Communication and National Development in Japan

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Since the end of the last world war, Asian countries who have joined the ranks of sovereign nations (nation-states) have been generally preoccupied with the problem of national development. Complementing the wave of economic, political and social changes in the developing countries for the past two decades or so is what has been aptly described as "the communication revolution."

Before proceeding further, it is well to make clear what we mean by "national development" and "communication." National development presupposes changes which may be collectively called a process of modernization or rationalization (ideally characterized by the highest possible degree of efficiency with the least expenditure of energy) of some or of all parts of the larger social system. "National development" and "modernization" will be used interchangeably here.

"Communication" refers to the flow of information and of intended and unintended messages through channels available within the society. One level of communication is the informal, face-to-face communication among people. Another level is the modern means through mass media which introduces the formal, impersonal type of communication along with specialized and professional agents of communication like journalists, radio broadcasters, television producers, commentators, entertainers and others.

Many of the major problems relating to modernization have been

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conceptualized and analyzed in terms of communication processes.[1] A central aspect of investigation is the role of communication in implanting the concept of change in a society in the direction of the desired change. Some hypotheses have been advanced regarding the nature of this relationship. One of these touches on the use of communication as a "planned dynamic" which suggests that, in deciding what to communicate, attention must be given not so much on communication as on change. Other hypotheses are that the greater part of communication theory must necessarily be psychological and sociological because it deals with the behavior of individuals and groups; and that the greater part of planning for effective communication must consist of planning in psychological terms for the content of the messages to be communicated.[2]

Another touchstone of communication effectiveness vis-a-vis change or innovation requires that communication fit into the culture it desires to change. It must be made in terms that are understandable and "acceptable to the culture where change is expected to occur."[3] It must coincide with existing norms and values held by the people of a given society.

This paper will look into Japan's early stages of modernization (from 1868 or the beginning of the Meiji period to 1945, the end of the last war) in the light of the two levels of communication cited above — the informal, face-to-face level and the modern means embodied in mass media. Japan's early modernization period is comparable to the present level of development in most transitional countries of Asia. Being the first nonwestern country to successfully modernize itself within a relatively brief period, Japan's experience has been closely studied by contemporary Asian nations.

Japan's national development was motivated by goals set by the innovating political elite of Meiji Japan who attained leadership without disrupting the larger social system's value of loyalty, obtaining imperial sanction concerning their modernization policies.[4] The goal was for Japan to attain a position of equality with the Western powers, who had infringed upon her sovereignty, by means of "extraterritorial rights" and "uniform tariffs" stipulated in the so-called "unequal treaties."

Japan's political leaders dropped the second half of the slogan *sonno joi* (revere the emperor and expel the "barbarians"), thereby focusing the people's attention upon the emperor and drawing it away from the "barbarians" or the Westerners whose goodwill, know-how, technology and capital were necessary for the attainment

of Japan's modernization. These major reformers devised a slogan *fukoku kyohei* (a strong and rich nation). Providing a guide for their decisions on what to change and what not to change within the larger social system, this also aimed at evoking the predictable favorable responses of the people, who were organized within a vertically hierarchical social system. The reformers revitalized the concept of the "emperor system" and developed it into a state cult, as well as reinforced the "family system" and their underlying values of loyalty and filial piety.

The result was the intensification of conformity and unquestioning obedience to superior authority, characteristic of Japanese behavior within the past Tokugawa "feudal" society. It can, therefore, be said that hierarchy, minutely defined and rigidly enforced,underlay the political ethics of traditional Japan. The exalted reaches of this hierarchy provided an elite that could wield authority easily because it was trained to that task, and because it was accepted by the governed.[5] The Meiji political system deliberately cultivated tradition, whenever possible, but adapted Western technology ("Eastern ethics, Western technology" was another Meiji slogan) to attain technical development and national power. The preceding description of the socio-politico-economic systems of the larger social system during the Meiji period suggests that traditional norms of social processes were the major support of the modernizing policies of Japan's political leaders.

