

Culture Mandala: The Bulletin of the Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies

The Bulletin of the Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies

Volume 5 | Issue 1

Article 5

November 2002

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Recommended Citation

Ferguson, R. James (2002) "The Rasa of leadership in contemporary Asia: the nexus of politics, culture and social performance," *Culture Mandala: The Bulletin of the Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies*: Vol. 5: Iss. 1, Article 5.
Available at: <http://epublications.bond.edu.au/cm/vol5/iss1/5>

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The Rasa of leadership in contemporary Asia: the nexus of politics, culture and social performance

Abstract

Extract:

Discussions of international politics in the contemporary period tend to be couched in terminologies consciously developed from political science, history, philosophy (usually post-Enlightenment) and behavioural science. These analyses are therefore largely a product of modern and post-modern concerns. Even when Asian politics, foreign affairs and values are discussed, they are still discussed almost exclusively through the filter of European, and often specifically through Anglo-American concerns.

Keywords

politics, culture, social performance

The Culture Mandala: Bulletin of the Centre for East-West Cultural and Economic Studies,

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The Rasa of Leadership in Contemporary Asia: The Nexus of Politics, Culture and Social Performance (1)

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Introduction: The Cultural Emplotment of Power

Discussions of international politics in the contemporary period tend to be couched in terminologies consciously developed from political science, history, philosophy (usually post-Enlightenment) and behavioural science. These analyses are therefore largely a product of modern and post-modern concerns. Even when Asian politics, foreign affairs and values are discussed, they are still discussed almost exclusively through the filter of European, and often specifically through Anglo-American concerns. The entire debate on 'Asian values', for example, tended to be structured, by its opponents especially, around normative or positivist usages of conceptions such as human rights, power elites, universal values, cultural variables, liberal democracy, authoritarianism, and a dialogue of contentious power politics. Only occasionally will 'culturalists' attempt to break out of this containment and introduce a more detailed analysis of alternative terminologies, e.g. the use of Confucian or Taoist modes of thought, or by building alternative and more inclusive formulations. Alternative strategies include notions of cultural dialogue, mandalas of relationships as a model for international processes, inclusive conceptions such as 'cultural China', and comprehensive security.(2) Even in Western intellectual and art history it remains rare to see non-West ideas given central place,(3) and Asian history is still usually treated through the lens of Euro-American methodologies and concerns.

These factors suggest that certain opportunities for exploring alternative schema of explanation and understanding are being missed in the international relations field. More incisively, there is also a danger that this Euro-American approach represents a deeper distortion: -

Thus, in framing the ideas of other cultures as partial, Euro-American academic thought becomes a way of framing, controlling, occupying, and consuming other cultures in a similar manner to the colonialist economic and political relationships that have guided intercultural contact over the last several centuries.(4)

It is particularly important that these themes are explored during the current period of rapid globalisation and growing conflict. Current patterns of globalisation feature interaction, mutual influence and interpenetration, rather than outright domination of modernism, Westernisation, and democratisation. Here we may be seeing not so much an artificial re-Asianisation of Asia through the conscious use of Asian values,(5) but rather the emergence of a new Asia where distinctive strands of traditional religious and philosophical systems are married to dynamic, if troubled, capitalist economies.(6) Combined with the global and regional turbulence of the 'war on terror', these factors demand a deep rather than shallow understanding of leadership and cultural values in Asia as a whole. It is in this context that a genuine dialogue between East and West, including an exchange of analytic concepts, is required.

Likewise, even simple phrases tend to frame entire viewpoints whose differences are not always adequately highlighted. The differences between 'foreign policy' (or 'foreign affairs') on the one hand and 'international relations', on the other, is a case in point. There has sometimes been a tendency for international relations to be simply reduced to the foreign policy of a major power (or powers), and

therefore unconsciously or intentionally read through the interests of one nation or group. Such views of 'international relations' tend to drift in the direction of prescriptive policy formulation, and from there the attempt to find means to shape international affairs in the preferred image of the dominant group. Hence the widespread, often misleading use of the term 'we', 'our' and 'us' in studies of international affairs, with neither the indicated groups nor the right of the speaker to represent that group being adequately defined. The 'we' that is used, and its presumed interests, sometimes stand for a particular government, state (the United States, Britain, Australia etc.), a vague collective (the 'West'), or a loose moral indicator (the 'we' who are enlightened, humanitarian, or pragmatic). At worst, such terminologies are a spurious appeal to the opinions of the 'majority', or to some 'manifestly superior' collective interests. But international relations cannot be reduced simply to the foreign policy of a great nation. International relations and global politics can no longer be effectively conceptualised as the foreign affairs of the United States and Europe, nor any other grouping of nations. International relations *per se* must be about relations and different tiers of relationships between international actors, including non-state actors. Such forms of communication and analysis are central to any effort to sustain a truly multipolar world system and to conceptualise genuinely global processes.(7)

These factors suggest special care needs to be given to the range of conceptual terms used in international relations. In recent years a large number of scholars have recognised that culture and cultural variables are likely to have a major role in shaping world affairs, particularly the more specific conception of political, economic and military cultures.(8) Cultural components have led to fascinating and partly successful attempts in the area of political culture, strategic studies, and trading cultures as a focus for international contact. Nonetheless, problems have emerged once attempts are made to quantify cultural variables and use them as explanatory factors in measurable behavioural outcomes. Economic growth, strategic planning, and environmental policies in East Asia over the last decade, for example, may have some indirect relationship to civilisation value systems, e.g. the legacies of Confucianism, Taoism, and Buddhism, and on converging political and family values.(9) With one or two exceptions, however, exact modelling of how and when these unique cultural factors come into play is usually missing.(10) Ironically, almost the same factors which were once argued as the basis of economic growth have more recently been cited as partial causes of financial and market instabilities of 1997-1998.(11) However, in some areas it is possible to show direct influences from major cultural traditions on specific areas of behaviour, thought, and institution building.(12)

However, in many areas the influence of culture is hard to access and quantify because it operates most strongly at the level of interpretation of events and the meaning assigned to embedded social behaviours. Furthermore, even when cultural indicators can be isolated, they often interact strongly with political and economic factors, i.e. they can rarely be isolated as truly independent variables. Yet cultural influences remain extremely powerful at another level. Culture affects the way we 'emplot' the world, create narratives, and interpret affairs.(13) Here different cultures will often take the same events and construct or interpret them in radically different ways. This has serious implications for the patterns of political legitimation, the maintenance of acceptable sources of authority, and the interpretation of the role of the state in meeting the aspirations of its citizens and subjects. Likewise, the meaning assigned to political actions, the criteria by which governments are judged, and the acceptability of patterns of governance, can all be very sensitive to different patterns of cultural signification. Here, when leaders such as Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister Mahathir or former President Suharto engaged in political displays, much more than charisma or the objective performance of governments are at stake. The appeals made by such leaders are often analysed in terms of nationalism, but also often appeal to subtle cultural factors which seek to allow such persons to 'represent' the nation, even when in fact their actions are not always in the interests of the entire population. Such appeals can cross complex levels of identity which cause problems as well as gain regime support, e.g. Suharto's attempt to project a dignified role as the leader of the state also involved an almost ritualised dominance in political life for himself and his family. At times his rule was viewed as being similar to that of a Javanese king.(14) This may seem to be an exaggeration, but viewing the public supplication of members of the government and family at the knees of 'head-of-state' Suharto reminds us that such rituals also enforce hierarchy and send a powerful signal of

political dominance to the public. Likewise, unifying mechanisms with a strong appeal to reconstructed forms of culturally-derived ideology, e.g. the Pancasila concept of Indonesia, have an important appeal to moral authority even when successive leaders 'commit serious errors'.(15) However, failure to meet the standards suggested by such symbolic appeals can also undermine support and reduce prestige. Not just charisma, but social power generally is strongly mediated by cultural systems.(16)

Rasa as Cognitive and Emotional Judgement

The nexus between political power and cultural mediation could be analysed from a variety of sociological perspectives. One way is to study how leaders and governments appeal (successfully or unsuccessfully) to culturally defined systems of legitimation, especially during times of crisis.(17) Such leaders use channels of privileged cultural communication to attempt to sway particular audiences and identity groups. In part this is done by presenting and drawing upon a specific image of themselves as leaders who embody national aspirations. However, this kind of cultural legitimation utilises much more than the meeting of expectations as its basis. Rather, it can draw on a mixture of cognitive, emotive and dramatic (or propaganda) elements. We can briefly draw on one powerful Asian concept, adapting it to modern conditions, to use it as a tool of analysis for the public arena of political life. This conception is a crucial philosophical, religious and aesthetic concept developed in the South Asian and Southeast Asian worlds. It is explicitly part of the Indian and Malay language worlds, but as we shall see, has a wider range of conceptual usage. This is the concept of *rasa*. *Rasa* is originally a Sanskrit word meaning 'enjoyment, interest', but can be combined with other words to arrive at a large number of nuances including 'taste', 'sweetness', 'charm', 'elegance', 'spirit', and 'character'.(18) There is a specific analogy with the juice which is extracted and provides a distinct flavour, using specific cooking techniques and spices.(19) The term has been taken almost directly into the Malaysian, Javanese and Indonesia languages, though with some adaptation of meaning.

