phase of Japanese concern to the Arab world after the first oil crisis,

## 2. Recent Economic Relations between Japan and the Arab World

The most significant change of Japanese concern to the Arab world from the fourth to the fifth phase will be attributed to an effort of implementing "the two principles of independency and continuity of policy," as was clearly commented in Foreign Minister Mr. S. Sonoda's official statement in 1979 (August 6). It is not likely, however, the two principles could already successfully deal with "dependency and discontinuity of policy," if such a reverse expression can be permitted, from the ground up.

Japan returned back to the international society in the mid-1950's. Japan's foreign policy was founded by the "three principles of Japan's foreign policy" of Kishi Cabinet in 1957: first, a respect and observance of UN; second, a co-operation with "free" states; and third, a self-recognition as a member of Asian countries. Several year later, Japan was permitted to be one of OECD members in the mid-1960's at length. But

in the 1950's and the 1960's, the USA had kept a political, economic and military superiority firmly pre-eminent above the rest of the advanced countries, and Japan's economic policy itself was restricted within USA influence. In the 1960's as well as in the 1950's, moreover Japan's major concern to Asia was restricted to East Asia and South-east Asia, but at the moment of the first oil crisis, it was expanded to the Middle East to a larger extent. Japan was, however, a newcomer to the Middle East as an actor, who had enough knowledges and experiences in this area, even at the time of the first oil crisis. A model of Japan's activities in the South-east Asia was, with a little revision, applied to Latin America, the Middle East and Africa, when Japanese firms made inroads into a new market. And in many cases, the non-governmental initiatives played an important role. In the mid-1970's, however, EC and Japan got a voice in international economy as well as politics, as one of the polars in international politics, and took an opportunity of requesting a relatively independent policy against the USA. Japan has entered just now to a period of transition to "the two principles of independency and continuity of policy" towards the Arab world, following towards East and South-east Asia. But in this transitional period, an economic motivation is still predominant in Japan's decision making.

"Economic Co-operation of 1979 (White Paper)" reviewed the critical situation of energy problems at the beginning of the

first chapter of general view of the year 1979, and concluded the general review of 1979 by demonstrating an urgent necessity of initiating much more positive economic co-operation towards oil producing countries, in particular to the Gulf states. In this white paper, we can find a clear-cut sense of the target of Japan's co-operation policy, which is exclusively aiming at an economic security of Japan before everything. Thus oil producing countries and newly industrialized countries are given a position of the most important partners of Japan's economic co-operation. This white paper closed the last chapter of general view of 1979, saying that much more joint venture projects should be introduced into the Gulf area. "Economic Co-operation of 1980 (White Paper)" follows the almost same idea of that of 1979.

The economic importance of the Gulf states for Japan will be confirmed by the following facts. Recent trade development of the Middle East and the Gulf states will be given by Table 1 and Table 2. If we compare two tables, we can safely conclude that 75-76% of the Middle Eastern export has been occupied by the Gulf states, and 65-68% of the Middle Eastern import has been destined to the Gulf states. Then 16%, 17% and 23% of the Middle Eastern export has been destined to Japan, and 11%, 9% and 11% of the Middle Eastern import has been occupied by Japan, respectively in 1978, 1979 and 1980. It is striking that 21%, 19% and 29% of the export of the Gulf states has been

destined to Japan, and 13%, 11% and 13% of the import of the Gulf states has been occupied by Japan, respectively in 1978, 1979 and 1980. In 1981, those figures will be much more increased, even though about 10% reduction of oil consumption in Japan during the last one year. If we compare the figures of 1975 and 1980, Japan's import from the Middle East increased from 11.4 billion US Dollars to 45.0 billion US Dollars, and Japan's export from 4.4 billion US Dollars to 15.1 billion US Dollars, that is, an increase of about 4 times in Japan's import and 3 times in Japan's export.

Table 1. Merchandise Export and Import of the Middle East

(Billion US Dollars)

	Export	Japan's Share	Import	Japan's Share
1978	127.1	16%	106.4	11%
1979	174.3	17	119.9	9
1980	200.0*	23	140.0	11

(\* estimated figure)

Table 2. Merchandise Export and Import of the Gulf States

(Billion US Dollars)

	Export	Japan's Share	Import	Japan's Share
1978	97.3	21%	72.6	13%
1979	133.0	19	78.4	11
1980	150.0	29	94.5	13

As is shown by Table 3 and Table 4, 26%, 27% and 32% of Japan's import from all over the world comes from the Middle East, and 82%, 84% and 97% of Japan's import from the Middle East is brought from the Gulf States, respectively in 1978, 1979 and 1980. Among the total export of Japan, 12%, 11% and 12% of it is destined to the Middle East, and 79%, 79% and again 79% of Japan's export to the Middle East is destined to the Gulf States, respectively in 1978, 1979 and 1980.

Table 3. Japan's Export to and Import from the Middle East

(Billion US Dollars)

	Total Export	Export to ME	%	Total Import	Import from ME	%
1978	97.5	11.7	12	79.3	24.9	26
1979	103.0	11.2	11	110.7	29.5	27
1980	129.8	15.1	12	140.5	45.0	32

Table 4. Japan's Export to and Import from the Gulf States

(Billion US Dollars)

	Total Export	Export to ME	%	Total Import	Import from ME	%
1978	11.7	9.3	79	24.9	20.4	82
1979	11.2	8.9	79	29.5	24.8	84
1980	15.1	11.9	79	45.0	43.6	97

As far as the trade relations are concerned, the importance of the Middle East for Japan's economy means the importance of the Gulf States, both in export and import, and such a trade pattern has been created since the first oil crisis and strengthened greatly after the second oil crisis. As trade partners of Japan, Algeria, Libya, and Egypt follows the Gulf States. The biggest trade partner of Japan is Saudi Arabia as is shown by Table 5.

Table 5. Major Partners of Japan's Trade in the Middle East

(Billion US Dollars)

(A) Japan's Import:

	1978	1979	1980		
Saudi Arabia	8.46	Saudi Arabia	12.13	Saudi Arabia	19.54
Iran	4.24	Kuwait	4.31	UAE	8.19
UAE	2.62	UAE	3.63	Iraq	4.34
Kuwait	2.48	Iraq	1.82	Iran	4.10
Oman	0.90	Oman	1.34	Kuwait	3.46
Iraq	0.78	Qatar	9.97	Qatar	1.80
Qatar	0.56	Bahrain	0.35	Oman	1.73

(B) Japan's Export:

1978		1979		1980	
Saudi Arabia	3.25	Saudi Arabia	3.83	Saudi Arabia	4.86
Iran	2.69	Iraq	1.61	Iraq	2.17
UAE	1.02	UAE	1.05	Iran	1.53
Iraq	0.95	Iran	0.93	UAE	1.36
Kuwait	0.77	Kuwait	0.86	Kuwait	1.27
Algeria	0.73	Libya	0.55	Egypt	0.64
Egypt	0.40	Egypt	0.40	Libya	0.53

\* cf. Japan's export to China in 1980 is amounted to 5.07 Billion and Japan's import from China is amounted to 4.32 Billion.

Next to the trade figures above-mentioned, we shall present some figures of indicating money flow between Japan and the Middle East. Table 6 gives us the total net flow of ODA from DAC to the Middle East as well as the total net receipts of the Middle East from all the sources including ODA and various investments from DAC.