Traditional Japanese expectations of socio-politico-economic behavior continued to be valid. Specialization and social interaction within the vertically hierarchical social, political and economic groups remained traditionally Japanese. Modern functions were grafted into traditional roles. Traditional cognitive habits and roles (the information-handling process acquired by playing a social role), as well as the opinion-reaction relationships, continued to be practised rather than unlearned. Acceptance of social changes, necessary for modernization and national development, meant compliance with the prescription of hierarchy.

Modernization was conceived at the top of the political hierarchy and transmitted through a communication system which coincided with the social hierarchical system downward to the informal communicators at the face-to-face level in the smaller social groups and ultimately to the family, and accepted by the people as a matter of accedence of rank. The earlier presentation of the goals (usually

"packaged" in slogans meaningful to the Japanese) and the means of attaining these goals suggest that the contents and instruments of communication were directed to supporting the legitimacy of the Meiji government and the administrative structures of the state which was necessary to guide further social changes, if Japan was to modernize and attain national power.

Thus, the relatively smooth transition of Japan from a "feudal" to a "modern" society during the Meiji period can partly be viewed as a function of the communication process which depended on people with their statuses in the social hierarchy (who were performing other roles like political and economic roles).

Before considering the role of the mass media in Japan's national development, it is important to take a quick glance at the educational system established durir the Meiji period which was another feature of the face-to-face level of communicating information.

By 1868, when the Charter Oath advocated in its fifth paragraph the seeking of universal knowledge throughout the world, Japanese society already had a relatively high literacy rate for a pre-modern nation (and some institutional arrangements whereby this literacy was produced).[6]

Although the past Tokugawa regime had no organized national educational system, it had a great number of schools. In these institutions, children were taught, among others, the virtues appropriate to the lower orders of the "feudal society" especially obedience to superiors and submission to family and community. In short, their education emphasized ethics and political consequence. There were also the schools attended by *samurai* maintained by the fief government. Here, the students were taught the moral basis and aims of politics; that the samurai class, endowed with breeding, learning, and morality, was to rule the rest of those constituting the society who were "ignorant and ignoble, prone to laziness, extravagant and immoral but responsive to moral exhortation and example and amenable to good treatment."[7] Hierarchy, conformity, obedience and loyalty of inferior to superiors were basic values of premodern Japanese education.

Between 1872, when universal education was instituted, and 1881, the year the revised regulations of education restored the priority position of the morals course in the list of subjects taught in the primary schools, a number of developments took place in Japan.

Industrialization and the growth of the market to which the family was gradually losing its economic functions, consequently affected family authority and family solidarity. The dynamic influences of Western liberal utilitarian and pragmatic ideas emphasizing individualism were weakening the vitality, if not the validity, of the emperor and family systems among those exposed to "Western learning." Political parties – the *Jiyuto* (Liberal Party) and the *Kaishinto* (Progressive Party), inspired by French and English liberalism, respectively, – appeared in Japan's political scene to confront the Meiji oligarchic modernizers with an opposition demanding for a parliamentary government.

It was in 1885 when Mori Arimori became minister of education that the educational system was geared to train self-sacrificing individuals – those with no thought of their own rights and privileges – subservient to the goals of the state and was used as an instrument to nourish nationalism centered around the concept of the emperor system. Strong nationalism was taught to teachers under training in strictly supervised schools and dormitories which became "semi-military barracks for the carrying out of rigid discipline and inculcation of unquestioning obedience."[8] The manipulation of the educational system to strengthen the state was thus facilitated.

To further the state's control of national thought, the Meiji oligarchs framed the Imperial Rescript on Education which was promulgated by the emperor on October 30, 1890. According to Sansom "it was not a chapter of learning but an announcement of ethical principles that were henceforth to govern the thoughts and actions of the teachers and pupils as well as the whole nation."[9] This Imperial Rescript prescribed indivisible virtues such as loyalty and filial piety, as well as other Confucian virtues, diligence and public spirit, respect for the laws, and willingness to die for the emperor in battle. This Rescript served as the basic "sacred text of the new religion of patriotism" until 1945.