In Bahasa Malaysia *rasa* indicates taste, flavour, feeling, sensation, consideration, or opinion. It can be combined with other words to yield important constructions, e.g. *rasa hati*, 'perception, feeling', or *rasa timbang* 'considerateness'.(20) The term can thus relate to notions of taste, judgement, or feeling, either generally or in relation to music.(21) There are also an important number of conceptions related to *hati*, i.e. the heart, liver, or centre of anything.(22) One particularly vigorous phrase is that of *hati bakar*, 'wrath'.(23) In Bahasa Indonesia 'the word "rasa" means "feeling", both in the physical and emotional sense; in the more spiritually resonant Javanese it also means "intuitive feeling". *Rasa* is at once the substance, vibration, or quality of what is apprehended and tool or organ which apprehends it'.(24) The concept of *rasa* and its compounds therefore include a wide range of connotations including feeling, emotion, sensation, perception and judgement. What is interesting about these concepts is that they seem to cross the heart-mind divide (25) so firmly established in Western rationalism. They therefore allow us to consider a wider range of rational and emotional judgements which impinge on public awareness.

Rasa implies important artistic and judgemental components, even though the main aesthetic meaning is a sublimated emotional response to a universal understanding in relation to a work of art. Thus there is a whole theory of experience, taste and well-being in Indian thought based on this notion of *rasa*. A significant usage of *rasa*, moreover, is its place in the aesthetic appreciation of music, dance and theatre. Any superior performance of music or traditional dance should have, or generate, the property of *rasa*.(26) This includes the notion of a complete form of satisfaction where the audience not only acknowledges the skill of the performers, but have been moved by the entire experience of the performance. Perhaps the only classical western term which can begin to approach the holism of this concept is that of catharsis in the classical Greek formulation, though there are differences between the two concepts.(27)

Rasa is a key concept in Indian religion and philosophy, and is 'the central and most potent idea in traditional Indian aesthetics'.(28) In the dramatic conception *rasa* is "aesthetic 'relish'" which 'is produced from various kinds of 'emotion' (bhava)".(29) The concept of *rasa* has been used in

particular psychological theories developed by Abhinava, and called *dhvani* theory.(30) According to *dhvani* theory: -

Words have their denotations and connotations, their primary meanings and their undertones, and it is with these latter that the poet has to do. By carefully choosing his words he can make them say far more than their bare meanings and induce a whole series of emotions by a single brief verse.(31)

Taken more broadly, subtle methods of suggestion or revelation, whether in words, music, or performance, become crucial elements for the higher forms of emotive and artistic expression.(32) Within this conception, the operations of memory, awareness, and trace emotions allow us to consider 'basic emotions and art emotions' including 'srngara [love], karuna [pity], hasya [laughter], bibhatsa [disgust], raudra [terror], bhaya [fear], vira [valor], santa [peace]'.(33) *Rasa*, at its most fundamental, is what 'we feel in experiencing a work of art'.(34) However, *rasa* implies much more than mere aesthetic pleasure. There is also a correlation with deeper experiences. In Saivaite metaphysics, 'the relation between the human and the divine, between atman and brahman is a highly eroticized relation and its reference point is a much celebrated mystical/cognitive jouissance'.(35) This wider and deeper usage of the concept links back to the central place of creative arts in the Indian and Southeast Asian contexts. Indian creative and performing arts, including music, came to be regarded in their own theoretical tradition as achievements of 'realization' or 'transformation' of an identifiable 'given',(36) i.e. using artistic principles to transform experience. Likewise, many indigenous cultures emphasise the art experience as transformative, either for the performer or viewer, sometimes involving trance-like states or other altered forms of awareness.(37) Thus Rabindranath Tagore can suggest: 'The principle creative forces, which transmute things into our living structure, are emotive forces.'(38) In developed theories *rasa* is much more than the tasting of presented dramatic or musical emotions, but leads on through an experience of 'heightening' towards 'the process of self-realization and spiritual enlightenment'.(39) Thus 'through complete imaginative sympathy with the situation, the audience forgets all differences of person, time and place, and this climax of emotion reveals itself in a sort of blissful consciousness. This bliss is *Rasa*.'(40)

Several aspects of *rasa* make it a concept suitable to be broadened from its aesthetic origins. Firstly, *rasa* theory incorporates an 'implied model of the interdependence between art and receiver'.(41) Second, *rasas* and their experience are evoked by complex primary and secondary meanings in literary texts and artistic performances, but cannot be reduced to a single intellectual meaning even though complex ideas may be at play in a work. Indeed, too much reflection can prevent the experiencing of the *rasa*.(42) Third, *rasa* implies not just the experience of emotion or catharsis, but rather the disinterested perception of heightened experiences in which 'a spectator finds himself in a perfect state of generality' and 'experiences happiness and despair of the world, uncircumscribed by any particular time or place'.(43) The experience of *rasa* thus constitutes an experience which has its own validity.(44) This reduces the level of self-interest of the particular viewer as the key determinant of experience. From the point of view of a critic of the tenth century, Bhatta Nayaka, it is through art 'that in the emotions of the world a process of universalization occurs, thanks to their artistic expression'. (45) This aspect has been particularly developed by the Indian thinker Abhinavagupta: -

Abhinavagupta extends this idea somewhat further when he argues that aesthetic pleasure results from the "generalization" of emotion in *rasa*, which is to say, its removal from the self-interest which is part of the link between the affect and the representational content in memory traces. In other words, when we fully remember a trace, the emotion which we experience is tied to self-interest (e.g. to our own personal loss of a loved one). However, through literature, we experience a version of the affect removed from its direct link with any particular (egocentric) representation in memory, and thus at least partially removed from self-interest.(46)

Rasa could therefore take on certain usages in Indian religious thought. *Rasa* was compared to 'the perfect joy that the sage experiences when he perceives intuitively the Highest Truth in meditation'. (47) Thus the term can be applied to Brahma in that 'He comprises in Him all the possible varieties of bliss with all the shades of sweetness', while in the *Upanishads* the name *Rasa* can be given him as 'the most relishable'.(48) In the context of the devotional movement reinvigorated by Sri Caitanya

(born A.D. 1485) *rasa* could come to take on a technical meaning. As 'a thing the taste of which is attended with delicious astonishment on account of its heightened sweetness',(49) it could therefore be the realisation of *bhakti* or love, now transformed into *bhakti-rasa* experienced in association with Sri Krsna.(50) A range of songs, known as *kirtana*, which described the life of Krsna, 'reached the acme of emotional expression' in Bengal.(51) 'Tears, shivering, horripilation, perspiration, loss of colour or complexion, loss of vigour, loss of voice, and loss of consciousness constitute the eightfold pure signs of true devotion, and the object . . . is to induce these states in the singer and in the audience'.(52) In general, the state of mind induced by the experience of *rasa* was thus a glimpse of more enduring forms of bliss and spiritual realisation.(53)

It is not surprising, therefore, that 'all the great musicians of India have been revered as saints'.(54) It is also with this religious role in mind that drama could be highly praised in the *Natya Sastra*: -

[God Brahma said:] I will create the lore of drama which promotes dharma [virtue], material gain, and fame, which will show for posterity all activities, which is enriched with the ideas of all branches of knowledge and presents all the arts; I shall create it, along with the story required for its theme, with its teachings and the summary of its topics.(55)

In this work, drama is not just cathartic, nor merely a learned entertainment. Rather, it is a kind of 'world education': -

[Brahma said:] The drama is a representation of the nature or feelings of the whole universe. In some places it depicts dharma, play somewhere else, material gain at another, quietude in yet another, fun at one place, fight in another place, love at one place, and killing at another. The drama that I have devised is a representation of the activities of the world; the virtuous ones have here virtue, and the amorous ones, love; the undisciplined ones are tamed here, and the disciplined ones exhibit their discipline; it emboldens the weak, energizes the heroic, enlightens the ignorant, and imparts erudition to the scholars; it depicts the gaiety of lords, teaches fortitude to those tormented by misery, shows gains to the materially minded, and firmness to the agitated; thus it is endowed with variegated feelings and embodies varied states.(56)

In this context it is not surprising that various Indian art-forms are both highly structured but also context and environment dependent. In music, for example, the different melodic forms or *ragas* are not only associated with specific emotions, but are viewed as suitable for performance at certain times of the day.(57) Traditional dancing and acting are closely associated and can be viewed as forms of the same art, *abhinaya*, whose main function is the portrayal of the eight fundamental emotions through the structured use of known body-movements and hundreds of specified hand movements or *mudra*.(58) The 'responsive' person who had identified with and understood these performances 'is called "a person of attuned heart" (*sa-hridaya*)'.(59) Likewise, traditional Indian theatre contained elements of religious architecture and in some ways conformed to the patterns of ritual sacrifice found in particular festivals, pointing to a religious origin.(60) More deeply, Indian literature and theatre formed a commentary on the nature of the world, history, and life experience. As such, it could not avoid judgement on the nature and justice of kings and kingdoms, war and peace, rule and misrule. Many of these dramatic literary creations were tied back to key narratives such as the *Mahabharata*. The *Mahabharata* is a story of rising and competing kingdoms, justice and war: it thus has a political as well as a deeper philosophical meaning. Likewise, even though *rasa* as an aesthetic concept is often applied to plays which seem rather like romances or comedies from the Western point of view, works such as *The Vision of Vasavadatta* and *The Little Clay Cart* often contain indirect narratives on the nature of just kingship. Thus it is possible to derive political as well as religious meanings from the use of this concept.

