From Leavenworth to Lhasa
Living in a Revolutionary Era

Robert A. Scalapino

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To my wife, Dee

Preface

Since the outset of World War II, Asia has been my life. Careers are often shaped by events beyond one's control. However, once a path is set, one's decisions as to the precise course to be taken are crucial. My determination from the outset was to seek to encompass East Asia as a whole as well as its peripheral regions. Thus, my research and travel have covered diverse nations, with the effort always to discern both their unique qualities and those factors that linked them to the broader international environment of which they were a part.

Like others, every Asian nation has had to cope with the simultaneous rise of internationalism and nationalism, two often conflicting forces that are having a profound effect upon every society. Moreover, a third force, separatism, is still a challenge for a majority of nations, whether in the form of religion, ethnicity, or the priority given to one's local community. How a nation handles these three forces is a major factor in determining its political stability and capacity for economic growth.

A further fact is vitally important. Today, there are no pure civilizations. Every society has been increasingly affected by the institutions and practices—even the culture—of others. Thus, the struggle to maintain national identity and the requisite amount of unity needed for stability grows, especially with differences between generations mounting.

At the same time, the political diversity that marks modern Asia is unequaled. Political systems range from fully democratic to tightly authoritarian, from extensively traditional to "modern." Economies have varied from the tightly closed to the largely open. Foreign policies have ranged from the strong dependence upon alliance with others to the effort to maintain balanced equal relations with all major states or in one case, maximum isolation from the outer world.

Despite its extensive variations, however, certain general principles apply broadly to the Asian scene. First, every Asian society is having to confront the impact of economic internationalism and its profound consequences for specific economic systems. Even North Korea is being reluctantly pulled into the international orbit.

Further, the timing and extent of economic change affect the nature of the political order. One prominent trend has been the gradual political openness that occurs after authoritarian leaders have pursued pragmatic economic policies, creating an expanding middle class and a growing involvement with the outer world. Although many challenges lie ahead, the broad trends that characterize Asia at present are conducive to cautious optimism, and that is eminently in accord with my psychological need. I have always been thankful for two things in my life: I am not a Middle East specialist and I am not an Africa specialist. Hence, I can look at the world with greater hope.

I start with an account of my background and the combination of opportunities and challenges that confronted me in my early years, moving on to the events that shaped my life in an era of repeated wars and precarious peace, then turning to my experiences in and evaluations of diverse parts of Asia as well as the regional and international environment that helped to shape their evolution.

I cannot conclude this introduction without paying homage to the many friends as well as members of my family who have been of enormous assistance through the years and, more recently, have offered suggestions and thus helped in the compilation of this work. I am especially indebted to my late wife, Dee, a source of support and encouragement for the sixty-three years we were together. Moreover, I have benefited greatly from the help of my three daughters and their spouses as well as my five grandchildren. To various colleagues who have aided me in a variety of ways, I am also deeply indebted. Among those who provided support and in some cases offered suggestions with respect to this manuscript, I should mention Ralph Cossa, Donald Hellmann, Chong-Sik Lee, Charles Morrison, Anthony Namkung, Kevin O'Brien, T. J. Pempel, Wen-hsin Yeh, George Yu, and Kyu-sun Choi. My special thanks go to Rochelle Halperin and my daughter Lynne Scalapino for their numerous hours of work on the manuscript. Naturally, the contents of this work are solely my responsibility.

Dee and Bob, Christmas 1941

CHAPTER ONE

The Early Years

To one small boy, Kansas was the center of the world and capable of providing all that was necessary for a good life. In the 1920s, harmony far out-distanced friction for us. Ours was a largely homogeneous rural small-town community. The Methodist Church provided spiritual guidance and, of equal importance to most of us, picnics and other social events.

Methodist? you say. With a name like Scalapino? The story is this: My grandfather, Antonio, came to the United States with his parents in the early 1850s as a boy of seven from Livorno, Italy. The family had all of the attributes of mainstream Italians: they were Catholic, drank wine, and were urbanites. Moreover, their name was Scanaveno. An immigration agent changed that. At the immigration station, the man in charge misread the name and wrote down "Scalapino." So it has remained.