Although written, the Imperial Rescript, the ethics texts, and their exegesis were difficult to understand because they were in literary stereotype language. Meaningful communication was therefore dependent on indoctrinated teachers who presented and explained the message to the students. The written text, itself was ritualistically communicated and learned by students who took them as the officially approved words to serve as "amulets" rather than "conveyors of meanings," [10] thus reinforcing the political system's

ability to mobilize the people towards the attainment of national development goals.

The reiteration and reinforcement of the emperor system and the emphasis on the indivisibility of the virtues of the values of loyalty and filial piety are found in the revision of the ethics text which modified "love of country" to "loyalty to the emperor" and dwelt on the need of "spiritual solidarity with nation family" in 1911. This was the year following the failure of members of an anarchist movement to assassinate the emperor.

As a result of the growing disorder during the closing years of World War I, two resolutions were passed in 1916 by the Education Committee formed to consider questions of school organization. One of them called for patriotism and self-abnegation, especially among the base of the population who were affected by inflation, through a better understanding of national policy and the sacred position of the imperial family. The other provided for military drills to be introduced in primary schools (later, in 1925, in middle and high school) so that students could cultivate "good habits of discipline and obedience" and a "sincere spirit on which the practical application of the virtues taught in the ethics course depended."[11]

By this time the political leaders of Japan had witnessed how the army had provided for a police force to protect the government against opposition, enforced political change, and won two wars (one against China, the other against Russia) for Japan. Conscription was considered an integral part of the nation's educational process by the Conscription Act's author[6] who is quoted as saying:

> If boys enter grammar school at six, high school at thirteen and graduate at nineteen, after which, from their twentieth year, they spend a few years as soldiers, in the end all will become soldiers and no one will be without education. In due course, the nation will become a great civil and military university. . . .[12]

The most important educational function of the new army was the propagation of the national ideology: the teaching of new recruits of the official ideology of loyalty and filial piety to the emperor and the spirit of courage and sacrifice. The army's function in reducing illiteracy, in imparting specialized skills and knowledge, and in promoting the national ideology aided the political system in pushing the larger social system towards modernization.[13]

As the nation started preparing for a total war, by 1937, a new civics or ethics text – the *Kokutai no Hongi* (Essence of National

Polity) – was introduced into the school system. And in 1941, the year the Pacific War broke out, patriotism was carried to great fervor and embodied in an ethics text entitled *Shinmin no Michi* (Way of the Subject). This was the culmination of the manipulation by the leaders of Japan of the national myths to intensify conformity and solidarity of the nation behind their plans to achieve national and international power.

The educational system channeled the flow and interpretation of information messages from the top of the political system, the controlling point of the larger social system. Moreover, in the two-step flow of communication, the face-to-face level of communication played an important role in channeling and explaining the contents of the messages and information from mass media. This was because the superior-inferior relationship within the vertical social hierarchy was intensified by the communication content and interpretation from the school system. The people – in whatever part of the larger social system they were located – continued to manifest traditional behavior of conformity as well as unquestioning obedience and, sacrificing their own interest, persisted in working hard to attain the objective of national development: the achievement of national power or the attainment of the goals of the nation-state, symbolized by the emperor.

Japan's modernization took place at a time when there was no quick-acting media like the press today with its advanced newspaper technology and no radio and films. While transmitting messages which can aid in the modernization and unification of the nation, such means of communication which speedily channel new information and ideas of modern societies can make it difficult for the recipient transitional society to effect the necessary social adjustments that would make such information and messages meaningful to the people with a yet hardly changing larger social system. Through these media, the inadequacies of the political system, if not the larger social system, as well as the failures of political leaders of transitional societies, are immediately disseminated far and wide. They can also report the strains and stresses upon the larger social system which are consequences of social dislocation and increasing frustration due to rising expectation, which may rally the people not into a cohesive group supporting national goals but rather into opposing groups questioning or contradicting national goals. In transitional societies these goals are usually those of the leadership

elite group, projected by its members as goals of the nation. Moreover, these media are able to convey the world-scene news about difficulties facing societies moving from the traditional to the modern stage of development. At times, this situation draws into the society well-meaning foreign aid (solicited or unsolicited) which, in certain instances, unwittingly contributes to further deterioration of the larger social system undergoing change. In transitional societies where the shock and pain of adjustment resulting from rapid and wrenching social changes necessary for modernization become unbearable and there appears no way out of what seems a hopeless situation, media-using charismatic leaders and demagogues offer short-term solutions to deeply rooted social problems. All these developments, partly resulting from the use of the mass media, which can further complicate plans for modernization or national development are not observable in Japan's experience.