In Javanese culture, likewise, *rasa* is a key term in the judgement and expression of aesthetic value. In Indonesia generally, and Java and Bali specifically, traditional artistic performances are not mere commodified products cut off from broader social life, nor do they exist just as high art forms for an elite or repackaged in palatable forms for tourists (though both these trends exist to some extent). In Bali, traditional dance and dance-theatre remain vibrant and locally enjoyed cultural forms which draw large local audiences, involve a large number of experts, students and semi-professional

performers. These arts have been kept vigorous by new troupes adding to the repertoire of dance, many of which comment on recent history or current affairs. In Bali, of course, large segments of ritual artistic performance are also connected into the world of Hindu religious experience, whether we are looking at trance dances, or presentations of ancient story cycles from the *Ramayana* or the *Mahabharata*. This 'social' engagement remains true even in the presence of key areas of Western involvement, e.g. in the visual arts, and in the structure of certain musical performances. Furthermore, the carving, painting and textile crafts also interact with this large expressive arena of art, culture and religion.

In Java, of course, though certain Hindu-Buddhist cultural layers persist, rather different styles of cultural expression were developed, specifically under the impact of Islam. But a range of cultural forms were never entirely assimilated to become merely the high ritual of the royal courts. We can see this, for example, in the art form known as *tembang*, where types of written Javanese literature are read out according to a set of known tunes, either in a traditional conservative pattern, or in a more flamboyant popular adaptation where the literature is sung with gamelan orchestra accompaniment. This literature, however, is not simply read or performed to a passive audience seeking aesthetic pleasure. It can have other social uses, e.g. it can 'accomplish magical ends, such as to protect the environs from danger, or to obtain accurate prognostications about the future'. (61)

Likewise, in time of crisis, traditional patterns of belief are sometimes invoked to provide a deeper conception of the past, present and future than might otherwise be possible. With the closing of the Suharto period, traditional Javanese soothsayers and religious advisers (62) came to the fore, giving advice and seeking a more harmonious social climate in the future. *Rasa*, in this context, has important ideological, experiential and psychological components (63) which make it much more than a technical, aesthetic term. Paul Stange has mapped out some of these interconnections: -

The logic of *rasa* is the mechanism underlying the interpenetration of "etiquette, art, and mystical practice"; it is the mechanism underlying the complex of Javanese ideas relating to the nature, manifestations, and ideals of power (*kasekten*) in the political realm. *Rasa* occupies a fundamental place within the Javanese map of spiritual consciousness, and that in turn is fundamentally related to notions of power and authority. (64)

Projected Leadership Styles as Legitimation Through Culturally-Sanctioned Performances

The concept of *rasa* can be applied to political performances and cultural phenomena at the level of international politics. An easy starting point is an assessment of the *rasa* developed through the public actions of leaders who have been extremely important in Asian international affairs. President Suharto and President Jiang Zemin all provide fascinating examples of statesmen who have fulfilled a nuanced public role as leaders of important states. (65) The *rasa* created, however, has not always been entirely successful in fruition, and in the case of Sukarno and Suharto certain crises of leadership have shown how a mismatch of leadership style and the international environment can lead to serious dysfunctions in governance. President Jiang Zemin, though at first not emerging clearly from the blandness of a quasi-collective leadership after the death of Deng Xiaoping, has since set the clear stamp of his own character as an appropriate leader for a determined China. This was done not only through certain symbolic acts, e.g. the ceremony returning Hong Kong to China, but also through a strategic and public management of relations with the U.S. With the naming of a new leader in 2002, Hu Jintao, it seems a ripe time to appraise Jiang's political leadership. Such leaders have acted on a stage mediated by a wide range of cultural variables. More importantly, their public presentation of self has hinged not just on meeting the expectations of particular interest groups, but by the projection of a certain legitimation based on the wider public conception of their competence and role-fulfilment. Here, hard reality converges with the symbolic display of power and personal character. A failure to live out the role claimed by such leaders has a direct impact on their power base.

Turning to Indonesia, former President Suharto also hoped to invoke elements drawn from traditional Indonesian and Javanese culture, while at the same time representing himself as a modern leader able to adapt to the demands of then current international system. Although Suharto had always

emphasised that he had an ordinary family background without any holy signs at his birth (in contrast to Sukarno), (66) at the same time he appealed to indigenous cultural traditions in other ways. The unimpassioned public displays of President Suharto have been interpreted as the mask of Indonesian theatre, with a superseding and almost suprahuman authority based on Javanese cultural patterns. (67) Observers have often noted his public calmness and 'Javanese urbanity' which seems impossible to disturb.(68) These types of display may also be linked to traditional notions of the spiritual control of a 'man of prowess' who deserved to be distinguished as a leader above his kinsmen.(69) One is reminded of the Javanese localisation of the Sanskrit word *santosa*, originally 'contemplation' or 'satisfaction', which came to refer to 'the completely unconcerned' state of mind of a man in control of his emotions.(70) Such a man might indeed be a fit ruler in 'maintaining the law, and ruling the world'.(71) Nor is such a projection narrowly based on a superficial attempt to create a certain propaganda image. Rather, Suharto seems to have used his intelligence to think ahead, anticipate events, and thus avoid shocks to his leadership. The key intent was not to let any sudden or surprising event allow one to be startled, overwhelmed, or even feel superior.(72) Thereby he could create the calm state of mind, or at least its appearance, which appealed both to cultural traditions and robbed opponents of the ability to know what he was thinking.(73)

Though Suharto was a very private person, it seems that his character contained 'a strong streak of traditional Javanese mysticism tempering his Islamic identity'.(74) During his youth, Suharto was also exposed to the ideas of Daryatmo, a 'magic specialist, traditional healer and Islamic religious teacher'. (75) In fact both Sukarno and Suharto were able to reflect key elements of the Javanese value system, e.g. refinement (*alus*) and grace, and the ability to win or lose rough political battles gracefully, even when it came to their own resignations and transfer of leadership.(76) It is accurate to view this composure 'as a product of his culture and, in particular, the mystical strand within it, with its emphasis on the control of unruly emotions'.(77) In fact, Suharto utilised these traditions to arrive at a particular merging of thought and intuition which helped him solve problems and make decisions. The following translation of a section of his *Otobiografi* makes this clear: -

There are people who say that I wait on the whispers of the *dukun* (magic specialist) before I take a decision concerning the problems which I face. . . . In fact, my philosophy here is '*cipta, rasa, karsa*' (thought, feeling, wish). That is my philosophy of life . . . Of course, our individual responses to a particular matter vary . . . Because of that, if we view it from the point of view of the tactics and strategy of war, a military explanation on its own is something quite raw, and needs to be worked up into an intelligence report. And it is this report which amounts to something ripe, which can be relied on, and which can be used as a standard.

And it is like that also with whatever we hear, see or feel. We must gather all this material so that it can be processed, entered into our '*komputer*', into our '*cipta*'. Then we allow it to settle in order to be felt. If we feel it to be right, if our 'feeling' says it's right, then an intention will emerge as of its own accord. After that I put forward choices, and make a decision.(78)

Some have even seen Suharto as the masterful *dalang*, leader of the *wayang kulit* puppet theatre, who controls and directs events.(79) Others privately denied that President Suharto was the true *dalang*, a strong criticism in the language of 'political performance'. Furthermore, in so far as the *dalang* is a puppet master, wheeling out different cabinets and officials at will,(80) but retaining coercive control, the parallel suggests a lack of accountability and democratic openness. This aspect of manipulation became a more negative connotation in the late 1990s, as the problems of the privileged economic position of Suharto's family and business friends continued,(81) and with the looming crisis of political succession not solved during parliamentary and presidential election years of 1997 and 1998.

The limitations of the Suharto regime may seem all too apparent to Western journalists, but they remained secondary to the authority and direct power that Suharto had managed to build up through political and non-political means. In this context, Indonesian political culture has been marked by 'circuitousness, innuendo, formalism and reliance on intermediaries', largely linked towards creating a level of consensus among a political elite or at least balancing factions.(82) Indigenous challenges to such leaders are also often circuitous and indirect, and in effect attack these claims to rightful authority. A combination of economic and social factors would combine to erode Suharto's prestige

internally and internationally. His political acts can be looked at through the lens of prestige and charisma that should define the man of power in Javanese thought. Here certain elements of the theatre-state (83) mentality seem to persist. These conceptions also link back to some extent to Indocentric and Indonesian conceptions of the civilised leader. In Sanskrit, civilisation is still correlated with the development of the town or city (*nagara*) and the 'civilized or cultured urban individual' is termed a *nagaraka*.(84) Like many other modern states, conscious efforts have been made in Malaysia and Indonesia to lay claim to an enduring civilisational legacy and to be the protectors of a diverse culture.