Table 6. Total Net Flow of ODA and Total Net Receipts

(Billion US Dollars)

	1978		1979	
	LDC Total	Middle East	LDC Total	Middle East
ODA Bilateral	13.1	3.2 (24%)	15.9	3.7 (23%)
ODA Total	22.0	6.9 (31%)	26.1	7.8 (30%)
Total Receipts	73.3	19.0 (26%)	77.8	16.9 (22%)

Even though a decline of Iranian receipts, the total receipt of the Middle East is not seriously affected in relation to the share of the Middle East in LDC. Major recipients of the Middle East are given by Table 7. During 1960-1979, the total sum of Japanese co-operation to the Arab world occupied about 15% of the total sum of Japanese co-operation to the developing countries, that is 6.6 Billion US Dollars. Japan has a big share of DAC in Algeria, Iran, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and on the contrary has a negligible share in Turkey, Syria and Israel in 1979. And in 1980, Algeria, Iran, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Turkey and Syria received a high proportion of DAC's flow from Japan. Concerning the direct investment of Japan to the Middle East, much capital flowed to Algeria, Iran and Saudi Arabia in 1979 from Japan.

Table 7. Major Recipients from DAC

(Billion US Dollars)

	1978		1979		
	Total	ODA	Total	ODA	
Algeria	3.87	0.13	Egypt	1.91	1.29
Iran	2.90	0.13	Turkey	1.85	0.58
Egypt	2.76	2.27	Israel	1.68	1.18
Israel	1.39	0.90	Algeria	1.57	0.10
Turkey	1.36	0.59	Syria	1.41	1.39
Morocco	1.09	0.59	Jordan	1.06	1.01
Sudan	0.50	0.31	Morocco	0.78	0.24

Investment of OPEC to Japan is amounted to 21.5 billion US Dollars in 1980, and will be expected to be amounted to about 100 billion US Dollars in 1985. Those figures are equivalent to 10% and 14% of the total OPEC investment respectively in 1980 and 1985. Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, UAE, Qatar, Iran and Iraq are major investors to Japan, in government securities, stocks and bank accounts. Recently SAMA of Saudi Arabia is setting about investment in Japan's stock market. Japan's staple industries will open the doors to Arab investors to some extent.

From those figures concerning trade and money flow, we can safely say that Japanese economy has been, and will be closely connected to the Middle East, in particular to the Gulf states, to an extent of forming an economic community of sharing the fortune. This fact will request for Japan to take a comprehensive policy, that is a policy with much wider scope than "exclusively economy-oriented policy" to the Middle Eastern affairs.

The first oil crisis, and again the second oil crisis gave an opportunity for Japanese political and business leaders to reconsider such a traditional behavior as based on "exclusively economy-oriented policy," because of the influence of political events in the Middle East to Japanese economy. From the beginning up to the present day, the major events which have affected to Japan's economy as well as policy are: the Iranian Revolution, the Peace Treaty between Egypt and Israel, a last-

ing and comprehensive peace of the Middle East and the Paletine problems, and the war between Iran and Iraq.

From the economic point of view, it is unanimously observed that Japan's economic activities in the Middle East are now beyond the capability of an individual firm, and a governmental initiative will be necessary for performing an economic target. A governmental initiative is expected in various aspects: in performance of large scale projects, in promotion of co-operation between small and medium scale industries, in expansion of technical co-operation, and so on. Some large scale projects were, and are discussed again and again whether they should be "a national project" or not. Recently a Saudi Arabian Petro-chemical project is designated to a national project. In order to expand the so-called foot-industries in the Arab world, the co-operation between small and medium scale industries as well as technical co-operation is expected to be strengthened.

As is reviewed here, an economic motivation is still predominant in the first stage of the transitional period, but a much closer economic tie between Japan and the Arab world will force Japan inevitably to take a further step from the first to the second stage of the transitional period.

In concluding my paper, I should like to say frankly that an academic and cultural relation between Japan and the Arab world has been still restricted within the limited circles on the both sides, even though it has been greatly expanded in these

years. We should look for a way how to expand a cultural and academic relation much more than now, in terms of official and non-official exchanges. For that purpose, we have to search for "a new motivation" beyond the exclusively economy-oriented motivation. This is the reason why I placed the long introduction about the historical background of Japanese concern towards the Arab world. Still I doubt a prospect of creating a new motivation successfully within a short period, because the historical background teaches us that Japan tended to deviate from the right way, when she took a policy-oriented offensive to Asia as a national target, with a few exceptions. Moreover, Japanese people, as some of political scientists say, has been losing a clear-cut image of a national target, after becoming an economic power in 1960's, with a sense of satisfaction with the present situation of Japan in international society.

## THE COMMERCIAL RELATIONS BETWEEN KUWAIT AND JAPAN

*Abdulla Al-Ghunaim*

- 1) The post-war agreements have sized down Japan politically and militarily but have simultaneously paved the way for the miraculous economic restoration which made Japan one of the world biggest economic powers.
- 2) The urgent need for energy has increased steadily since the early sixties. In 1960, for instance, local sources of energy provided Japan with some 56% of its energy needs whilst imported oil represented only 44%. In 1970-1980, the percentage of imported energy rose to 83.5% and 85.0%, respectively.
- 3) Japanese oil companies began to take part in the exploration and exploitation of oil in the Arab Gulf area. The first oil agreement was signed in 1958, between Japan on one side, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia on the other for the exploitation of oil in the offshore area between the two countries (The Arabian Oil Company). Since then the interests of Japan in the area increased and the commercial relations between Kuwait and the other Gulf countries rose very sharply to put Japan as the leading country either as an exporter to or an importer from the Gulf area.



4) Before 1967 Japan was the third exporter to Kuwait, next to Britain and the United States. Since 1967 it has become the second taking the place of Britain. Japan became the first exporter to Kuwait in 1970 and since then the value of Kuwait imports from Japan has risen gradually (from 33.9 million K.D. in 1970 to 275.7 million K.D. in 1977).

The following table shows the major commodities imported by Kuwait from Japan in the period 1973-1977 and their value. These commodities are : cars and spare parts, iron and steel, fabrics woven of nylon, televisions, air conditioners, printing and writing papers, cotton fabrics, woolen fabrics and domestic refrigerators and in all these commodities Japan occupies the first rank.

Although the U.S.A. exceeds Japan in the value of cars and spare parts exported to Kuwait, but according to the number of cars Japan comes first.

Vehicle imports comprise 13% of the total value of Kuwait imports. They are increasing in number and value. The main exporter of limousine cars to Kuwait is the United States (42.5% of the total value of this kind of cars). Japan comes next (nearly 30%), but according to the number of these cars, Japan comes first. Imports of trucks come from West Germany (67%), U.S.A. (12.6%), Sweden (10.7%) and Japan (6%). In the whole, Japan is the major exporter of vehicles to Kuwait according to number.

MAJOR COMMODITIES IMPORTED BY KUWAIT FROM JAPAN  
IN THE PERIOD 1973 - 1977 & THEIR  
VALUE (1000 K.D.)

Commodities	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977	Rank of Japan as exporter to Kuwait
Cars and Spare Parts	8,638	12,918	27,278	33,533	44,757	Second to U.S.A.
Iron and Steel	5,768	12,375	16,582	32,296	36,046	First
Fabrics woven of Nylon	4,910	6,862	10,987	16,092	15,883	First
Television Sets	1,866	4,897	3,842	8,033	13,608	First
Cement	192	2,491	5,360	13,544	13,566	First
Air Conditioner Sets	1,643	823	1,152	3,441	5,306	First
Printing and Writing Papers	60	656	644	158	621	Second to Austria
Cotton Fabrics	377	311	680	782	501	Third to China and India
Woolen Fabrics	899	870	825	391	300	Third to U.K. and China
Domestic Refrigerators	9	-	9	43	296	First

Kuwait is the second largest market of imported vehicles next to Saudi Arabia in the Arab World. This means that Kuwait is a very important and promising consumer to the Japanese cars. Just within five years (the period 1973-1977) the value of imported cars and spare parts from Japan increased sharply from only 8.6 million K.D. in the first year to 44.7 million K.D. in the second that is more than five times. Japan is also the first exporter of iron and steel to Kuwait. The value of this category increased from about 5.7 million K.D. in 1973 to more than 36 million K.D. in 1977, with percentage increase even more than cars and spare parts.