Unlike developing countries today, Japan underwent an initial modernization process where people were in relative isolation from information that might disrupt the existing social order. Generally speaking, the people were comparatively uninformed about what was going on within the country as transitional societies are today, through the mass media. Neither did the people receive communications concerning the modern world except those which the political leaders chose to transmit because of the language barrier. In its early modernization period, Japan's direct contacts with the West were limited to the leading urban centers like Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka, and the other ports opened under treaties with the West. Not having had a colonial period under a Western power, practically most Japanese had no access to information about world developments through any of the Western languages. The educated elite who were exposed to Western learning – many of whom were supporters of the Meiji modernizers – were in a position to decide what information and ideas were to be transmitted through the communication channels to the base of the population.

Until the 1920's when the radio and cinema film were used as media, Japanese political leaders had only the press to reckon with as they carried out their country's national development geared towards reaching the nation's objectives. The press was essential in enlightening the people about new ideas, new ways of life and political action as well as the government's policies during the first decade of modernization, following the 1868 "Restoration." However, as the

press developed into a critic of government policies in Japan, it was periodically checked whenever the political leaders considered it a threat to the political system.

The year after newspaper publication was authorized in 1899,[14] the first newspaper appeared in Yokohama with the blessings and encouragement of the Kanawaga prefectural governor. Generally carrying out information about government policy, orders, and laws, these early newspapers were perhaps circulated between Tokyo and Osaka through a postal service inaugurated in 1871, the year before the locomotive was introduced and two years before the telegraph system was established.

The last year (1873) witnessed the first break within the Meiji oligarchy over the issue of seikanron (the discussion resolving the dispatch of an expedition to Korea). Opposition to the remaining oligarchs continued in two ways: one was the direct military action (the Satsuma rebellion) under Saigo Takamori which was successfully suppressed in 1877; the other by organized political associations with its own newspapers used in spreading their campaign for general elections and for a national parliament as a means of checking the autocratic control of the political system. A press law was promulgated in 1875 providing for severe penalties to anyone convicted of writing openly against the established policies.

With accelerating control of public associations and meetings in the early 1880's, the Press Law was further strengthened in 1883 and 1885. It should be noted here that, by 1889, Article 29 of the Constitution guaranteed "the liberty of speech, writing, publication, public meetings and associations within the limits of law." The limiting phrase practically enabled the Meiji oligarchs[15] to issue imperial edicts in the name of the emperor, whenever they needed to prevent the publication of opinion or information unfavorable to the government.

Meiji Japan's journalists, like a number of their counterparts in contemporary developing countries of Asia, were "Renaissance men who were equally at home in literature, journalism, the arts, and politics as Fukuzawa Yukichi, Suehiro Tetcho, Fumio Yano and others.[16] Whenever the government tried to silence these journalists through the Press Law, many of them turned to other literary genre, like the novel, as a means of communicating their political ideas and ideals. The novel, in fact, was one of the most effective means of giving the people an understanding of modern life and its new values and concepts.

Towards the end of the century, some of these writers contributed to *Nippon* and *Kokumin* – newspapers founded in 1889 and 1890, respectively. Inasmuch as they sought to lead public opinion, these newspapers were active in political debates, though not directly affiliated with any of the political parties. They often tangled with the law and were suspended by the government. The *Nippon,* for example, was suspended in 1895 because of its editors's stand against the government's seizure of Chinese territory after the Sino-Japanese war.