However, Suharto's regime had not been truly inclusive, had not been able to peacefully nominate a genuine successor, and he failed to weather the following storm of recent failures in environmental and economic policies. On this basis, Suharto's implicit cultural claims to pre-eminence and rightful leadership had been in doubt for some time. The poor handling of the economic crisis and the IMF implementation package, combined with continued and vigorous student and elite criticism, stripped the mask from the regime in late 1997. Many in Indonesia suspected the problems of the Suharto regime and the inefficiencies and corruption of its economic policies. They knew what the mask of cultural legitimacy covered. However, the authority and support for the regime (via the Golkar political party, the army, and Suharto's connections to rich business elements) had to be publicly revealed and fragmented before Suharto could be forced to stand down. Furthermore, in spite of his own aspirations, Suharto was found not to be the *dalang*, not the puppet master who orders the events in the shadow-puppet play and mediates between the human and spiritual worlds. The poor performance of many of his family, ministers, and colleagues, and their total inability to stabilise the Indonesian currency, underlined the real limits of their power. The riots, deaths, rapes, and burnings of May 1998, combined with an ambiguous military and police response, spelled the end of any confidence that the situation could be contained by the Suharto government. Such failures, and a lack of credible follow up by the Habibie government, also further hardened the international community and the attitudes of particular groups overseas.(85)

President Suharto, so long as he claimed to promote the general interests of a nation and was strong enough to control its main power groups, could partly contain resentment of the role of his family in public life and widespread elite corruption. This façade of competence was cracked by the economic crisis into which Indonesia was plunged in 1997. When the full fragility of the supposed economic miracle was revealed by the realities of company closures, bank crashes, a dropping currency,(86) job losses, and the rising cost of basic goods, the image of a strong, authoritarian leadership was shattered. Any residual claims to either Javanese royal symbology (87) or to Indonesian Republican embodiment took on elements of irony, farce, and emptiness. In this setting, even the army and police forces, though dominant in terms of the brute force at their disposal, soon recoiled from excessively repressive actions against an increasingly vocal student and opposition movement. Repeated attempts to appeal to public calm and national unity,(88) combined with threats of severe repression by military commanders, failed to restore any sense of 'business as usual' or of a resilient regime. It was not only that the government had failed to deal with the crises, but that the entire performance of Suharto and his various cabinets did not produce a satisfying script of action which could be turned into effective public propaganda or create a source of legitimation. At the deepest level, those not directly tied to Suharto's clique were not satisfied at any level, materially, economically, psychological or emotionally.

This sense of outrage and betrayed hopes were particularly strong among members of the university population, most of whom were aware of the political nuances of Javanese, Indonesian and Western politics. It was this deeper sense of dissatisfaction which boiled over in the streets, and mobilised such a wide range of opposition to the continuation of the Suharto presidency. This anger and frustration, of course, also expressed itself in mob violence, arson, and racially motivated attacks. In spite of the brave aspirations of the young Republic for 'unity in diversity', it was precisely the problems of internal factions, relations with the Chinese ethnic minority, and with East Timor, that would be intensified through 1998. It must be stressed that the reaction to the regime was not just based on a rational calculation of fear, nor of hatred. Rather, a complex array of cognitive and

emotive factors had mobilised a wide range of opposition to the attempt by Suharto to paper over the cracks by simply appealing for national unity.

It is also possible to use the concepts of *rasa* and cultural legitimation to assess the performance of non-Indonesian leaders. The career of Jiang Zemin since 1989 seems to present a certain pattern which soon set its stamp on China's international role. Jiang Zemin has had to appeal to different audiences within China, including central and regional elites, as well as the wider Chinese public in a more diffuse sense. His main task has been to demonstrate that 'he can meet China's domestic and international challenges and bring a bright future to the country'.(89) With the death of Deng Xiaoping, Jiang Zemin at first seemed part of a collective leadership in which no one man would step out of Deng's shadow.(90) However, President Jiang Zemin soon managed to set his own stamp on the politics of the new China. Although it seems unlikely that there will be any return to the 'great leader' style of past, Jiang has stepped out of the shadow of Deng Xiaoping and established a claim to be 'first among equals'.(91) Jiang still relied on the cooperation of figures such as Zhu Rongji and Li Peng, but by 1998 it was no longer true to regard China's leadership as a collective system based mainly on a 'Jiang-Li axis'.(92) This was done not so much by clear political dominance as by a cooperative style which has managed to retain the support of competent men such as Premier Zhu Rongji, while reducing the prospects of others. In effect, Jiang Zemin built up a 'core' of power, utilising both formal authority and informal networks.(93)

Several public events help set Jiang's stamp on the Chinese leadership. This included his successful handling of the return of Hong Kong, a strong presence at the funeral of Deng Xiaoping, (94) effective management of the Fifteenth Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (September 1997), (95) a moderately successful visit to America, and an impressive display of diplomacy on President Clinton's return visit to China. Furthermore, there were signs that although central control is still firmly held by the CCP, some degree of cautious opening to reform and new ideas are a part of Jiang Zemin's programme.(96) Issues such as Tibet, the future of Taiwan, human rights, and the open use of the Internet remain problematic (97) for China, but the current leadership seems to be edging towards the understanding that the strict control of communication and debate can no longer be imposed on these issues. Dialogue with the U.S. even on such disputed areas is a preferred path rather than direct confrontation.(98) The careful handling of protest in Hong Kong, the improved diplomatic ties between China and the U.S. during 1997 and 1998, and China's signing of the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights indicate an edging towards this dialogue process, though overt political dissent within mainland China itself still seems to be viewed as a direct threat to political stability. Likewise, China's ability to present itself a cooperative player in the global war on terror, even as U.S. power seemed to find itself a strong niche in Central Asia, was a careful handling of a difficult issue for PRC foreign policy. It is in this context that China was able to sign the controversial new Security Council Resolution against Iraq in November 2002, rather than merely abstain from the issue.

Although Jiang Zemin had not achieved all his goals at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress (September 1997), he nonetheless managed a complex situation quite effectively: -

Despite modest setbacks, Jiang undoubtedly strengthened his own power and emerged unrivalled from the Congress. Jiang himself was in the limelight throughout the conclave and is clearly emerging from Deng Xiaoping's shadow to the point that earlier estimates of Jiang as a weak and transitional figure now seem misplaced. Jiang had to cut deals and make tradeoffs with other leaders - particularly Premier Li Peng and retired General Zhang Zhen - but he has clearly emerged as China's preeminent leader.(99)

In the case of President Jiang Zemin's visit to America in November 1997, readings of his political performance varied. Some argued that Jiang was not entirely convincing to his American audience, and that a repeat performance of Deng Xiaoping's visit was simply not possible.(100) Likewise, certain elements of the American Congress and public remained sharply critical of China.(101) However, as noted by Avery Goldstein: -

For the most part, Jiang got what he wanted from his trip to the United States. As China's head of state, he was accorded the respect due the leader of a great power, complete with 21-gun salute, red carpets, and an elaborate state dinner. Moreover, China's global importance was confirmed as the two sides agreed that beyond President Clinton's return visit to China in 1998, summitry should become a regular feature of the Sino-American relationship. Jiang also was able to cultivate ties with the American business community (visiting the New York Stock Exchange and meeting with corporate leaders on each leg of his journey), create photo opportunities at historic sites that would underscore the importance of his visit for the audience in China, and present a somewhat more personal side to the American public . . .(102)

On review, it is clear the Chinese side carefully organised their choice of protocol and locations, e.g. the visit to Pearl Harbour, with a direct view to their symbolism.(103) This symbolism was directed both towards their American hosts and towards domestic audiences in China.(104) Overall, Jiang's visit, even with some moments of tension, did enhance the Chinese view of his international standing.