Kuwait is becoming a growing market for Japanese cement and Japan is now the first exporter to Kuwait. The value of cement imports from Japan in the period 1973-1977 increased abruptly from only 192,000 K.D. in the former year to more than 13.5 million K.D. in the latter. The building and construction sector in Kuwait is very active and it is expected that there will be great demands for Japanese cement.

There is another commodity category for goods imported from Japan, namely electric equipments such as television sets and air conditioners. Japan also stands first as an exporter to Kuwait. The value of television sets imported from Japan rose sharply from about 1.8 million K.D. in 1973 to more than 13.6 million K.D. in 1977.

Nylon fabrics represent the third commodity group of goods imported from Japan who comes the first exporter to Kuwait. The value of these nylon fabrics trippled in the period 1972-1977 (rising from about 4.9 million K.D. to more than 15.8 million K.D.).

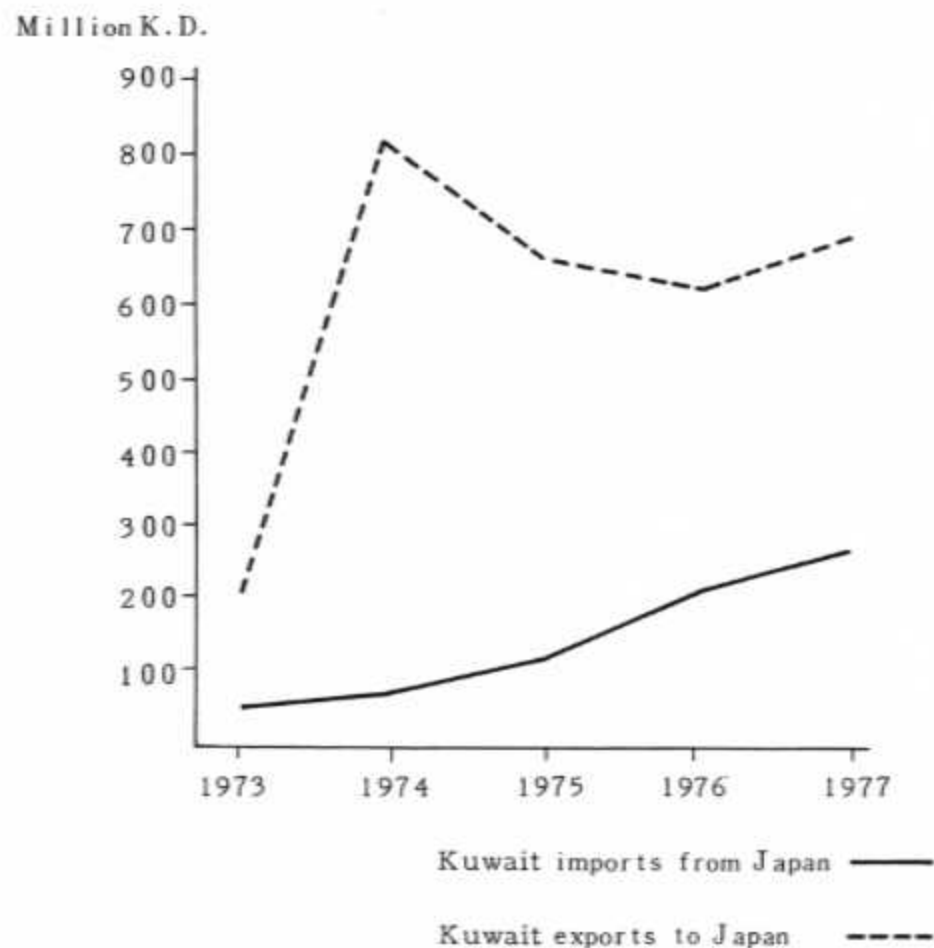
The table and all these previous figures show clearly how Japan, as the first exporter to Kuwait, is expanding its commercial activity in the Kuwait market.

- 5) Apart from these commercial aspects, Japanese companies are taking an increasing role in many projects in Kuwait. One of the latest is the contract obtained by Japanese company to build a land station for international radio-communications in Kuwait the value of which is 3.9 million K.D. This also includes the maintenance and repair of a previous station built by the same company in 1969. Another contract was signed between the Kuwait Company of Oil Tankers and the Japanese A.H.I. Company for building two super tankers (290,000 tons each) with total cost of 170 million dollars. The Kuwait Company also has signed contracts with other Japanese companies to construct four tankers to be delivered by the end of this year.

Many Japanese establishments and companies are seeking loans from Kuwait. One of the latest is the loan obtained from one of the Kuwait establishments for money investment

by one of the large trade companies in Japan (Ito Yokado) which values five billion dollars. This reflects the Japanese policy to benefit from the surplus capitals in Kuwait and the rest of the Gulf Oil countries and also to improve the balance of payment owing to the huge oil imports.

Japan is the biggest importer from Kuwait. In 1977, the value of Kuwait exports to Japan (mainly oil) was more than 700 million K.D., out of the total value of exports, nearly 2,792 million K.D., that is about 27%.



6) Japan sets a model to the Arab World as the only oriental country with a truly western complex of technological expertise of Japanese nationals. The industrial revolution of Japan was not attributed to Europeans or to imported experts.

Thus the building up and mobilization of its human resources represents the essence of its expanding industrialism, which has enabled Japanese products to compete in world markets and even with super powers more richly endowed with raw materials and long-standing industrial experience.

The fundamental basis of its successful competition with western manufacturing states was mainly her ability to control and regiment her population. I, therefore, firmly believe that the Japanese lesson of miraculous restoration lies primarily in the development of its human potentialities. It is perhaps for this reason, that I have come to the conclusion that the mere expansion of commercial relations between Kuwait and Japan does not suffice to denote the degree of cooperation between both. Economic cooperation definitely lacks substance unless foreseen within an overall and comprehensive cultural perspective. In this sense, my approach to the review of Kuwaiti-Japanese commercial relations is meant to be nothing more than an inlet to the fundamental issue of the development of human resources which should be the pivotal cornerstone in the cultural cooperation between the two countries. The valuable and condense contri-

bution of Dr. Nakaoka which he submitted yesterday afternoon has also induced me to re-orientate my paper in such a way as to embrace additional remarks pertaining to the need for a closer cooperation between our two countries particularly in the domains connected with the development of human resources such as training, organization, administration, behavioural psychology, the means of mass recruitment, industrial relations ... etc ... .

- 7) In this context, the development of cooperation between Universities and Higher education institutes in both countries should become the keynote of our joint action in the future. In April 3rd, 1979, Kuwait University and Nihon University signed a mutual agreement between the College of Science and the College of Engineering and Petroleum of the former and the College of Science of the later. It entailed the exchange of Faculty members and students and the promotion of joint research activities. Prof. Shin Ishida and Prof. Kenji Hotta from Nihon University spent a meaningful time in Kuwait in accordance with this agreement. Another agreement is now under way between the Faculty of Arts of Kuwait University and the Institute of Developing Economies to carry out a survey of social science research in the Gulf Area. In March 1981, Kuwait University received a Four-man delegation from Japan Society for the Promotion

of Sciences, and several spheres of academic cooperation were explored.