Instead of doing what good Italians generally did, settling in New York or nearby, the newly christened Scalapinos went directly to northeast Kansas, enticed there by my great-grandfather's brother, who was a stagecoach driver, and became farmers. When my grandfather grew up, he fell in love with a German Lutheran girl, Katherine Kempf, who lived in a nearby German settlement. They were married—but not in the Catholic Church where marriages to non-Catholics were prohibited. Outraged, grandfather encouraged all eight of his children to become Methodists—that church being the pillar of the small community of Everest, the town very near the Scalapino farm. Further, he believed that "the old world" was passé. His small library was composed entirely of books about the early American West, Teddy Roosevelt, and similar sagas. Nor was any language encouraged within the family except English. Thus my father—Anthony Scalapino—trained for the Methodist ministry at one point, spoke not a word of Italian, and in addition, became an

CHAPTER TWO

Eighteen Months in the Pacific—Then Back to Academia

My first assignment in Pearl Harbor was decoding Japanese messages. There were many different manual codes. The simplest, used to transmit weather reports, involved a direct substitution of kana—"ka equals su." Although it could be broken rather quickly, this code changed every twenty-four hours. Hence, time was of the essence. The more complex codes required creating a table: "On February 25 at 4 p.m., the following transposition is used." One had to work out the day and hour at which the code was sent, accounting for the difference between Japanese and U.S. time zones. Document translation was a sideline, including Japanese servicemen's diaries, which gave some indication of conditions and morale at the various battle sites. Order of battle communiqués and similar items were translated in the field.

My first prisoner interrogation came after our capture of Palau. We had taken the chief of police into custody. I was more nervous than he since I was unsure how well my made-in-Colorado Japanese would work. Hence, I had written out all of my questions. I was getting along fine until I came to the question "Over whom did you have control—just the natives or also the Japanese troops?" The answer came back that he had control over the Siberians. I knew relatively little about Pacific geography, but I was certain that there were no Siberians on Palau. I repeated the question, and received the same answer. At this point, I became firm: "You must answer questions sensibly!" Then the answer came slowly with the key word spelled out: "Siberians—c-i-v-i-l-i-a-n-s." There are Siberians everywhere!

One day in the early spring of 1945, I was summoned to naval headquarters and informed that in three to four days I would be shipping out with a consignment of troops for a destination still secret. First, I was ordered to report to a firing range for target

CHAPTER THREE

Life in Berkeley during the Turbulent Years and Beyond

After the Loyalty Oath controversy faded away, the university remained relatively calm for the remainder of the 1950s. No events, either at home or abroad, aroused strong opposition. Although the Korean War was not popular, the incontrovertible fact that the North had invaded the South after we had placed the ROK outside our strategic boundaries restrained opponents. When the fighting stopped in 1953 with the restoration of the previous North-South boundary, the primary dissent came from those who felt that we had not made a sufficient commitment to victory and an end to the Kim Il Sung regime in the North despite China's intervention, but that view gained little support at the university.

These were years when two centrists, Dwight Eisenhower and Harry Truman, occupied the presidency. Neither man pleased the student-intellectual community, but neither did they arouse fervent opposition. Thus, those who espoused political activism found few issues upon which they could garner widespread support. One exception was the civil rights movement in the South. Periodically, this movement, so crucial to subsequent advances relating to racial equality in the United States, led to widespread demonstrations and other actions throughout the country, receiving national attention. Thus, it is not surprising that a number of leaders of the free speech movement had their first experience as activists in the civil rights movement and brought such tactics as sit-ins from the South to Berkeley.

At the beginning of the 1960s, I was selected to be the chair of the Political Science Department. It did not seem to be too onerous a task since the department was relatively unified, and there were few contentious issues whether with respect to appointments or courses to be offered. The major debates over

CHAPTER FOUR

Interacting with Japan through the Years

My first opportunity to explore post-Occupation Japan came in 1950, at the time of my brief teaching assignment at 5th Air Force Headquarters in Nagoya (see chapter 2). As I reflected on Japan at that time, I saw both positive and negative factors. The "American Era" had ended slightly more than a year before my arrival, with the formal conclusion of the American Occupation in January 1949. Already, the political atmosphere was marked by a decline in passivity and self-criticism and the emergence of a call for self-governance at home and acceptance internationally. Priority, however, was given overwhelmingly to domestic issues, with attention focused on the desire for economic recovery.

Political trends were cloudy, but a new order marked by conservative dominance seemed to be in the offing. In the early Occupation period, five parties had been hastily organized. Three were conservative or centrist, one Socialist, and one Communist. This was first time that the Communist Party had been allowed to operate legally. In addition, there were literally hundreds of prefectural and local "parties," some scarcely more than one person. The combination of defeat, the subsequent purges of wartime figures, and the new American-implanted institutions had brought massive uncertainty to the political scene.