As industrialization proceeded with greater speed and intensity to the 1920's due to the momentum built up since 1868 and the sudden expansion of markets for Japanese goods during World War I, more pervasive disturbances resulted within the larger social system. Old loyalties and solidarities, especially in urban areas, became eroded. Social unrest stemmed from the growing population which the economic system could not absorb, and from the new class consciousness – a consequence of the factory system's establishment of a demarcation between the employer and the worker and between capital and labor. The disturbing appearance of Communist movements in the Asian continent and the reassertion of Russian power in the Far East under Bolshevik rule made Japan's political leaders more apprehensive.

The political system, which remained autocratic, also manifested the impact of Japan's increasing industrialization during this period. The modern business elite, for instance, gained access to a share of political power since the 1890's. The electorate was enlarged from 450,000 well-to-do tax-payers of 1890 to three million in 1919 and to all adult men in 1925. By 1918, with the death of most of the members of the *Genro* (the real power behind the throne), the oligarchy controlling the political system became more diverse and hence more sensitive to public needs and attitudes. In sum, there was "a general loss of submissiveness on the part of the 'lower orders'."

Yet, submissive behavior continued to be reinforced by means of the moral courses taught at the civil and military schools during the same period, as we pointed out earlier. There were, therefore, two social processes taking place within the larger social system: the erosion of traditional social values and behavioral norms as a result of the modernization of the economic system and the ever-persisting counteraction of the same values and norms through the communication system of the schools.

In 1905, the Imperial Edict prevented the press from mentioning the burning of the Hibiya Police station by Japanese dissatisfied with the peace settlement ending the Russo-Japanese war. Further revision of the Press Law in 1910 gave the Minister of Home Affairs regular control over newspapers. Despite periodic suppressions and repressions, newspaper circulation tremendously increased between the 1890's and the 1920's when it tapered off until the end of the last world war due to the availability of radio and cinema films. Equally remarkable was the rise in the number of readers considered in terms of population increase during the same period of time.

It was during the decade of the twenties when radio and cinema films became widely available in Japan. The control of the media by the political system was manifest from the start. For instance, from 1924 when the N.H.K. (Nihon Hoso Kyohai) or the Japan Radio Broadcasting Corporation began operating, it was a semi-government agency. In the 1930's, it became a government monopoly. Data on the increase in the number of radio sets from 1924 to 1940 and on their coverage of the total population are indeed comparatively impressive.

From 1925, the ubiquitous Home Ministry, which was given the power of film censorship, organized the Motion Picture Control Commission in 1934. The following year, the Dai Nippon Kyokai (Great Japan Import Motion Picture Association) was formed. When the "undeclared war" in China broke out in 1937, the enforcement of import restrictions on foreign films further tightened government control. The next year, a licensing system was introduced covering the importation of foreign films. The Motion Picture Law of 1939 which completely placed the Japanese film industry under the government was immediately followed by the integration of the film-production companies into three major concerns, and then by their merger into the Dai Nippon Eiga Seisaku Kabushi Kaisha (Great Japan Motion Picture Production Company, Ltd.) in 1941 and 1942, respectively. Simultaneously, film distribution was also centralized.

It will be easy to understand the growing centralization of control by the political system of the two media – radio and film – especially in the 1930's, if we consider the crucial importance of these communication media to the process of attaining national development goals set down by Japan's political leaders, the militarists, during most of the decade.

The worldwide economic depression which caused Western countries to raise their tariff barriers to Japanese goods, unemploy-

ment, increasing population, and disillusionment over the leadership of the political system, among others, led the militarists in the early thirties to plan the "Showa Restoration." All the national problems were traced to the corruption and venality of political party members as well as businessmen and some bureaucrats who constituted the oligarchic circle at the top of the political system. These militarists sought to "liberate" the emperor from the oligarchic circle. They therefore intended to "restore" the emperor to the fullness of his sovereign powers as did the Meiji "restorers" before them. Actually, it merely meant the replacement of the incumbent oligarchs with militarists.