- 8) Perhaps one of the most positive results of this symposium is my acquaintance with a number of Japanese specialists and scholars whom we will be happy to receive in Kuwait for the primary objective of enhancing and furthering the cultural and humanistic relationship between our two countries. It goes also without saying that the Kuwaiti "Academia" will spare no effort to support, endorse and assist in the continuation of symposia held under the banner of the study of Arab - Japanese relations.

Mr. Chairman, Fellow colleagues, I hope I am forgiven for departing from the actual theme of my paper, but such departure stemmed from the fact that economic cooperation becomes meaningless, and precarious if it is based only on the short-term materialistic aspects and discarded the more lasting and rewarding human understanding.

## THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND TECHNOLOGY TRANSFER

*Masuo Tomioka*

The subject given to me for today's session is on the economic relation between Japan and the Arab countries. My report for today, I am afraid, may not be related directly to the subject because my speciality is somewhat different from the subject. However, I will be very happy if I could make any contribution to the symposium through my report which is to deal with the problem of economic development and technology transfer. In the first part of this report, I'll refer to something about the economic development theory and then proceed to the problem of technology transfer.

As a means to understand the modern economic development, we have a well-known theory called the theory of economic development stages. It is one of the most widely held and accepted views to explain how European countries succeeded to industrialize themselves and how the other parts of the world did not. According to the theory, every country can go along the historical development course only stage by stage in regular sequence, which means that a country can reach the industrial stage only after it had reached its preceding stage --- let me call it for the time being "pre-industrial stage". The pre-industrial stage is considered to be attained to when the com-

modity economy developed to a certain degree, often indicated by, for instance, the nation-wide evolution of domestic market and the establishment of "manufacture" system. The European countries could be industrialized in the 19th century because they had already reached this pre-industrial stage in the 18th century when the other parts of the world were still stagnant in more backward stages, being prematured, in a word, for the industrialization.

The theory of economic development stages as was mentioned above seems to have been quite influential among students of the economic history and the economic development. We find one of its newest versions in Prof. W.W. Rostow's The Stages of Economic Growth, London, 1960. However, I have to add here that the still recent studies about the economic history of the world have been revealing more and more new historical facts that are contradictory in some way or another to the theory.

If I give some examples of these recent studies, Prof. M. Rodinson made it clear in his book, Islam et Capitalisme, Paris, 1966, that in the 18th century Islamic world there had been already formed an economic sector which he characterizes as "capitalistique" and which is according to K. Marx a sine qua non --- a necessary condition --- for the evolution of capitalist economic formation of society. P. Gran depicts vividly in his Islamic Roots of Capitalism, Austin, 1979, various aspects of the dynamic and active society of the 18th century Egypt. In their

publication entitled "Village in Ottoman Egypt and Tokugawa Japan, Tokyo, 1977, A. Al-Rahman and W. Miki pointed out the development of rural industries and the evolution of regional division of labour in Egypt in the same days. These phenomena were never limited to Egypt only because, for instance, the crisis of Turkish "feudalism" in the 16th - 17th century was not the result of external factors such as the inflow of Mexican silver, but that of the internal development of market economy according to Y. Nagata's "Pre-capitalistic Society and Modernization of Turkey" (in Japanese), in H. Ohtsuka(ed.), "Koshin Shihonshugi no Tenkai Katei (On the Development of Backward Capitalism)", Tokyo, 1973. Also we have to remember the economic prosperity of the Gulf countries which was attained as one of the centers of economic activities in a vast region ranging from Africa to the Far Eastern countries about hundreds years ago.

Those studies seem to show us that the parts of the world other than the European Continent in the 18th century reached to the socio-economic stage which was matured enough to be considered as pre-industrial stage, or the same stage as that of the European Continental countries of the 18th century. And if so, here comes a question --- what divided the latter from the former in the subsequent historical course?

On the other hand, we must not forget the fact that, when people speak of the Asian backwardness in the 18th century,

they often treat the European Continental countries and England as the same thing although in fact there was a big gap between them. England was of course different from any other countries of the world in the sense that it was the only country dashing forward to the Industrial Revolution in the 18th century, while the other European Continental countries were still in the far backward stage if I use the term "stage". As the economic historians of Europe correctly argue when they treat the European economic history itself, there was a great differential between England and the other Continental countries. Nevertheless, it has been common that people would confuse unconsciously those Continental countries with England when they try to compare the Asian countries with the European Continental countries, and that they would misunderstand as if there had been a great differential between the two although in fact the two were the same and England only different from the two. In a word, people have tended to neglect the economic development of the Asian countries while on the other hand they overestimate the development of market economy in the European Continent, thus misunderstanding as if there had been a difference of economic development stages between the two.

Now, then, let me repeat the question I put before --- what made the European Continental countries succeed to be industrialized in the 19th century and what made the Asian countries fail to be industrialized thereafter?

One answer was recently given by Prof. G. Frank, Dr. S. Amin and others with the well-known theory of "development of underdevelopment". According to the theory, the very capitalistic development of European countries distorted other countries' historical development and introduced various pseudo-feudalistic socio-economic formations into them. In short, the industrialization of European countries on the one hand brought the de-industrialization of other countries on the other hand. The underdevelopment of non-European countries is not the result of their backwardness in the economic development stages but the result of the industrialization of European countries.

This theory --- often called "dependency theory" in Japan --- is, in my opinion, the first that came effectively against the traditional theory of economic development stages. However, the theory can not tell us how the role of the world "metropolis" was assigned to the European countries and the role of "periphery" to the other part of the world. Standing on the premise that the European countries were a priori the world metropolis, the theory does not seem to liberate us from traditional historical view that Europe occupied the central position of the world history from the beginning.

The factor to make one country industrialized and not to make another does not seem to be completely explained only by the purely economic background. A historical phenomenon is too complicated to be explained monistically by the economic theory.

Then comes the problem of technology because it is one of the most important factors other than economic ones that are considered to have given much influence upon the modern economic development.

When we refer to technological factors, people seem to see soon that there is a technological gap between the developing countries and the industrialized ones. And the view goes as far as to see it natural that the today's developing countries are not industrialized because they were, and still are, in a technologically backward stage comparing to the today's industrialized countries. And my opinion is quite different from this common one. There is a difference of the degree of industrialization in the form of capital accumulation and it brings forth what seems to be sometimes a technological gap, but in fact there is not a difference of the technological gap between the two.

Today, most of the people take a view that the technology is something that can be transferred from one nation to another. Thence comes out that popular argument on the various barriers to the technology transfer. According to the argument, the barriers exist on the both side of the nations that have technology to transfer and that have not, the former, for instance, being criticized for their secretive policies about the technological informations and the latter being reproached with their lacking in the effort to acquire technology. But, to

speaking strictly, what can be transferred from one nation to another is not the technology, but the idea to create new products. Today the industrialized countries are racing each other to develop new ideas --- which are now commonly called new technology --- and try to keep them secret, but as it is easy to understand those new ideas themselves are nothing if there are no means of realizing them for the countries to receive. And the ways of realizing the new idea vary from country to country, from region to region. There is no common way to do it. They are quite different just as people are quite different from person to person. And this process of realizing a new idea, or materializing a new idea, is to be indeed technology.