In the mid-Occupation period, the Socialists reached their high tide, with 26 percent of the vote in the 1947 Diet elections. Thereupon, with the support of two moderate centrist parties, the Democratic Party of Japan and the Cooperative Party, a coalition government was established under Socialist Tetsu Katayama, shifting in one year to the Democratic Party head, Hitoshi Ashida. Internal cleavages soon shattered the fragile coalition. As the Socialists moved left, the Democrats saw alignment with fellow conservatives more appropriate. The antileftist tilt of U.S.

CHAPTER FIVE

China—the Opening Stages

Having been frustrated in my efforts to go to China in the late 1940s, I took every opportunity to meet with individuals who had had some contact with that nation in the recent past. One such person was John Service. As noted earlier, Jack had been dismissed from the State Department after it had been revealed that he had given classified materials to Philip Jaffe, then editor of the pro-Communist journal *Amerasia.* After a brief time in England, Jack had decided to enter graduate school at Berkeley, determined to get a degree despite the fact that he was in his fifties. Soon, however, he decided that such a direction was not for him, and he applied for a position as curator of the university's China library.

The administration, nervous because of his background, asked me whether he should be hired. By this time, I had gotten to know Jack reasonably well, and we had had a number of discussions regarding the scene in China, past and present. I urged his appointment, asserting that while I did not agree with Service on certain issues, I was convinced that he was not a Communist, nor did he have ideological commitments in that direction. (Philip Jaffe, himself a Communist earlier, later confirmed to me that while Service had voluntarily sent him the papers without any request, he was not affiliated with the Communist movement.)

Jack Service was typical of many Americans who had direct contact with the Chinese Nationalists, Communists, or both during the war and the immediate postwar period. Son of missionaries and fluent in Chinese, he worked at the American embassy in the wartime capital, Chongqing, before being sent on a mission to Yenan, Communist headquarters. While in the ROC's temporary capital, he had become deeply disillusioned with the ROC government and its leaders, regarding them as authoritarian, corrupt, and immersed in internal conflict. In his view, the Nationalists were incapable of working with others effectively to defeat Japan.

CHAPTER SIX

My Involvement with a Rising China

The China I returned to in the spring of 1981 was quite different from the China I'd seen in my previous trip. Hua Guofeng had been further marginalized, with four of his top supporters caused to resign. Additional reforms had been initiated under Deng's leadership. Yet at the beginning of 1981, the conservatives had struck back, halting most political and economic reforms. Among the resisters was the PLA, worried about the rise in public demonstrations and other signs of unrest.

It was in this context that I returned to Beijing. I had been invited to deliver a series of lectures on the United States and Asia at Peking University in the late spring of 1981. The lectures extended over three weeks, three lectures a week, and as my interpreter I was given Yuan Ming, a young instructor at the university. Yuan Ming, and her husband, Chide, a university science professor, became close friends over the years and both achieved a high university status. My class comprised well over a hundred people—students, auditors, and others—mainly from the university faculty, but probably some officials as well. I used detailed notes for my lectures, and spoke slowly, pausing after three or four sentences so that Yuan Ming could interpret with ease. I also introduced a question and discussion period at the end of each lecture, a novel procedure at the university.

At first, students were reluctant to ask questions. Political openness was still constrained, and with a mixed audience, one had to be careful. On one occasion, I lectured on the United States and Korea. In the course of the talk, I stated how the Korean War had begun, namely, with the invasion of the South by the North Korean military forces. At the outset of the question period, a young man rose and said, "Professor Scalapino, you say that the North started the war. Our government says that the American imperialists and the South Korean puppets started the war. Who is right?" I responded by citing certain sources, ending with

CHAPTER SEVEN

The Two Koreas—Saga of a Divided Nation

My interest in Korea was initiated by the immediate effect of the Korean War on my lectures in Japan. However, I did not visit Korea until 1957. By that time, the events that had taken place after World War II had had a permanent impact upon both parts of the Korean peninsula. Hence, a brief summary of the years leading up to the Korean War and its immediate aftermath is required.