The militarists's revitalization of the "emperor system" was aimed at its being used as a means whereby to control eventually the political system and to direct it towards the national goal: the attainment of national power at par with the powers of the world. The militarists were aided in reaching this end by patriotic groups like the *Kokohonsha* (Foundation Root Society) founded, among others, by Baron K. Hiranuma who was enamored of the then current fascistic methods and goals. They supported the militarists's campaign against the parliamentary government and all subversives, including the communists. Another "patriot" Kita Ikki, prepared a plan for Japan's attainment of state socialism – the *Plan for National Reconstruction of Japan* – which included the idea of direct rule by the emperor.

Other "cloak-and-dagger" organizations like the *Tekento* ("Association of the Heavenly Sword" – the Sword was one of the Imperial symbols), the *Sakurakai* (Cherry Blossoms Association), the *Jimmukai* ("Association of Jimmu Tenno" – Jimmu Tenno was considered the first human emperor of Japan), and the *Ketsumeidan* (Blood Brotherhood Society), proposed to take direct action against those "misleading" or "misguiding" the emperor. In May 1932, members of the last two organizations assasinated Premier Inukai and attacked the Bank of Japan which, respectively, symbolized the political party and big business. Those who participated justified their action at their trail in terms of the concept of the emperor system.

By 1934, this emperor system concept found its way into the series of pamphlets disseminated by War Minister Araki which embodied his nationalistic philosophy. He justified Japan's activities in the Asian continent by indicating that the Japanese were destined

through the workings of "the way of the Emperor" to bring peace and order to the Asian continent.

We can observe from Araki's philosophy that the Japanese – all of whom went through their country's educational system – continued to effectively internalize the concept of the emperor system as well as the family system and their inherent values of loyalty and filial piety.

In fact, even within the military group, it was the emperor who served as the rallying point of its members divided into two factions until 1936. One faction was led by the group of young bloods among the officers of the army who supported Baron Hiranuma's radical, anti-capitalistic, anti-parliamentarian, and direct action ideas, and who organized themselves into the *Kodo-ha,* the Imperial Way Faction. The other was the *Toseiha,* the Control Faction, which was composed of the old guard of the army officers who chose to employ legal, nonterroristic methods in effecting an orderly reconstruction of the nation. The difference between these two factions was in means rather than goals.

The national economic crisis and Japan's military involvement in the Asian continent (Manchuria) were convenient excuses for the militarists to rationalize the socio-politico-economic systems and to centralize control at the top of the political system (symbolized by the emperor). The mass media was consequently centrally controlled from the top.

After the Manchurian incident, the extremist army officers threatened to use military force against newspapers expressing "liberal opinion" or criticizing government policies. And as the government became more militaristic and nationalistic, it also suppressed Communist writers, university scholars as well as Social Democrats, thus virtually silencing all critical and opposing opinions to the government's national and international policies.

By 1935, all newspaper publishers who could not afford to send their own correspondents abroad were forced to depend on the government-controlled Central News Agency (Domei Tsushin) as their source of foreign news. The government issued repressive and suppressive imperial edicts reinforcing the Japanese way of life as well as underscoring the sacred role of the emperor and the "sacred mission" of Japan in Asia. Writers and journalists transmitted these messages through the media. They were bound to describe the "sacredness of the war," the bravery of the soldiers fighting for their emperor at war, and not the realities of war which they saw.

In 1940, the government succeeded in organizing all newspaper publications into the Association of Japanese Newspapers (*Nihon Shimbun Renmei*), reorganized the next year into the Society of Japanese Newspapers (*Nihon Shimbun Kai*). An Executive Committee, composed of representatives from the major papers, the government information office, the police and the Ministry of Home Affairs, was the governing body of the Association. Inasmuch as it was the central agency for distribution, all newspapers joined the Association, although membership was not obligatory. Thus, when the Pacific War broke out, the press became part of the government propaganda machine transmitting news approved by the political leaders and suppressing those which were questionable or unacceptable.