By the way, an invention is the combination of a new idea and the technology to realize it. An idea itself can not be regarded as an invention as is seen, for instance, in the case that the idea to fly like a bird had not been an invention until a man succeeded to make the artificial wings carrying an engine and really fly in the sky. The idea of the artificial wings carrying an engine is a part of invention, and to make the apparatus in practice is the second half of it. It is materialization of an idea that is really important. And in this materializing process there is no universal rules applicable in any time and any place. On the contrary, this materializing process requires originality and devices as much as, or more than, get-

ting a new idea requires. It is this materializing process that should be called technology in its strict sense of the word although the term is today used in a broader sense. Or, this technological process indeed can be called an invention in its narrow sense. Thus we have to know that an idea can be transferred from one place to another, but that the technology to materialize it can't be.

Let me give an example cited very often recently in Japan in the discussion about the technology transfer. In its early stage of modern history, Japan tried twice to introduce the modern iron industry from Europe. In both of the cases, European engineers, mechanics, and foremen were invited to realize in Japan just what they did in Europe, but unhappily in vain. The first blast furnace in Japan had eventually to be built by Japanese themselves. The reason seems to be very simple to me. The idea or the theory to build a blast furnace for the mass production of iron was easy to understand, but to make it in practice was another thing. To give one example, the Japanese iron ore as raw material was different from that of Europe. Therefore a different material for the furnace was needed. The most critical material for a blast furnace is, as you know, the firebrick used as inner wall. And to make the firebrick satisfactory for a Japanese blast furnace, people had to begin from going around to look for the suitable clay. In prac-



tice, traditional ceramists were called for help because they knew where to find particular kind of clays. Of course the problem was not confined to this. In addition to the problems of fuel, transportation, etc., there was even needed the change of design of the furnace itself, being entailed by the difference of iron ore, material for the furnace, etc. In short, as is quite understandable from this example, to build a modern blast furnace and to operate it successfully in Japan was the result of creative co-operation of all the relating Japanese specialists and artisans in those days. It was not the "technology" transferred from Europe, but the Japanese "technology" itself, that made them succeed.

Just the same thing happened in the early 19th century Europe. At that time, the Industrial Revolution was going on only in England and all the other parts of the world were trying to follow and industrialize themselves. Those countries exported their agricultural products as the "farm of the world" to England, and England in turn exported its industrial products as "the workshop of the world" to them. Through this international trade, those "farms of the world" were able to industrialize themselves, the fact being often referred to, for instance, by Prof. R. Nurkse as "trade was an engine of growth in the 19th century (Patterns of Trade and Development, Oxford, 1961). But what I wish you to pay attention to is not this economic phenomenon although it is very important,

but the very fact that those countries of "farm of the world" did not succeed to industrialize themselves by importing machines and devices from England where they had been developed and brought the Industrial Revolution. In fact, it was blacksmiths, carpenters, joiners and other artisans of those countries who really made spinning jennies, power looms and so on. They were forced to do so partly because of the British government's embargo policy of machines but they did so quite in conformity with the very nature of technology just as was shown above in the example of Japan, and as a result they succeeded to bring the industrialization into their countries.

Here we have to notice again that the same thing happened in Egypt of the same days --- Egypt of Muhammad Ali ---, too. As all of you know, when Egypt of Muhammad Ali started to introduce the industrial revolution, it did not import the machines, etc. from abroad but it had them made by the Egyptian artisans just as European Continental countries did. And thus Egypt witnessed a kind of industrial age although it did not go so long. This historical fact shows that there was no technological gap between Egypt and European Continent in those days because they did the same thing on the similar occasion. And Egypt having been chosen only as one of the many examples and being not particularly exceptional one, it would be able to be said safely, of course preferably with more studies added, that there was what is called technological gap primarily between the

European Continent and most of the Asian countries. This you can easily understand when you look at the splendid artisans' skills of Asian countries and when you consult with your daily experience.

Thus we reach to the conclusion that the reason why the countries were divided into the industrialized and the non-industrialized can not be explained by the technological gap theory as well as the economic development stages theory as we saw it before. Then, what is the true reason of it?

Well, the aim of my report today is not to decide the ultimate cause which divided the countries of the world into the industrialized and the non-industrialized. It is one of the main themes of the economics on the North-South problem of today, and far beyond the range of my today's report. So I'd like to conclude my report with some brief comment on it.

As I said before, a historical phenomenon can not always be caused by a single factor. It may be caused by an economic factor, or by a political factor or by combination of the two. One of my colleagues in the University of Kanagawa, Prof. Kajimura, recently published his argument on how Japan started to be industrialized in the 19th century while Korea and China did not. According to the common view about the question, China and Korea could not be industrialized because they were not economically matured enough to accept the transmission of industrialization from Europe, that is, there existed a differ-

ential of economic development stages between Japan on the one hand and China and Korea on the other hand. But Prof. Kajimura insists that there was nothing of such an economic differential between those three countries in the 19th century and that the main factors to have divided those countries were actually political. The external political factors, according to him, forced those three countries to open their ports to the Europeans at different times, China first, then Japan about 20 years after, and lastly Korea further 20 years after approximately, and these successive political incidents brought in turn to each of the countries internal political repercussions of the same character but to result in the different destinies thereafter because of the different characters of these three external political impacts.

This argument of Prof. Kajimura is an example how to explain the different courses followed by modern countries without resort to the theory of economic development stages. Of course we can apply this argument to all the cases in different times and places. To explain other cases, for instance, Indian, Egyptian, etc., it might be necessary that the traditional and cultural factors should be taken into consideration. This traditional and cultural factors sound like a little too vague to be a scientific concept, so instead of that, it might be better for us to introduce a concept of "social pattern of technology". It has of course nothing to do with the technological level but it is a sci-

entific expression to be used to analyze the difference between Europe and Asia. That is to say, or if I dare to say, it is not that the Asian societies could not introduce the industrial revolution as easily as the European Continental societies did, but it is that the Asian societies "rejected" the industrial revolution because of the difference of the traditional and cultural background, or more clearly, the social pattern of technology.

## INTRODUCTION TO ARAB JAPANESE MUTUAL CULTURAL IMAGE PERCEPTION

— A Personal Experience and Analysis —

*Seif Wady Romahi*

### Introduction

Having lived for four years in Japan, I intend to put down before you my own experience. As such, unlike my previous paper, Diplomacy of Resources, submitted to the first symposium, this paper will contain, as I anticipated, my analysis and personal views.

In fact, I was delighted to live here amongst people of high discipline, traditional values, and distinct image of creativity. Staying here for a while had given me a deeper insight into how cultural contacts can best be interpreted and how the gap of narrowness and shallowness of understanding of foreign cultures and peoples can be bridged.

During my early days in Japan, while observing the high standard that this country had reached in various fields, two questions have preoccupied my mind: 1) How far did Japan go in its westernisation while preserving its cultural personality? And, 2) What kind of image do the Japanese people hold of the Arabs? Is it the Western image of the stereotype "Sheik of Araby" or else?

## 1. Cultural Identity & Westernisation

Touching upon the first question will ipso facto lead us to think of cultural traditions and national civilisation and values whenever confronted with Westernisation, as has happened in Japan and in the Arab World.

To define culture and civilisation may be somehow difficult. However, to use the anthropologists definition, it might be said that culture is "the sum total of the attainments and activities of any specific period, race, or people, including their implements, handicrafts, agriculture, economics, music, art, religious beliefs, traditions, language and story".<sup>1</sup> As a matter of fact, this definition covers the whole cycle of human life. As such, the growth of civilisation, as culture, is a sum total of a nations aesthetic and intellectual achievement. However, to a layman, culture is the training, improvement, and refinement of mind, morals, or taste. As such, this is the preliminary basic understanding, for culture includes, inter alia, "restraint over oneself and consideration of others."<sup>2</sup> And it is often labelled as "uncultured" for a man who does not acquire the value of self-restraint or has no consideration for others.