American military activities in the Asia-Pacific region during World War II were largely confined to an effort to progressively isolate Japan by seizing Pacific islands, together with air and sea operations. The last major military campaign in the Pacific was fought on Okinawa. The U.S. military commitment to the Asian continent was minimal. Thus, it is not surprising that the United States was unprepared to play a prominent role with respect to postwar Korea. A broad agreement among allies had earlier been reached to place Korea under a trusteeship while it acquired the capacity for independence, but the terms and conditions remained vague as the war ended.

The Soviet Union had entered the Pacific war in its final days, and Russian troops were advancing through Manchuria into the northern part of the Korean peninsula. The nearest American ground forces were in Okinawa. The Soviet Union, eager to work harmoniously with the other Allies at this point, and especially with the United States, permitted a division of Soviet and U.S. Korean occupation forces, scheduled to be temporary, to be stationed at the 38th parallel. It had hoped to obtain a similar division in Japan, with Russians in charge of Hokkaido, but this did not occur.

In December 1945, the major powers met in Moscow and approved a plan for a Korean trusteeship up to five years

CHAPTER EIGHT

Exploring the Peripheries of Northeast Asia

Having presented my experiences and views concerning Northeast Asia, let me turn next to the regions on its outer borders, namely, Mongolia, the Russian Far East and Central Asia to the north and west, and Taiwan to the south. I first began to study these regions in the 1970s and 1980s.

Mongolia has always represented a fascinating nation to me: remote, vast in terrain, with a small population many of whom live a nomadic life, moving with the season, cultivating livestock, riding camels and other animals, and living in *ger*—as the Mongols called yurts. My first opportunity to visit this land came in 1985, when I was part of a mixed group of American and Russian scholars invited for a dialogue held in Ulaanbaatar, the Mongolian capital. At this point, Mongolia was very much a satellite under Soviet tutelage. Like more official parts of the Soviet Union, it paid homage to Marxism-Leninism, maintained a one-party dictatorship with the Communist Party in total control, and operated a socialist economy. While sentiments for greater independence existed, many Mongolians welcomed the Russian presence as an alternative to Chinese dominance, which the country had experienced for long periods in its earlier history. Nonetheless, the Mongolian government sought recognition as a separate nation with some success. It had achieved membership in the United Nations in 1961 and by the 1980s was recognized as an independent nation by many of the major powers.

At the 1985 dialogue, I happened to bring North and South Koreans together. During one of the intermissions, I sought to engage in conversation with the head of the North Korean delegation, not having had the opportunity to meet a DPRK figure earlier. However, we had no language in common. Soon, the North Korean motioned to an English-speaking South Korean who was

CHAPTER NINE

Indochina—Personal Experience and Reflections on the Past and Future

Since my involvement in Indochina was chiefly with Vietnam, let me begin with my analysis of developments in that country, during and after the war. My first contact was indirect. It will be recalled that at the invitation of Ambassador Saburo Kurusu, I interviewed three former Japanese Communists in 1950 in the course of acquiring data for my book on Japanese communism. One of these men had served in Vietnam, and he talked mainly with my colleague, Wesley Fishel.

My own interest in Indochina and especially Vietnam grew in the 1950s, partly because I wanted to include this region along with the rest of Southeast Asia in my undergraduate course on Asian politics and international relations. The year 1954 was especially important. Between May 8 and July 21, the major powers and the Indochina governments held discussions in Geneva, with the result being the Geneva Agreement. That document, based upon the ardent efforts of such key promoters as France, represented impracticality in its most extreme form, and in retrospect, one must wonder how anyone could have taken it seriously. It provided for the temporary partition of Vietnam near the 17th parallel with the demarcation line buttressed by a demilitarized zone. Neither North nor South Vietnam was to interfere with the domestic affairs of the other. Free elections, with secret balloting and open to all parties, were to be held in both North and South within two years of the signing of the agreement, leading to reunification. Meanwhile, new troops, weapons, and bases were banned, but those forces and weapons currently present could be replaced. All Viet Minh (Communist) and French troops were to be withdrawn from Laos and Cambodia, and to enforce the terms of the armistice, a three-nation International Control Commission was established.

CHAPTER TEN

Into the Heartland of Southeast Asia

In the course of the last half century, I have visited all of the nations of Southeast Asia, Brunei excepted. In every case, there have been multiple visits, primarily for professional reasons but occasionally for pleasure. Let me highlight my key visits and my assessment of conditions in the various countries of the region, starting with the Philippines.