In the process of transition from a traditional to a modern society or the process of national development, the mass media was subjected to the political system under an oligarchy. At the beginning, for a brief period of time, the press was used to communicate modern ideas, institutions, and a way of life which the political elite decided to transmit to the people. When the political system was threatened as a result of the cleavage within the political oligarchy in 1837, resulting in the appearance of opposition newspapers supported by political associations antagonistic to the authoritarian power of the political oligarchy, the Press Law of 1875 was passed by the oligarchs. This law was continuously made stringent as the threats to the political system increased, to meet the pervasive disturbances within the larger social system brought about by industrialization or the modernization of the economic system up to the end of the last world war.

In its struggle with an authoritarian political system for greater freedom of expression, the Japanese press evolved an anti-government posture still evident today. But the press, like the radio and cinema, was inevitably constrained to pursue the militaristic government's policy in the 1930's, especially after the mass media was centralized and placed under the direct control of the government. Therefore, it can be said that in Japan the mass media was always compelled to serve the political system and its leaders's plans for the modernization or the political development of the nation.

To recapitulate, both the face-to-face and mass media levels of communication were significant to the process of national development of Japan from 1868 to 1945. Initiated and directed by the political system, Japan's modernization was steered by a handful of

political leaders who desired change to attain national power. Planning and making decisions behind the "divine" emperor, these Japanese oligarchs were able to establish a political system stable and powerful enough to channel cohesive social action towards the achievement of the nation's goals in consonance with the social changes brought about by modernization introduced into Japanese society.

Social mobilization was possible because the Meiji innovators utilized the traditional concepts of the emperor system and the family system with their underpinning values of filial piety and loyalty as mainsprings of action for the people to support modernization, and as sanctions for necessary social changes entailing sacrifices and painful adjustments. These traditional concepts and values preserved the preexisting vertically hierarchical social ties and the resulting conformity and unquestioning obedience of inferiors to superiors. Modernization conceived at the top of the political system was accepted by the people with minimum opposition.

The absence in Japan of a colonial experience partly explains the continuing smooth operation of the "frozen" social system, including its social norms and processes, during the period when modernizing Japan was experiencing wrenching social changes. In Japan, unlike in former colonial countries, there were no traumatic breaks with her cultural past no wholesale elimination – through the modernization process – of earlier behavioral forms, and no forceful injection into its culture of discordant alien institutions. Japan's Meiji reformers aimed at selective modernization – allowing also for continuity within Japanese society. Besides deciding what to change, they also determined when and how changes were to be introduced into Japanese society in order to modernize it.

Although Japan's political leaders attempted to preserve the social hierarchical system, the modernization or national development process produced unintended consequences which became apparent in the 1880's and were more pervasive in the 1920's. These disturbances were considered by Japan's oligarchs as threats to the political system. They responded at every instance by reinforcing the morals course in the civil and military school systems and by strengthening the Press Law as well as other laws circumscribing civil liberties. Thus, individual initiative and freedom which, in the first place, the Japanese never experienced in the past, did not evolve in Modern Japan to the end of the last world war. Any improvement of

the individuals's level of living was incidental to the achievement of the nation-state's priority goals.

To successfully keep this existing social order functioning, the educational system's efficiency in implementing instructions from the top of the political system should not be underestimated. The civil and military schools fortified every Japanese's traditional socialization within the family in the concepts of the emperor and family systems and their inherent values of filial piety and loyalty, thereby facilitating Japan's forced march to modernization and national development in the shortest time possible. So long as the government was enhancing the national prestige and keeping the national image ever refulgent through military successes abroad, the national myths of the emperor and family systems continued to be effectively communicated through the face-to-face and mass media levels of communication. Most of the time, especially during the 1930's, the mass media were subservient to the dictates of the political oligarchy, the real power behind the emperor.

Whatever may have been the negative aspects of Japanese modernization or national development, it can be said that Japan successfully attained rapid modernization or national development within a generation – something contemporary developing countries hope to duplicate.