By and large, "cultural identity of a people is expressed by their total way of life, not only in the finest specimens of their creative arts as admired and promoted by the elite class, or even including the common folk crafts and entertainments, but also in everyday language, manners and customs, beliefs,

philosophies, and values. In a differentiated society of strata, for example, the overall culture is the sum total of all patterns of living of all its constituent social groups.

Admitting the inevitability of cultural change through contact and exchange with foreign cultures, concerned persons have noted some of the forces that may adversely affect the desirable form of development. First of this is the un-mindful adoption of foreign education which may have its positive benefits for the development in technology and industry, but negative effects on traditional values. The problem usually originates from un-discriminating whole-sale adoption and could be resolved by greater attention to the proper context and purpose of education and its un-intended consequences. It also originates from the profit motive of modern business which disregards traditional culture values. Local business vie for customers with new and fashionable products of foreign origins that encourage abandonment of native customs.

At the end of the Ottoman Empire, when Attaturk launched his programme of Western way of life on Turkey, many Muslim outcries criticised his westernisation of a Muslim society. Some saw it as a devil and an evil work, others saw it as an impossible mission and that there can be no cultural marriage between genuine traditions and modernism. On the other hand, some groups found it an opportunity to divorce the society from its past and welcomed, therefore, the western heritage.

Islam as a monotheistic religion, is also a code of life. As such, it has three main aspects: religious, political, and cultural; the three overlap and interact. Islam, as culture, is a compound of varied elements, ancient Semitic, Indo-Persian, and classical Greek, synthesised under the caliphate and expressed primarily through the medium of the Arabic tongue. It also holds the distinction of having been, from the middle of the 8th century till the end of the 12th century, unmatched in its brilliancy and unsurpassed in its literary and its scientific and philosophical output. When Islam spread, Arabic heritage was able to absorb the different foreign cultures that it came in contact with and assimilated them in various ways, to a far extend than it attempted to supplement them. The history of the Muslim and Arabic peoples, therefore, became a unique example of a culture with religious foundation.<sup>3</sup>

Generally speaking, the belief that Islamic traditions and identity being jeopardised by the new influx of western values was and is considered a serious issue among many Islamites, although, logically speaking, no development in culture can take place without new creations, be it from one's own genius or judicious borrowing.

One reason of the present concern may lie in the increasingly rapid rate of possible contact and exchange with large numbers of foreign cultures. This was made possible by the development of modern means of communication through travel,

trade, and tourism. This also extends the range of alternatives for selection and absorption without a sufficient time for deliberation especially among the young and the ill-informed.

However, it may be looked upon as an important to think of the greater cause for concern of the increasingly dubious effects of many cultural traits from foreign sources that are acclaimed as models for "progress and modernity." Hence, the growing debate on the preservation of "cultural identity," the desirable form of "cultural development," the threats of "foreign cultures," and possibly the need for a "national cultural policy".

Popular culture today in many Arab countries has taken full advantage of material amenities produced by modern technology and industry. Modern education based on the western models brought with it ideas and values in the arts, manners, and customs from the same source. Modern trade and business facilitated further dissemination. Many of such items are outright adoption for consumption; fashionable dresses, popular music, foreign films, international sports, and the like.

With regard to Japan it was subjected to the invasion of western culture, western art, western way of life, the spread of technology and industrialisation. But, did all these resulted in the loss of Japan's distinguished personality? Or did it loose its oriental face as a price of its modernity and westernisation? Some contemporary Japanese writers hold the view that Japan

has gone too far in its "westernisation and pollution"!

With the reforms that took place during the Meiji-era (1868-1912), the feudal system disappeared, and the new Japan emerged. As a result of the contact with the West, a lot of changes and developments occurred in the Japanese society. Consequently, many were fascinated with the Western culture to a degree that made some of them say that Japan has no history of its own; and its history starts with its westernisation period. This group looked at Japanese traditions as an outdated and backward heritage, and, therefore, should be abandoned and Japan must completely go west. This very thing happened with some Arab intellectuals among which is Dr. Hussein Fawzi, who thought of western civilisation as the only tool for progress and development.

In the same manner that the Japanese intellectuals during the Hei-an era (794-1191) thought of the Chinese education and wisdom, the intellectuals of the Meiji-era looked at the western civilisation. While importing western technology and its know-how and learning western art, Japanese art was shelved behind.

It was not until Kawabata Yasunari was awarded the Noble Prize (in 1958) for his contribution in genuine Japanese literature, the outside world became interested in Japanese art and began to realise that it does have deep roots and rich heritage. Needless to say that this had also left its thumbprint on the thinking of Japanese intellectuals as well.

In fact, we, in the Arab world, had the chance to observe very closely the western industrial revolution from a nearly distance. But, because of our overcautiousness, the colonialisation of our part of the world, the dismemberment of our land, and the disintegration of our nation, we remained behind; while Japan who started later, specifically with the Meiji Era, has continued its goals without being hindered by its traditions. Japanese culture proved also that it did not prevent Japan from digesting Western technology and civilisation. Although Japan may give the impression that it is a mixture of various imported cultures, dominated by foreign elements, a deep observation, however, shows that the Japanese culture is distinguished by its capabilities of receiving and digesting foreign cultures. And this has a similarity with early Arabic Civilisation in the classical Islamic period.

Nonetheless, the Japanese contemporary strength lies in their cultural development while concurrently coping with modernity, maintaining a spirit that it harmoniously coloured their life and culture with a hidden beauty, simplicity, and beautiful taste; or what is known in Japanese as sabi, miyabi, and mono-no aware. As a result, while digesting foreign cultures through Japanisation and improvement, Japan was able to preserve its own personality and national identity.

Reading the Japanese history and culture, I cannot but say that I cherished and appreciated Japanese ancient heritage.

One of those observations is the "bushido" (the Samurai Spirit) which coincidentally has a lot in common with Arab "Foroussiyah". And needless to say that modern European nations have learned the principles of "Chivalry" from the Arabic "Foroussiyah" of the Islamic Empire, during the Crusade period. I also admire the Japanese keenness and interest in learning the philosophies and modes of life of other nations while maintaining their old traditions, because of their free spirit.

Furthermore, Japan has proven that modernisation, progress, and the highly advanced technology is not a sole feature of the Western nations. My assignment at the UAE Embassy in Tokyo gave me a far sighted outlook and a broad overview. Living amongst Japanese made me hold the view that the Japanese miracle is not in Japan's geographical location nor in its limited natural resources; but it is in the Japanese man. The Japanese capability and creativity in challenging the harsh natural phenomena, constituted for this nation the basic foundation for its great achievement, indeed.

Being an Arab with strong roots in traditions and as an oriental person who looks for the progress of his country, for its industrialisation and technological development, and the building up of its modernity, I felt impressed. Nonetheless, the main issue remains the same one confronted the Japanese intellectuals; that is, how far and to what extent can we preserve our values while concurrently work for modernisation?

Does Japan, in this regard, offer a good example for us to follow? In addition to that, does modernisation necessarily mean westernisation?

## 2. Mutual Images & Perception

Discussing images, as such, draws my attention to the pre-imagined stereotype perception, which endangers cultural and political inter-relations. This stereotype image constitutes a characteristic of the profound inequality between the industrially advanced, the non-industrial but rich and developing, and the poor nations of the world.