By the time of then President Clinton's return visit to China, President Jiang was in a strong enough position to broker a confident representation of China's role as a legitimate player in world affairs, tolerant enough to weather public criticism by Clinton, and able to enter into debate about opposing political and value systems. Jiang, who allowed one long debate to go out live over national television, demonstrated 'to his domestic political audience an ability to stand up for his country's views'.(105) It is probable that at least to some extent the broadcast gave 'the Chinese a new image of their leadership'.(106) During his trip, Clinton made use of other opportunities on radio and television to speak of human rights and democracy, and even engaged to debate with Beijing University students on these and other issues.(107) Even if the meeting from the U.S. point of view would merely encourage 'warmer atmospherics' rather than resolve major differences, the public face of the meeting seemed to suggest two great leaders determined to avoid deepened conflict over these real differences. Improving Sino-American relations, the basis for a more favourable international environment for China, is one of the key elements of Jiang's foreign policy.(108)

It was perhaps with these successful performances behind him that President Jiang Zemin felt confident enough to launch some powerful displays of serious political intent. This included a clear warning that the PLA must reduce its involvement in business (109) and that officers must distinguish between professional military and commercial career paths. His intention to reduce corruption, even when important persons were involved, was underlined when Chen Xitong, Beijing's former party secretary, was arrested and sentenced to 16 years in prison.(110)

Chinese confidence was also expressed clearly in its first strong role in countering financial instability due to currency fluctuations. However, by June 1998, China had stated that it would need to review its position unless serious efforts were made to strengthen the yen. If the yen and the Chinese currency slipped, it was feared that there would be a renewed cycle of economic crisis in Asia, since many of the smaller Asian states rely on Japan as a trading, investing and aid partner. As a result, the U.S. agreed to help support the Japanese currency, with billions of dollars being committed to strengthen the yen in mid June 1998. This, of course, was at best a temporary measure, and as early as 24-25 June money markets began to let the yen slide, perhaps regarding the Japanese response on banking reform as still too limited,(111) though in fact adequate time had not been allowed for a comprehensive strategy to develop. The Chinese action is interesting, since it was perhaps the first forceful entry of China into international currency diplomacy.(112) Furthermore, it suggested a strong degree of covert cooperation between China, Japan, and the U.S. to deal with a real problem threatening the Asia-Pacific region. By resisting devaluation of the renminbi throughout 1997 and 1998, China not only avoided internal economic turmoil, but had helped at least reduce some of the problems of instability in Asian markets.(113) These policies gained the Chinese leadership a certain recognition for making sound financial judgements in the face of difficulties, though the banking, financial and investment sectors do need further reform.(114) China is cautiously trying to avoid any serious down-turn in its economy. A stall in growth could contribute to serious unrest within China, and weaken regime-maintenance for the leadership and the Communist Party as a whole, which over the last decade has prided itself on economic reform and pragmatic gains.

Likewise, China would bring this issues forcefully forward in the following 1998 APEC meeting, arguing that international financial markets in the Asian setting needed greater regulation and stability. Malaysia and China argued for the need to regulate short-term speculative capital flows, a move not supported by the U.S., Japan, or South Korea. President Jiang Zemin put this case most strongly: 'Those big powers with influence on international finances are duty-bound to take effective measures to improve the supervision and regulation of the flow of international financial capital, contain overspeculation of international hot money and enhance the capability for the forecast and prevention of financial risks and for their relief.'(115)

Nor was President Jiang Zemin's approach without explicit cultural foundations, even though these have only been cautiously launched within limited Chinese circles. In 1996, Jiang Zemin spent some months discussing political, historical and cultural issues with eight professors, which resulted in a book called *Nine Manuscripts on the Issues of Chinese and World History (Zhong wai lishi wenti de jiu pian wengao)*.(116) Published through the CCP's central secretarial bureau under the names of the academics involved, the book received only a limited circulation within Communist Party cadres, and seemed to be a testing of Jiang's particular political vision for the 21st century. Jiang appeared to be linking back to the tradition of the enlightened ruler (*ming jun*),(117) who uses the ideas of intellectuals to help provide a morally just leadership. Xinhua Shen has provided a brief summary of the themes of the book, which positions China's place among the great cultures of the world, arguing that China has a unique civilisation which has allowed it to endure where other ancient civilisations have declined and disappeared. At the same time, reform and renovation are required to sustain this civilisation legacy, to maintain its economic base, and to maintain its cultural inclination towards cooperation.(118) Several chapters of the book draw on Confucian values and ideals for political and international relations, but also argue that some kind of cultural renaissance may be required alongside any kind of economic take-off.(119) Themes concerning centralisation of power, the role of an effective civil service, and stabilisation of the boundaries of a unified China are given historical treatment, as is the need for moral education based on 'benevolence and love' (*ren ai ci shan*).(120) One chapter also notes that with these values as the basis of Chinese society, there will always be serious differences with U.S. policy.(121)

What is fascinating about this work, which seems to have been quite well received among its limited readership, was that it tried to draw on China's cultural and civilisation legacy as a source for legitimation, with only a limited attempt to reconstruct Marxist or socialist ideologies.(122) As noted by Xinhau Shen: -

This book reflects the complex leadership psychology and enigmatic situation China faces. It can best be regarded as an attempt by the Chinese leadership to create a vision for China in the next century and to redefine China's position in a historical perspective.(123)

This kind of thinking has also found reflection in some of Jiang Zemin's public speeches.(124) It seems clear that as leader of the CCP Jiang no longer wished to rest the success of the Party on the narrow grounds of official ideology, improving the standard of living, or nationalism.(125) It is for this reason that Jiang developed the dictum of 'pay attention to politics',(126) a mechanism whereby some of the unwanted effects of economic reform might be controlled. In the broader context, this seems to be the stressing of politics within the context of knowledge of the historical process of world civilisation, particularly the follow-on effects of the industrial revolution.(127) The industrial revolution opened up great opportunities for both Europe and America, but also caused serious social dislocations. In China, from this point of view the current economic and social transformation has also created 'crises of social dislocation, money worship, moral vacuum, economic chaos, and legal disorder'.(128) In this context, 'stressing politics means the stressing of non-economic fields, particularly the legal system, moral values, and the rule of economic competition'.(129)

Hence, Jiang Zemin at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress 'lauded village-level elections and the need for greater public accountability of local government and cadres' and stressed 'the need to build the legal system and streamline bureaucratic organs to make them more responsive and efficient'.(130) Thus

one of Jiang's advisers, Liu Ji, suggested that some level of political reform was needed to protect economic reform and the future of the Party.(131) These changes were not so much an overt change in ideology, as an 'implicit political reform' through the additional of certain institutional elements. (132) Improving the effectiveness of the legal system, introducing regular methods for electing members to the CCP Central Committee, consolidating grass-roots democracy (at village and local levels), and giving priority the rule of law are all mechanisms that improve the accountability of the Party and enhance stability, but without heading down the path of widespread democratisation.(133)

Jiang was reaching for some kind of regime maintenance beyond the narrow appeal of successful economic performance (134) or adherence to communist credentials. Nor did he fully accept Western criteria of transparency, division of powers, and a multiparty system as the goals of political evolution. Rather, a cultural and social legacy was appealed to in order to gain some credence in trying to reform and revitalise a civilisation which could embrace Chinese in the PRC, Hong Kong, Taiwan and elsewhere in the world. Indeed, in so far as the claims were tied up with cultural and intellectual achievements, they transcended racial and nationality considerations, thereby allowing a move towards civilisation dialogue with all those involved in a constructive way in the Chinese world.

Having said this, it remains to be seen whether these moves towards cultural and social legitimation will find a politically acceptable space in which the leaderships of the PRC, Taiwan, and the 'democratic opposition' can find some shared ground for evolutionary political reform.(135) Nonetheless, through such mechanisms Jiang Zemin during 1997 and 1998 managed to present a reasonable, intelligent and participatory face for China to the international community, while at the same time providing an acceptable leadership for many in his diverse Chinese 'audiences'. Evolving from his early appearance as a bland technocrat, he displayed not only a competent administrative capacity, but later seemed to be slowly developing a more complex and satisfying public persona which prompted a level of cautious confidence in regional stability. Through 1999-2001, he managed to steer China into the WTO, to avoid a head-on clash with the U.S. over Taiwan, in spite of serious tensions such as the spy-plane scandal in which China took a relatively tough line, and remained a strong critic of the proposed U.S. national missile defence system (NMD). By February 2002, the global importance of China had managed to turn U.S.-PRC summitry in a positive if not warm direction.(136) Of course, he had not met demands for more radical reform, but nor had he retreated into a mechanical conservatism or slavish repetition of past policies. These factors gave him the authority to remain a major force in the last People's Congress in November 2002, nominating a new range of leaders to replace him. These include not just Hu Jintao but others such as Wen Jiabao and Zeng Qinghong who will represent his interests (137) in a new collective leadership that is not expected to deviate from his policies, at least in the short term.

