



IN MEMORIAM

Robert Scalpino: A scholar, teacher and friend

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THE JAKARTA POST/JAKARTA

Out of the many scholars I have known well, Bob was special. We met for the first time in October 1972 at UC Berkeley as part of my trial visit to the US. We were friends ever since and together we took up the challenge of introducing Indonesia and ASEAN to Berkeley's Institute for East Asian Studies in May 1973.

This one-day meeting was ably assisted by Karl Jackson, who had just started teaching at Berkeley as an Assistant Professor. In the Indonesian group there were Juwono Sudarsono, the late Panglaykim and Soetaryo Sigit then the secretary-general, Department of Mines and Energy under Professor Sadli. We had a very fruitful discussion on Soeharto and the military regime in Indonesia, and introduced ASEAN as the new indigenous Southeast Asian regional mechanism created in 1967.

In the years that followed we undertook several joint-projects like the Trilateral Project (1983/1984) that produced three books on East Asian politics, economics and security, co-edited by Bob, the late Seisaburo Sato and myself.

Following that was the Quadri-lateral Project, producing another set of three books coedited by Seisaburo Sato, Han Sung-joo and myself (1987-1988).

These were among Bob's efforts to link US and East Asian scholars to work on regional issues. Each project involved around 30-40 scholars from the US and East Asia.

The way the cooperative works were conducted was for scholars

working on each pillar (economics, politics and security) to meet in East Asia, whereas the general meetings of scholars of the three pillars were held at Berkeley.

The Berkeley meetings also invited non-author generalists (around 10 scholars) to comment on the works of the project scholars. It was a very educational process where we got to know each other and each of the ideas in the works.

These scholarly processes were my formative education that exposed me to international relations, internal and regional politics and economics.

Bob did a lot more for ASEAN-US relations too, where for seven years (1981-1988) we had a bilateral conference annually. Knowing Asia so well he clearly saw how important Southeast Asia and ASEAN could be, although our meetings were held

during and after the Vietnam War, a period when the certainties of the US presence in the region were questioned.

Due to Bob's efforts, we, the participants in the conferences and book projects with him, obviously did not welcome a US withdrawal from Southeast Asia, because he and his equally gifted US academic colleagues were always enthusiastic about the region.

They sadly recognized the declining attention paid by the US administration towards the Southeast Asian region and its studies but they helped to keep the US interested and later to see a revival after an interval of a few years.

Bob's efforts to establish these networks between US and East Asian scholars, and between Northeast

Asians and Southeast Asians, as well as South West Pacific, particularly Australian, scholars, were the basis of regional institution-building on politico-security matters in East Asia and the Asia Pacific in the 1980s and early 1990s. Among other achievements are the establishment of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) and the Council on Security Cooperation in Asia Pacific (CSCAP), made possible by the existing networking of so many East Asian and Asia Pacific scholars that Bob had initiated and developed.

Bob brought enormous ideas and organizing capabilities to Asia. He developed the wisdom to grasp the issues and problems of Asia (East, South and Central Asia), that surpassed everybody else's in the field. He worked and travelled extensively to acquire the understanding and established so many linkages at the same time with leaders and scholars alike.

Above all, he was a very special human being and a friend of all of us in Asia. He expressed his love for Asia and Asians through his unlimited goodwill and ever helping hand for many. Only one thing surpassed that love, that was his love for his wife Dee, whom for decades on end he brought along in his travels and work in Asia, despite her disabilities resulting from a car accident. Seeing Bob pushing Dee in her wheelchair, even in some of the most rugged parts of the world, was a revelation of the gentleness and love of the man for his wonderful wife.

I believe Bob's love for us in Asia was also that wide and deep. Thank you, and rest in peace, Bob.

The writer is Vice Chair, Board of Trustees, CSIS Foundation