The first group is used to images of the latter two that carry a flavour of their own superiority complex. Ironically speaking, and more tragically, however, to find in many cases some of the educated elites in the latter two who yield to and/or accept the images of what the rich industrial nations carry of the the poor. In this connection, the industrial West in many ways used to see peoples of the 3rd world as lazy, inefficient, corrupt, intriguing, unreliable, untrustworthy, and even immoral.

Unfortunately, this image of stereotype of others tends to serve as a basis for action on policy-making. It also may tend to influence foreign policy decisions, because the makers of this foreign policy themselves often share the same perception. Therefore, as long as the industrial nations do not change their perception of the peoples of the 3rd World, or the poorer na-

tions, and learn to see them as they see their own societies, there can be no equal political relationship between the rich and the poor.

Generally speaking, the images of peoples are usually formed by a complex mix of various disciplines. History, geography, politics, and economics, each plays a special role. The most powerful role, however, is played by the media. The mass media disseminate daily doses of inputs which go to create and re-inforce the prevailing stereotypes. For instance, it is a habit of western media to play up the "disunities, discords and differences" among the Arabs and ignore their positive aspects.

Thereupon, embarking upon the second question related to the mutual images and perceptions between Japan and the Arab world, I can safely say that the general Arab outlook of the Japanese is and has been more favourable than that of vice versa. To me, personally, Japan has acquired a distinguished picture ever since my early schooling days. With the beginning of the century, the Arabs looked at Japan with favour and admiration.

The Arabs were impressed by the Japanese individual as a symbolic patriot. Japan, to them, has demonstrated the strong will of a non-western and an oriental nation challenging a western one, the Czarist Russia. This era has also witnessed the birth of the Arab revolution and the second Arab awakening. The Arabs, under the leadership of Sherif Hussain, then ruler

of Mecca, were revolting against their Ottoman rulers with the aspiration of independence and unity. At the same time, they were resisting Zionist invasion, self-imposed colonialism, and western-planned partition of their land into several tiny political entities.

After my arrival in Japan, however, this admiration became somehow mixed with the feeling of disappointment, for the fact that I found a distorted image about the Arabs, Islam, and the Palestine Question. Further disappointing point was to find that many books of history in Japanese schools carry, similar to what I found in western schools, a fictitious literature and distorted picture of the Arabs. Perhaps the main reason for this situation was that the Arab nation and Japan did not have, until recently, a direct channel of information. All what both have learned of each other was presented by a 3rd party.

Because of the fact that Japan and the Japanese were living, relatively speaking, in a self-imposed isolation, the previous western image of an Arab was exported to Japan. Whereas the Japanese people did not have enough opportunities to understand for themselves the Arab people, they relied largely on what American or European writers, such as Lawrence, had pictured the Arabs; in addition to that, Hollywood's distorted glamour of Arab Sheikhs, has much to do with the present western image of the Arabs.

Before 1973, Japan did not develop a great political inter-



est in the Arab East as did the United States, Britain, and Europe. However, unlike the U.S., Japan was not pulled into Middle Eastern affairs as a result of the cold war; and unlike Britain and other European powers she did not have any record of colonial relations, treaty obligations, or defence commitments, that linked her with the region.

Nevertheless, in contrast with her prewar objectives, Japan's postwar diplomacy generally has concentrated on economic rather than on political or military matters. The promotion of trade has been regarded as the most important means for facilitating the country's economic growth. This has been of major concern for the Japanese Government. It has been said that Japanese leaders have continually stressed the necessity of "safeguarding overseas trade," and, therefore, have pursued a "business-first" policy. Accordingly, Japan's stand on many international issues, including the Arabic ones, was determined largely on the basis of the actual and potential effect on her economy and her international trade.

For the abovementioned facts, and as has been mentioned earlier regarding her image on the Arabs, Japan relied on what has been exported from the West regardless its validity or accuracy. Accordingly, this leads us to think of what kind of image did or does the West have of the Arabs that have influenced the Japanese perception. In an article carried by the International Herald Tribune (I.H.T., 12 Dec. 1974), Professor

Qazzaz, of California State University at Sacramento, summarised American images of the Arabs as being "dirty, dishonest unscrupulous, ... fatalistic, lazy, unambitious, shifty scheming." He also added that American images however do not differ much from images held by many western nations on Asians, Africans, and Latin Americans.<sup>4</sup>

Only conclusive evidence of the resurgence of the weaker nations can alter the western stereotypes. Therefore, it was the Arab's performance in the October war of 1973, followed by the effective use of Arab oil resources for the advancement of the Arab national cause that knocked out many of the western stereotype of the Arab world. It is the oil income of the Arab countries, which is, essentially, a manifestation of the new power and strength of the Arab community, that has been forcing the western media to redraw images of the Arab world. The assertion of Arab power during the 70's and the Arab determination to rapidly transform the socio-economic structure of their States through industrialisation have splintered the western stereotype of the Arab people.

Presently, the Arab world is becoming of greater economic, political, and strategic significance. The region is the primary petroleum-exporting area in the world and supply most of the crude oil required by Western countries & Japan. Its oil fields, mineral deposits, and manufacturing sectors continue to attract considerable foreign investment. As such, the Arab world is

becoming of vital economic importance to Japan and the International community.

The continuing rise in oil prices since 1973, allowed Arab oil-producing countries to launch ambitious development plans that involved large-scale industrial projects. This action stimulates a good market for Japanese industrial goods and a depot for labour force from poorer nations including S.E. Asia. Whereas those oil producing Arab states are stepping up their international economic development on the strength of their abundant oil revenues, they do need, in return, Japan's technological assistance.

In the political arena, however, the image has been also changing. For more than 30 years, the Middle-East-policy of many industrial nations was anchored on the assumption of the superiority of Israel with western backing. This assumption now lies in shambles. Presently, many observers are persuaded that as the years roll, Israel will, comparatively, grow weaker, while the Arabs go stronger.

However powerful the Zionist lobby in the U.S., the Jews constitute only 5% of the American population. On the other hand, the centre of gravity of U.S. domestic politics have shifted away from the areas where the Jews were politically and economically strong and that the Jewish lobby in the U.S.A. is no more being the decisive and the main factor in the determination of the presidential election.

By and large, a new mood of re-thinking is gushing in. Senator Howard Baker of Tennessee in his report on the Middle East stated that, "neither can we, nor should we, turn our back on the Arab States; we must deal evenly and openly with all the nations of the Middle East ..."<sup>5</sup> Senator Barry Goldwater, once fully committed to Israel, said in January 1976 that there could be no peace in the Middle East "until the Palestinian problem is solved."<sup>6</sup>

In addition to this, an American columnist was clearer in his point of view, when he challenged the validity of American assistance to Israel by stating that, "must the American taxpayer in one form or another, grant to Israel over \$3 billion for the return of 2,000 square miles of desert to its rightful... (people)?... All this, and more, while ... displaced and destitute Palestinian cries out for justice?"<sup>7</sup>

While the American images of Arabs and Israel are in a melting pot, clearer images of the Middle East are perceptible in Western Europe and in Japan.

A genuine Euro-Arab dialogue was one of the ideas to emerge from this realisation. At their Copenhagen summit, the leaders of the nine EEC countries began the process of adopting a minimum political position on the Arab-Israeli dispute. Although the idea of the Euro-Arab dialogue is still in its infancy, many West European countries have since clarified their interpretation of Resolution 242 passed by the United Nations and defined it in

a more concrete terms for the cooperation with the Arab states.