In sum, Japan's experience of modernization reveals that the Meiji modernizers were able to strike an appropriate and workable balance between Japan's search for innovation and her need for continuity to keep the stability of Japanese society while social changes were being undertaken to modernize it. They were also able to relate the face-to-face level with the mass media level of communication to guarantee the continuing strength and adaptability of the political system, under which was achieved the modernization of the larger social system, thus allowing it to reach the nation's goal: equality with the Powers (before Japan was defeated by the Allied Powers at the end of the second world war).

It is well, therefore, to study both the negative and positive aspects of Japan's historical experience in modernization or national development as well as her utilization of both levels of communication in achieving the nation's goals and to note how applicable the experience is within a different historico-socio-cultural context before taking it as a model for any other country's modernization or national development.

NOTES

[1]See, for instance, David Lerner, *The Passing of Traditional Society* (Illinois: The Free Press, 1958); Wilbur Schramm, *Mass Media and National Development* (California: Stanford University Press, 1964) and S. C. Dube, *India's Changing Villages: Human Factors in Community Development* (London; Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1958).

[2]Wilbur Schramm, "Communication and Change," in Daniel Lerner and Wilbur Schramm (eds.), *Communication and Change in the Developing Countries* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1967), p. 99.

[3]*Ibid,* p. 21.

[4]J. M. Saniel, "The Mobilization of Traditional Values in the Modernizing of Japan," in R. N. Bellah (ed.) *Religion and Progress in Modern Asia* (New York: The Free Press, 1965), pp. 124-149.

[5]R. A. Scalapino, "Environmental and Foreign Contributions, Japan," in R. E. Ward and D. D. Rostow (eds.), *Political Modernization in Japan and Turkey* (Studies in Political Development 3; Princeton, N.M.: Princeton University Press, 1964), p. 70.

It should be noted here that "elitism" in Japanese leadership has been a result of the Japanese concept of government as a supreme and extensive form of social organization whose powers and authority should, when legally exercised, override and control almost all competing claims. The Japanese traditionally have looked upon politics as an activity reserved to the upper classes of the people. See R. E. Ward, *Japan's Political System* (Englewood Cliffs, N. J.: Prentice-Hall Inc., 1967), pp. 46-48.

[6]Considerable literacy was observable particularly among Japan's upper classes and urban population. Since the Genroku Period (1688-1740) a surprisingly modern publishing industry had developed, characterized by large publishing houses and professional writers and book illustrators as well as editions of more than 10,000 copies. There were even commercial lending libraries to distribute books to larger audiences. See H. Passim, *Society and Education in Japan* (New York: Bureau of Publications, Teachers College, Columbia University, 1965), pp. 11-12.

[7]R. P. Dore, "Education, Japan," in Ward and Rostow (eds.), *op. cit.,* pp. 176-178.

[8]Yanaga, *Japan Since Perry* (New York: McGraw-Hill Book Co., Inc., 1949), p. 109.

[9]G. B. Sansom, *The Western World and Japan* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1958), p. 464.

[10]H. Kato, *Japanese Popular Culture* (Tokyo: Charles K. Tuttle Co., 1959), pp. 29, 32-34.

[11]Quoted from Mombusho, *Meiji iko,* Vol. 5, pp. 1, 197-201, 203 in Dore, *ibid,* p, 194.

[12]The Conscription Law of 1873 provided for seven years of military service for males over twenty-three in the regular army and four years in the reserve. See R. F. Hackett, "The Military, Japan," in Ward and Rostow, *op. cit.,* p. 335.

[13]Matsushita Yoshi, *Choheirei seitaishi* (History of the Enactment of the Conscription Law), p. 121, quoted in *ibid.*

[14]See the "Brief Chronology of Modern Japanese Communications," in H. Kato, *op. cit.,* pp. 455-456. Unless otherwise stated, all other dates mentioned will be based on this chronology.

[15]Among whom were powerful members of the genro, the extra-constitutional body of elder statesmen, and the second generation of clan *samurai* and *kuge* (nobles) whose ancestors had participated in the "Restoration" and, like the latter, constituted the real power behind the throne.

[16]H. Passim, "The Writer and Journalist in the Traditional Society," in L. W. Pye (ed.), *Communication and Political Development* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963), p. 111.