Drawing Conclusions

To varying degrees, these two leaders have tried to adapt their public performance to create a satisfying *rasa*, thereby gaining cultural legitimation for their rule first among elites and then the wider public, even during periods of intense crisis and conflict. The analytical concept of *rasa* has proved useful as a schema in approaching complex political narratives which appeal to cognitive and emotive understandings. There are of course limits to how far *rasa* theory can be directly applied: it is not possible, for example, to use the eight traditional types of *rasa* directly to typify modern styles of leadership. Likewise, more work needs to be done linking cultural legitimation strategies to patterns of identity politics, both within national constituencies and international audiences. Nonetheless, *rasa* provides one example of a sophisticated conception, drawn from the South and Southeast Asian intellectual traditions, which can function, with suitable adaptation, as a schema of explanation. In East Asia, culturally sanctioned patterns of performance have had a direct impact on the confidence felt in governments, both internally and abroad, as well as shaping aspects of foreign affairs. The eventual strong resistance to the Suharto regime was in part due to concrete failures as well as failures in the maintenance of cultural patterns of legitimation. There are signs that President Jiang Zemin during the late 1990s had moved towards the greater use of patterns of cultural legitimation as the

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32. BASHAM, A.L. et al. (eds.) *Sources of Indian Tradition, I*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1958, p261.
33. PANDIT, Lalita "'Dhvani' and the 'full word': Suggestion and Signification from Abhinavagupta to Jacques Lacan", *College Literature*, 23, 2-1-1996, pp142-164 [Access via Electric Library Database]. For a listing of these eight rasa, and their the means by which they can be enabled on stage, see RANGACHARYA, Adya *Introduction to Bharata's Natya-Sastra*, Bombay, Popular Prakashan, 1966, pp73-74. The number of these aesthetic emotions are sometimes listed as 8 or 9, and on occasion even 10, with critical disputes about the number and those suitable for inclusion, e.g. whether *Santa rasa* (peace) should be included, see SANKARAN, A. *Some Aspects of Literary Criticism in Sanskrit, or The Theories of Rasa and Dhvani*, New Delhi, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1973, pp31-32, p90, pp112-117, p145. One of the most controversial issues is whether these different rasa in fact all are transformed into, and thereby dependent, on one central rasa such as Wonder or Marvel (*Adbhuta rasa*) or Peace (*Santa rasa*), BYRSKI, M. Christopher *Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre*, New Dehli, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1974, pp150-152, pp186-187. The theoretical dominance of *Santa rasa* in some accounts may be due to the influence of Mahayana Buddhism, BYRSKI, M. Christopher *Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre*, New Dehli, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1974, pp165-187; SANKARAN, A. *Some Aspects of Literary Criticism in Sanskrit, or The Theories of Rasa and Dhvani*, New Delhi, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1973, p46. At the same time, it could be argued by thinkers such as Ananda and Kuntaka that *Santa rasa* is the chief rasa of the *Mahabharata*, SANKARAN, A. *Some Aspects of Literary Criticism in Sanskrit, or The Theories of Rasa and Dhvani*, New Delhi, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1973, p84, p129.
34. HOGAN, Patrick Colm "Towards a Cognitive Science of Poetics: Anandavardhana, Abhinavagupta, and the Theory of Literature", *College Literature*, 23, no. 1, February 1996, pp164-179 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database].
35. PANDIT, Lalita "'Dhvani' and the 'full word': Suggestion and Signification from Abhinavagupta to Jacques Lacan", *College Literature*, 23, 2-1-1996, pp142-164 [Access via Electric Library Database].
36. KATZ, Jonathan "Music and Aesthetics: An Early Indian Perspective", *Early Music*, 24, no. 3, August 1996, pp407-419 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database]. Here we can note in passing the Chinese concept of culture, *wen*, also can imply the sense of social transformation through cultivation.
37. LEUTHOLD, Steven "Is There Art in Indigenous Aesthetics?", *Journal of Arts Management, Law and Society*, 25, January 1996 [Access via Electric Library Database].
38. Ibid.

39. KATZ, Jonathan "Music and Aesthetics: An Early Indian Perspective", *Early Music*, 24, no. 3, August 1996, pp407-419 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database]. See also BYRSKI, M. Christopher *Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre*, New Dehli, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1974, pp152-153. Drama thus has to be both entertaining and enlightening, RANGACHARYA, Adya *Introduction to Bharata's Natya-Sastra*, Bombay, Popular Prakashan, 1966, p6.
40. SANKARAN, A. *Some Aspects of Literary Criticism in Sanskrit, or The Theories of Rasa and Dhvani*, New Delhi, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1973, p15.
41. KATZ, Jonathan "Music and Aesthetics: An Early Indian Perspective", *Early Music*, 24, no. 3, August 1996, pp407-419 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database].
42. HOGAN, Patrick Colm "Towards a Cognitive Science of Poetics: Anandavardhana, Abhinavagupta, and the Theory of Literature", *College Literature*, 23, no. 1, February 1996, pp164-179 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database].
43. BYRSKI, M. Christopher *Concept of Ancient Indian Theatre*, New Dehli, Munshiram Manoharlal Publishers, 1974, p160.
44. SANKARAN, A. *Some Aspects of Literary Criticism in Sanskrit, or The Theories of Rasa and Dhvani*, New Delhi, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1973, p100.
45. BASHAM, A.L. et al. (eds.) *Sources of Indian Tradition, I*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1958, p259.
46. HOGAN, Patrick Colm "Towards a Cognitive Science of Poetics: Anandavardhana, Abhinavagupta, and the Theory of Literature", *College Literature*, 23, no. 1, February 1996, pp164-179 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database], following Abhinavagupta *Aesthetic Experience*, pp86-87, pp96-97. See also BASHAM, A.L. *The Wonder That was India*, London, Fontana Collins, 1974, p419.
47. SANKARAN, A. *Some Aspects of Literary Criticism in Sanskrit, or The Theories of Rasa and Dhvani*, New Delhi, Oriental Books Reprint Corporation, 1973, p3.
48. NATH, Radha Govinda "A Survey of the Caitanya Movement", in BHATTACHARYYA, Haridas (ed.) *The Cultural Heritage: Volume IV, The Religions*, Calcutta, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1956, p190, following *Tattiriyai*. II.7. See also BASHAM, A.L. et al. (eds.) *Sources of Indian Tradition, I*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1958, p256.
49. NATH, Radha Govinda "A Survey of the Caitanya Movement", in BHATTACHARYYA, Haridas (ed.) *The Cultural Heritage: Volume IV, The Religions*, Calcutta, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1956, p197.
50. Ibid. pp197-198.
51. MITRA, Khagendranath & BHATTACHARYYA, Asutosh "Diffussion of Socio-Religious Culture in North India", in BHATTACHARYYA, Haridas (ed.) *The Cultural Heritage: Volume IV, The Religions*, Calcutta, The Ramakrishna Mission Institute of Culture, 1956, p522.
52. Ibid., pp522-523.
53. BASHAM, A.L. et al. (eds.) *Sources of Indian Tradition, I*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1958, p253.
54. Ibid., p257. A fourth century text argues that musicians can attain the 'path of liberation without any strain', *Yajnavalkya Smrti* 3.4.115, translated in Ibid., p269.
55. *Natya Sastra* I.14-16, translated in Ibid., p262.
56. *Natya Sastra* I.104-108, translated in Ibid., p263.
57. BASHAM, A.L. *The Wonder That was India*, London, Fontana Collins, 1974, p385.
58. Ibid.
59. BASHAM, A.L. et al. (eds.) *Sources of Indian Tradition, I*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1958, p258.

60. RANGACHARYA, Adya *Drama in Sanskrit Literature*, Bombay, Popular Prakashan, 1967, pp18-24, pp30-34, pp40-42.
61. KEELER, Ward "Review of ARPS, Bernard *Tembang in Two Traditions: Performance and Interpretation of Javanese Literature*", *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 25, no. 2, September 1994, pp432-436 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database].
62. Politicised mysticism has tended to be an accurate 'barometer' of rising political tensions, STANGE, Paul "The Logic of Rasa in Java", *Indonesia*, 38, October 1984, p132.
63. Ibid., pp115-126.
64. Ibid., p130.
65. President Sukarno was considered in the earlier papers on this theme, FERGUSON, R. James "The Dynamics of Culture in Contemporary Asia: Politics and Performance during 'Uneven Globalisation'", Paper Presented at the International Conference, *Asian Cultures at the Crossroad: An East-West Dialogue in the New World Order*, 16-18 November 1998, Hong Kong Baptist University & the David C. Lam Institute, Hong Kong; FERGUSON, R. James "The Rasa of Culture in International Relations: Politics, Dialogue, and Performance in the New Indo-Pacific", Paper Presented at the *SGIR-ISA Joint Conference*, Vienna, Austria, 16-19 September, 1998.
66. In fact, Suharto had to publicly debunk an attempt to make him a descendent of Sultan Hamengku Buwono II, McINTYRE, Angus *Soeharto's Composure: Considering the Biographical and Autobiographical Accounts*, Working Paper no. 97, Clayton Victoria, Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996, pp5-8, pp10-11.
67. KING, Dwight "Indonesia's Foreign Policy" in WURFEL, David & BURTON, Bruce (eds) *The Political Economy of Foreign Policy in Southeast Asia*, N.Y., St. Martin's Press, 1990, p86.
68. SHERIDAN, Greg *Tigers: Leaders of the New Asia-Pacific*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1997, p85.
69. WOLTERS, O.W. *History, Culture, and Region in Southeast Asian Perspectives*, Singapore, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, 1982, p6.
70. Ibid., p50.
71. MOEDJANTO, G. *The Concept of Power in Javanese Culture*, Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University Press, 1986, pp102-103.
72. McINTYRE, Angus *Soeharto's Composure: Considering the Biographical and Autobiographical Accounts*, Working Paper no. 97, Clayton Victoria, Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996, p13.
73. Ibid., p2. For a somewhat Westernised psychological analysis of this composure and its family origins, see Ibid., pp11-18.
74. SHERIDAN, Greg *Tigers: Leaders of the New Asia-Pacific*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1997, p109. See also McINTYRE, Angus *Soeharto's Composure: Considering the Biographical and Autobiographical Accounts*, Working Paper no. 97, Clayton Victoria, Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996, pp1-2. For Angus McIntyre, Suharto was 'someone who has organised his personality around thinking where thinking principally means thinking ahead in the service of his composure and is associated with a kind of emotional autarchy', Ibid., pp18-19.
75. McINTYRE, Angus *Soeharto's Composure: Considering the Biographical and Autobiographical Accounts*, Working Paper no. 97, Clayton Victoria, Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996, p6.
76. PABOTTINGI, Mochtar "Indonesia: Historicizing the New Order's Legitimacy Dilemma", in ALAGAPPA, Muthiah (ed.) *Political Legitimacy in Southeast Asia: The Quest for Moral Authority*, Stanford, Stanford University, 1995, p237.
77. McINTYRE, Angus *Soeharto's Composure: Considering the Biographical and Autobiographical Accounts*, Working Paper no. 97, Clayton Victoria, Monash University, Centre of Southeast Asian Studies, 1996, p12.
78. In Ibid., p15. The autobiography, written in Bahasa, was completed with the aid of Siti Hardijanti Rukmana, his eldest daughter, and G. Dwipayana. It has been argued that Sukarno's policy formation was also influenced by a culturally based