Despite the necessity and the importance of having Japan-Arab Dialogue, unlike Europe, such thing has not started yet. Nevertheless, relations between the two have taken some positive steps since 1973. Prime Minister Miki, in 1975, was the first premier to initiate a pro-Arab policy. For Japan, said Miki, "there was no alternative in the foreseeable future but to continue to rely on Middle East oil", and "It naturally makes careful consideration on the part of Japan in framing its Middle East policy all the more important." Moreover, Japanese officials made it clear that Japan would side with the Arabs in any diplomatic maneuverings, and politically at least, in the event of renewed hostilities in the Middle East. Commenting on this, Richard Halloran, the New York Times correspondent in Tokyo, said that, "this was one of the rare times that a policy statement of this sort has been made on Japanese initiative."<sup>8</sup>

This primary step was later followed with further constructive steps such as the negotiations carried in Japan between the U.A.E. Oil Minister, Dr. Mana al-Oteibah on one side and the Japanese officials on the other, including Premier Ohira, his Foreign Minister, and the former MITI Minister, Masumi Esaki. In his discussions with Japanese Officials, Dr. Oteibah reached a constructive results and established a better understanding and foundation for a mutual cooperation that was carried later in Abu Dhabi by the Japanese Ambassador to UAE,

Mr. Ryohei Murata (presently, Director-General of Africa and the M.E. Bureau), Mr. Abdul-Rahman al-Jarwan, Under Secretary of the UAE Foreign Ministry, and Mr. Mahmoud Abbass (Abu Mazin) one of the PLO leaders. This mutual dialogue resulted in the approval of the Japanese officialdom to raise the Palestinian flag over the PLO chancery in Tokyo; also a parliamentary invitation was extended to a delegation from the Palestinian National Council and to Chairman Arafat to visit Tokyo.

### 3. Conclusion

The world's interest in the Arab affairs has been intense since the oil crisis stunned the industrialised nations into recognition of the new realities of the 1970's. It is my conviction that one of the main obstacles hindering the development of a better images between the Arabs on the one side and the industrial world on the other, is the problem of Palestine. Therefore, it is the duty of all peace-loving men and nations and those who are concerned to help reach a durable peace and justice in Palestine.

My experience made me firmly believe that peace in the Middle East which constitute a major cornerstone of the security and interests of the world community, cannot be achieved without the full participation of the PLO in any peace process and/or without the recognition of the Palestinian right to self-determination.

Therefore, it pleases me nowadays to see the increasing Japanese interest in the Palestine Question that coincided with the increasing international wide support. It also pleases me that the Japanese are becoming more interested in Arab affairs. Through my stay in Japan I have learned that the Japanese whether officials or laymen are learning more about the Arabs through their direct contacts and personal experiences. They are becoming more aware that the Arabs are a society of ancient heritage, a community who participated in human civilisation and science at the time when Europe was blanketed with its Dark Ages. More Japanese scholars now admit that, "the debt the Japanese people owe to the civilisation of the ... [Arabs] is very old, dating back many centuries."

Presently, we happily admit that the worlds major industrialised nations are starting to change their outlook of the Arabs. As such, this step will enable them to recognise the new realities in the Middle East. Industrial nations have just begun to have glimpses of the new dynamism that has gripped the Arabs.

The Autumn of 1973 marked the 3rd Arab awakening to a new dawn in their history. This 3rd awakening and renaissance (nahdah) differs from the previous ones. The last does not cast them as conquerer Saracens, professing a new faith, but responsible partners in the progress, stability, and security of the world, and also partners in economic development at home

and abroad. This fact is becoming more realised in the outside in the Sunday Times, Mr. E.C.Hodgkin stated that "the new renaissance is visible in Arab literature, painting, music, theatre, and films, as well as in Arab diplomacy."<sup>9</sup> As a matter of fact, the Arabs are well determined to rapidly bridge technological gap between themselves and the industrial world.

Concludingly, therefore, it may be stated that although the old image of the Arabs being of an oil rig, desert, and the "harem skarum" of the "Arabian Nights" did not die yet, it is fading away and a new image is taking shape. Thereupon, a lot of constructive steps should be implemented for the guidance of the public perception towards a general Arab-Japanese inter-outlook and for the continuity of the work and the activities of this committee. Both Arabs and Japanese do acquire the necessary criteria for that. Relations between both have a very clean record. Both mutual history is not spotted with previous actions of enmity, colonial interests, nor that the Arabs are afraid of Japan to export to them any political ideology --- contrary to all this, the two parties, as has been mentioned earlier, do maintain an excellent interdependence status.

### Footnotes

1. Britannica World Language Dictionary (London, 1964).
2. G. Nehm, Glimpse of World History, 4th ed., (London, 1949).
3. Philip Hitti, Islam: A Way of Life (Oxford, 1970), pp 2-3; see also History of Islam Series, Religion and Culture, vol.2 (Cambridge, 1970) pp. 569-71.
4. International Herald Tribune (Paris), 12 December, 1974.
5. News Sentinel (Lodi, Calif.), 7 November, 1975.
6. Contra Costa Times (Walnut Creek, Calif.), 13 November, 1975.
7. Desert News (Salt Lake City, Utah), 5 November, 1975.
8. I.H.T. 25 January, 1975.
9. Sunday Times, 12 March, 1975.

### P R O P O S A L S

*Seif Wady Romahi*

In order to deepen Arab-Japanese understanding and foster their relations, I suggest that the symposium send a message to the Japanese Government, the Secretary-General of the League of Arab States and to the Arab Governments through their embassies in Tokyo that include the following remarks.

- (1) Work for the establishment of Arab-Japanese Dialogue on political, cultural, and socio-economic levels benefiting from the experience of the Euro-Arab Dialogue and avoiding its mishaps.
- (2) Increase Arabic and Islamic studies in Japanese institutions and vice versa.
- (3) Increase the exchange of films and series and encourage literature translations benefiting from the experience that was mentioned in Professor Nutahara's lecture.
- (4) Encourage exchange of scholars and scholarship from both parties to study each other's culture and language.
- (5) Call on the Japanese Ministry of Education to assign scholarship grants to Palestinian students to be nominated through PLO in the same manner it does for Arab and non-Arab countries in the Middle East including Israel.
- (6) Mapping a strategy of the understanding of political and economic problems of each party in order to assist, in a scholarly systematical conviction, the decision makers in

Arab countries and in Japan, to reach decisions that may benefit both, and enhance their relations.

- (7) Call on the Arab League to support the 3rd symposium on Arab-Japanese understanding.
- (8) The Symposium participants do believe that deepening relations with the Palestinian people and the PLO will ipso facto enhance Arab-Japanese relations, therefore, both parties (Arab+Japanese) kindly appeal to the Japanese Government to extend its recognition to the PLO in order to serve a better relations and understanding between Japan and Arab countries.
- (9) Call on the Arab participant in this symposium to constitute what may be called as the Arab Provisional Founding National Committee for the Study of Arab-Japanese Relations taking into consideration the following points:
  - (a) having scholars from various Arab countries, I would suggest to the Founding Committee expands its membership to include one, at least, from Arab countries, not represented today.
  - (b) to have its temporary seat of secretariat in Kuwait until it moves to the headquarters of the League of Arab States where it might be, or perhaps keeping Kuwait as a permanent seat, if the Arab League approves that.
  - (c) Report the outcome and proceeding of the Committee

to the Arab League and the Arab Governments.

- (10) Renaming the committee and the symposium into "ARAB-JAPANESE CULTURAL DIALOGUE NATIONAL COMMITTEE".
- (11) This statement may be called the MISHIMA STATEMENT ON ARAB-JAPANESE CULTURAL DIALOGUE.