My first trip to the Philippines was after the Okinawa campaign, toward the close of World War II. My contacts with Filipinos at that time were few, but with one—Jose Lim—I established a friendship that lasted for decades, until his death. My next trip was in 1953, after our stay in Japan. As mentioned, I went ahead of the family to spend ten days in the country. In addition to discussions with academics and officials in Manila, I had the opportunity to meet with the governor of Mindanao in Zamboanga. We discussed the problem of the Islamic insurgency at length, and afterward, he suggested that we go swimming at a nearby beach. I was somewhat startled to find that as we swam, four military guards patrolled the beach in front of us, but such were the times.

A few years later, on a third trip, I again visited the southern Philippines, on this occasion going to the very end of the Sulu archipelago, the islands of Jolo and Tawi Tawi. In Jolo, I garnered some idea of the grievances of the Muslims. A teacher said to me, "We don't object to Manila sending a catholic priest here, but why will they not allow us to invite an Islamic cleric from Pakistan?" The more basic problem, however, has been the extensive poverty of the southern Philippines. Although rich in minerals and with significant agrarian and marine production, many portions of the region have a poverty rate of more than 50 percent. External connections and professionally headed enterprises are lacking. Corruption and patronage, moreover, are endemic. When Manila allocates funds to local leaders, they distribute it to their support-

CHAPTER ELEVEN

Exploring South Asia through the Years

My first visit to South Asia was a trip through central India in 1959, crossing the country by train from Calcutta to Bombay (Mumbai) on the east coast with my family. The trip was in connection with our return from a sabbatical in Japan. We had a chance for a rapid glimpse of some of India's most populous centers, and a brief deviation to view the Taj Mahal, India's most magnificent edifice. What was implanted in my mind at the time, however, was the massive population that composed this newly emerging independent nation.

Subsequently, I traveled to India on many occasions. Once, Dee and I departed from Sri Lanka, crossed the sea by ship, rented a car in southernmost India and drove north through the state of Kerala to Mumbai. On another occasion, I joined my associate, Leo Rose, going to Dharamsala for a conversation with the young Dalai Lama, who had recently come out of Tibet as an exile. It was a rewarding experience. He was intelligent, deeply committed to his people, and hoping to return to an autonomous Tibet at some point. Later, I visited central India, seeing the rural areas in the vicinity of Hyderabad. Subsequently, I was in one of India's major game reserves. Riding an elephant, I was able to get very close to a tiger, and his picture hangs on the wall of my television room. Thus, over the years, I have had the good fortune to see virtually all parts of this vast country.

At an early point, I was deeply impressed by one fact regarding India's politics. Every Indian political party including the Communists supported a democratic system, including full rights for the citizenry; free, competitive elections; and the rule of law. Consequently, despite periodic political upheavals, systemic change such as the imposition of military rule was avoided. This is truly unique, especially for a nation of the size and diversity of

CHAPTER TWELVE

Reflections on Our Times

It has been my privilege to live in a world of extraordinary opportunity as well as challenge for nearly nine decades. Before setting forth some final thoughts, let me make it clear that my professional activities and travel were not restricted to the areas that I have discussed. I've taken numerous trips to Europe, primarily for professional reasons. Conferences in Cambridge, Stockholm, and Warsaw enabled me to travel to neighboring regions. In 1992, I delivered the Kennedy Lectures at five of New Zealand's universities. As I noted earlier, I had given a similar series of lectures in Australia at all of that nation's major universities. I was also in the Middle East and Africa on five occasions, including a three-week series of lectures at Makerere University in Kampala, Uganda, in 1965. One episode on that occasion warrants brief attention. I took the opportunity of using my four-day weekends to explore various regions in the vicinity, and at one point, I decided to go to Rwanda and Burundi. When I reached the Burundi border, I sensed that there was a problem. The man in charge of visas looked at my passport and said, "I'm going out to lunch. You'll have to wait." It was 11:15, scarcely lunch time. The visa finally came, and I reached Bujumbura, Burundi's capital. After checking in at a hotel, I telephoned our embassy, seeking to have an interview. The embassy official said immediately, "What are you doing here? Our ambassador was ordered out of the country two days ago for making critical remarks about Burundi's human rights record before the International Justice Tribunal. Stay in the hotel, and leave early tomorrow morning."

I did as instructed, but as I drove out of the parking lot, I was stopped by a policeman who indicated to me that he wanted to get into the car. Since I had no options, he joined me and directed me to a building in the downtown region. We went up to the fourth floor, and I was confronted by a man who said that I had to file an income tax report. I protested that I had been in the

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