style of 'rationalistic-emotionalism' which tended to confuse and arouse the Western world, QUIKO, Edo "The Rise and Fall of Sukarno: A Brief Analysis of Indonesia's Political Development, 1949-1965", *Asian Profile*, 5 no. 5, October 1977, p472.

79. SHERIDAN, Greg *Tigers: Leaders of the New Asia-Pacific*, Sydney, Allen & Unwin, 1997, p86.

80. For example, the removal of the 'Berkeley mafia' of Western education, often Christian technocrats who had run the economy along conservative lines since the late 1960s, and the attempt to reduce the influence of Benny Murdani since 1993, *Ibid.*, p88, p97.

81. Names such as Bob Hasan and Liem Sioe Liong remained linked to Suharto as 'informal advisers and corporate associates', *Ibid.*, p96.

82. KING, Dwight "Indonesia's Foreign Policy" in WURFEL, David & BURTON, Bruce (eds) *The Political Economy of Foreign Policy in Southeast Asia*, N.Y., St. Martin's Press, 1990, p78, pp80-81.

83. The classic formulation for courts in Bali remains GEERTZ, Clifford *Negara: The Theatre State in Nineteenth-century Bali*, Princeton, Princeton University Press, 1980. The metaphor, only at a general level, can be applied to certain aspects of Indonesian politics. For ritual displays of dance drama at the courts of Yogyakarta and the ancient kingdoms of Java, see SOEDARSONO *Wayang Wong: The State Ritual Dance Drama in The Court of Yogyakarta*, Yogyakarta, Gadjah Mada University, 1990.

84. BASHAM, A.L. et al. (eds.) *Sources of Indian Tradition, I*, N.Y., Columbia University Press, 1958, p254.

85. See KYNGE, James & THOENES, Sander "China Assails Habibie Over Persecution of Chinese", *Financial Times*, 5 September 1998 [Internet Access]. For protests made on the Internet, indicating particular outrage over attacks on Indonesian Chinese, see GLAVE, James "Cyber 'Vandals' Target Indonesia", *Wired News*, 18 August 1998 [Internet Access].

86. For the linkage of these issues, see ROSENBERGER, Leif Roderick "Southeast Asia's Currency Crisis: Diagnosis and Prescription", *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 19 no. 3, December 1997, pp223-252.

87. From the traditional Javanese point of view the very qualities that are appealed to can also be the basis for criticisms. As noted by Paul Stange: "The classical notion of the ruler held that the king's heart (sanubari) needed to be "oceanic," embracing the realm so that his consciousness became a pure embodiment or reflection of the collective. Conversely, criticism becomes justified when it begins to seem that *pamrih*, selfish motive or self-interest, rather than collective interest, guides government. These notions are still current, even contributing to the framing of dissent within Suharto's New Order", STANGE, Paul "The Logic of Rasa in Java", *Indonesia*, 38, October 1984, p131.

88. For example, a call to national unity in face of the threat posed by 'openness' and political violence, in his Independence Day speech in 1997, WILLIAMS, Louise "Soeharto Ready to Crush Protest", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 18 August 1997 [Internet Access].

89. ZHENG, Yongnian "Power and Agenda: Jiang Zemin's New Political Initiatives at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p38.

90. For the miscalling of Jiang Zemin's prospects, see "The Song of Jiang Zemin", *The Economist*, 348 no. 8080, 8 August 1998, pp35-6 [Access via Infotrac Database].

91. ZHENG, Yongnian "Power and Agenda: Jiang Zemin's New Political Initiatives at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p56.

92. Contra WANG, Jianguo "The Era of Jiang Zemin?: The New Personnel Structure from the Fifteenth Congress of the CCP", *China Strategic Review*, II no. 5, September/October 1997, pp16-22. Of course, Li Peng still retains a strong political position, SHAMBAUGH, David "The CCP's Fifteenth Congress: Technocrats in Command", *Issues & Studies*, 34 no. 1, January 1998, p11.

93. For this formulation, see CAVEY, Paul "Building a Power Base: Jiang Zemin and the Post-Deng Succession", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, pp3-34. In official party terms, even leaders such as Mao Zedong and Deng Xiaoping operated through a collective leadership with themselves at the core, see JIANG, Zemin "Hold High the Great Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory for an All-Round Advancement of the Cause of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics into the 21st Century", *Beijing Review*, 6-12 October 1997, p11.

94. Jiang Zemin was chairman of the funeral committee, and delivered the eulogy in a way which demonstrated his ties to the former leader and current claims to prominence, CAVEY, Paul "Building a Power Base: Jiang Zemin and the Post-Deng Succession", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p28.
95. For an overview, see SHAMBAUGH, David "The CCP's Fifteenth Congress: Technocrats in Command", *Issues & Studies*, 34 no. 1, January 1998, pp1-37.
96. This was done utilising concepts such as 'the primary stage of socialism' and 'socialist market economy', JIANG, Zemin "Hold High the Great Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory for an All-Round Advancement of the Cause of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics into the 21st Century", *Beijing Review*, 6-12 October 1997, pp16-18; ZHENG, Yongnian "Power and Agenda: Jiang Zemin's New Political Initiatives at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p39, pp42-44.
97. See GOLDSTEIN, Avery "China in 1997: A Year of Transitions", *Asian Survey*, 38 no. 1, January 1998, pp34-52 [Access via Infotrac Database].
98. For the centrality of improved U.S. relations in Jiang's policies, see NELAN, Bruce W. "Did the Summit Matter?", *Time*, 152 no. 2, 13 July 1998, pp40-42 [Access via Infotrac Database].
99. SHAMBAUGH, David "The CCP's Fifteenth Congress: Technocrats in Command", *Issues & Studies*, 34 no. 1, January 1998, p11.
100. For some negative American reactions, especially in the U.S. press, see HU, Xiaobo "A Milestone As Well As a Millstone: The Jiang-Clinton Summit", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 12, December 1997, p2, pp9-14; FORNEY, Matt "Hoist With His Own Petard", *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 160 no. 46, 13 November 1997, pp16-18; WEHRFRITZ, George & LIU, Melinda "A Noise in Jiang's Ear", *Newsweek*, 130 no. 19, 10 November 1997, pp44-46 [Access via Infotrac Database].
101. Outlined in GOLDSTEIN, Avery "China in 1997: A Year of Transitions", *Asian Survey*, 38 no. 1, January 1998, pp34-52 [Access via Infotrac Database].
102. Ibid.
103. HU, Xiaobo "A Milestone As Well As a Millstone: The Jiang-Clinton Summit", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 12, December 1997, pp2-4.
104. For an analysis of the different audiences and goals involved, see HU, Xiaobo "A Milestone As Well As a Millstone: The Jiang-Clinton Summit", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 12, December 1997, pp5-7; WEHRFRITZ, George & LIU, Melinda "A Noise in Jiang's Ear", *Newsweek*, 130 no. 19, 10 November 1997, pp44-46 [Access via Infotrac Database].
105. GOLDSTEIN, Avery "China in 1997: A Year of Transitions", *Asian Survey*, 38 no. 1, January 1998, pp34-52 [Access via Infotrac Database].
106. "The Clinton and Jiang Show: For the Most Part, Bill Clinton Got a Good Press During his Visit to China, but What Did Jiang Get from It?", *The Economist*, 348 no. 8075, 4 July 1998, pp33-34 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database]. For some local Chinese reactions, see LI, Haibo "History Has Brought Us Together", *Beijing Review*, 20-26 July 1998, p10; STRASSER, Steven "Skirmish in Beijing", *Newsweek*, 132 no. 1, 6 July 1998, p26. Apparently this main debate was not covered in newspaper accounts and regular television news shows within China, NELAN, Bruce W. "Did the Summit Matter?", *Time*, 152 no. 2, 13 July 1998, pp40-42. American reactions suggested that the Clinton visit was viewed moderately warmly by American audiences. A Time/CNN poll of 1,024 Americans on June 30 - July 1 indicated that 8% thought China was changing for the worse, 51% thought China was staying about the same, and 30% that China was changing for the better, NELAN, Bruce W. "Did the Summit Matter?", *Time*, 152 no. 2, 13 July 1998, pp40-42.
107. NELAN, Bruce W. "Did the Summit Matter?", *Time*, 152 no. 2, 13 July 1998, pp40-42; LIU, Melinda & WATSON, Russell "The Ties That Might Bind", *Newsweek*, 132 no. 2, 13 July 1998, p30.
108. Such thinking was clearly signalled in the 27 May 1997 speech at Harvard University by Liu Ji, Vice President of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences in Beijing, "Making the Right Choices in Twenty-First Century Sino-American Relations", *Journal of Contemporary China*, 7 no. 17, March 1998, pp89-102.
109. "The Song of Jiang Zemin", *The Economist*, 348 no. 8080, 8 August 1998, pp35-6.

110. Mr Chen Xitong was also a political opponent of Jiang Zemin and a member of the 'Beijing faction', "The Song of Jiang Zemin", *The Economist*, 348 no. 8080, 8 August 1998, pp35-6. See also GOLDSTEIN, Avery "China in 1997: A Year of Transitions", *Asian Survey*, 38 no. 1, January 1998, pp34-52 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database]; CAVEY, Paul "Building a Power Base: Jiang Zemin and the Post-Deng Succession", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p13. At the CCP's Fifteenth Congress, corruption within the Party was viewed as one of the major challenges and dangers for the future of China, JIANG, Zemin "Hold High the Great Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory for an All-Round Advancement of the Cause of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics into the 21st Century", *Beijing Review*, 6-12 October 1997, p13, p32. Although serious efforts have been made to attack this problem, e.g. 37,492 criminal prosecutions and 121,500 expulsions from the Party between 1992 and 1997, corruption remains a major threat to political stability and Party legitimacy, see SHAMBAUGH, David "The CCP's Fifteenth Congress: Technocrats in Command", *Issues & Studies*, 34 no. 1, January 1998, pp8-9. See also ZHENG, Yongnian "Power and Agenda: Jiang Zemin's New Political Initiatives at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p53.
111. HOPKINS, Nic "Yen Dives as Doubts Beset Rescue Plan", *The Australian*, 25 June 1995, p25.
112. HARDING, James "China: Brinkmanship Wins a Triumph", *Financial Times*, 19 June 1998 [Internet Access].
113. STRASSER, Steven "Skirmish in Beijing", *Newsweek*, 132 no. 1, 6 July 1998, p26.
114. See PEI, Minxin "The Political Economy of Banking Reforms in China, 1993-1997", *Journal of Contemporary China*, 7 no. 18, July 1998, pp321-350; HONG, Zhaohui "Jiang Zemin's Stressing Politics and Reconstruction of Social Order in China", *Asian Profile*, 25 no. 2, April 1997, pp95-97.
115. RICHARDSON, Michael "APEC Reaches Broad Pact: Members Vow Cooperation But Stumble on Details", *International Herald Tribune*, 19 November 1998, p14.
116. SHEN, Xinhua "Jiang Zemin's Brave New World: The Formation of a Vision for the Next Century", *Chinese Strategic Review*, 2 no. 6, November-December 1997, pp85-86.
117. Ibid., p86.
118. Ibid., pp88-89.
119. Ibid., pp89-90.
120. Ibid., pp91-92.
121. Ibid., pp94-95.
122. This tendency has also been noted in HONG, Zhaohui "Jiang Zemin's Stressing Politics and Reconstruction of Social Order in China", *Asian Profile*, 25 no. 2, April 1997, p98. Of course, publicly Jiang Zemin's has launched his policies as a continuation of Deng Xiaoping theory, for example, see JIANG, Zemin "Hold High the Great Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory for an All-Round Advancement of the Cause of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics into the 21st Century", *Beijing Review*, 6-12 October 1997, pp10-33. Yet even in his report to the 15th National Congress Jiang stated the need to 'firmly seize the historical opportunities at the turn of the century and take new steps forward', Ibid., p11.
123. SHEN, Xinhua "Jiang Zemin's Brave New World: The Formation of a Vision for the Next Century", *Chinese Strategic Review*, 2 no. 6, November-December 1997, p96.
124. It has been noted that Jiang Zemin 'loves to quote great names and celebrated historic dictums', ZHENG, Yongnian "Power and Agenda: Jiang Zemin's New Political Initiatives at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p37. Themes concerning the history and civilisation legacy of China were prominent in the speech Jiang Zemin gave at Harvard University on 1 November 1997, see "Enhancing Mutual Understanding", *Vital Speeches*, 64 no. 3, 15 November 1997, pp69-72 [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database]. For history as a reference point for such leaders, see LI, Haibo "History Has Brought Us Together", *Beijing Review*, 20-26 July 1998, p8.
125. For the limits and dangers of such narrow appeals, see SHAMBAUGH, David "The CCP's Fifteenth Congress: Technocrats in Command", *Issues & Studies*, 34 no. 1, January 1998, p20.
126. CAVEY, Paul "Building a Power Base: Jiang Zemin and the Post-Deng Succession", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, pp11-12.

127. HONG, Zhaohui "Jiang Zemin's Stressing Politics and Reconstruction of Social Order in China", *Asian Profile*, 25 no. 2, April 1997, pp91-93. Jiang Zemin also spoke of the Party's policies at the 15th National Congress in terms of China's historical development since 1840, and in the context of the 5,000 year-old civilisation, JIANG, Zemin "Hold High the Great Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory for an All-Round Advancement of the Cause of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics into the 21st Century", *Beijing Review*, 6-12 October 1997, p11, pp26-27.
128. HONG, Zhaohui "Jiang Zemin's Stressing Politics and Reconstruction of Social Order in China", *Asian Profile*, 25 no. 2, April 1997, p93.
129. Ibid., p92.
130. SHAMBAUGH, David "The CCP's Fifteenth Congress: Technocrats in Command", *Issues & Studies*, 34 no. 1, January 1998, p15.
131. Discussed in ZHENG, Yongnian "Power and Agenda: Jiang Zemin's New Political Initiatives at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p53.
132. ZHENG, Yongnian "Power and Agenda: Jiang Zemin's New Political Initiatives at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p54. See JIANG, Zemin "Hold High the Great Banner of Deng Xiaoping Theory for an All-Round Advancement of the Cause of Building Socialism with Chinese Characteristics into the 21st Century", *Beijing Review*, 6-12 October 1997, pp19-25
133. ZHENG, Yongnian "Power and Agenda: Jiang Zemin's New Political Initiatives at the CCP's Fifteenth Congress", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, pp54-57. See also CAVEY, Paul "Building a Power Base: Jiang Zemin and the Post-Deng Succession", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, p19; HONG, Zhaohui "Jiang Zemin's Stressing Politics and Reconstruction of Social Order in China", *Asian Profile*, 25 no. 2, April 1997, pp93-94. Phrases such as 'govern the country according to law' and 'build a socialist country under the rule of law' are found in the speech Jiang Zemin gave at Harvard University on 1 November 1997, see "Enhancing Mutual Understanding", *Vital Speeches*, 64 no. 3, 15 November 1997, pp69-72. [Access via Infotrac Searchbank Database].
134. It must be remembered that 'successful rule' by itself is a fragile basis for legitimacy, since any subsequent downturn or policy failure immediately undermines regime authority. Hence other mechanisms are needed to establish a long term-power base, CAVEY, Paul "Building a Power Base: Jiang Zemin and the Post-Deng Succession", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, pp8-9.
135. Limitations in how far direct political reform can go are indicated by the rumoured rejection of a petition by Zhao Ziyang requesting a review of the 1989 events, and the decline of the moderate reformer Qiao Shi and his influence since the CCP's Fifteenth Congress, SHAMBAUGH, David "The CCP's Fifteenth Congress: Technocrats in Command", *Issues & Studies*, 34 no. 1, January 1998, pp4-5, pp15-16; CAVEY, Paul "Building a Power Base: Jiang Zemin and the Post-Deng Succession", *Issues & Studies*, 33 no. 11, November 1997, pp33-34.
136. See the two presidential addresses at the Great Hall of the People, in "President Bush Meets With Chinese President Jiang Zemin", *PR Newswire*, February 21, 2002 [Access via www.findarticles.com].
137. "Loaded: How Jiang Zemin Stacked the Politburo", *Sydney Morning Herald*, 16 November 2002 [Internet Access].

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