

The Asian Values in Singapore`s Context of Use. The Curbsides of the Singapore`s Model of Democracy

Associate Assistant Ioana-Bianca Berna, PhD
National School of Political and Administrative Studies, Romania
bianca.berna@yahoo.it

Abstract: Out of a sense of nationhood or out of mere circumstantial and specific references to a national context, it is altogether visible that anti-universalist debate is making headway in international relations, in cultural studies and in the political science, if we are to classify a broader consultation of events. This article aims at presenting how the Western ideas can be seen in examination, as artificial structures, in the national context of Asia. The Asian Values are a very interesting evaluative specimen of the anti-universalist orations. In the case of many Asian states, they created settled forms of government, having a special adaptation with the originating incidents that were their birthplace. With the inward of these units of contextualization, we will turn to the conferral of the Singapore democracy model and to its German block and bond with the Asian Values. We will interrelate a personal conspectus regarding the correctness of the seal of fastening between the Asian Values and Singapore`s democracy model.

Keywords: Asian values; Singapore`s democracy model; Singapore`s capitalism

1. The Asian Values` Diorama

The Asian Values are an exhibition of the nusus of perseverance of some Asian states in trying to scale a firewall against the world`s interconnectedness and the negative homogenizing effects of *globalization*¹. They are resistant to them, yet they do not aim at the same tendency of thrusting out. They do not aim to use the same checking and adjusting with the same global marks. They pine for flattened environmental conditions of growth and ambience. They do not propose a system

¹ In the terms of reference of this article, we use the term of *globalization* in order to denote the intensification, to a world-scale, of ideas, of Western origin, of how inter-state relations need to be conducted and regularized and how the exploration and development of inter-state relations need to be fulfilled by implements.

that can be comfortable to all countries, but rather a system that can impact the circle of acquaintances, only for Asian countries.

From this side-view, *Western Values* have been shepherded by an agreement of the few. They cannot represent an item of collective solicitation for all the states on the global arena, since not all the states took part in their ontogenesis. Representatively, *the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948* was not an emanation of all the countries in the world. Then, if the participation at its drafting was not unanimous, how can each and every state in the world esteem and venerate its provisions as a moral and impartial ordinance? Some states may feel that, since they could not affirm a stance in the fashioning of *the democratic principles, of the respect for human rights and civil liberties*, then why are they expected to field the same manufacture in their own domestic environ? The virtue and quality of *the Asian Values discourse* is that these values are anti-universal in pith and meaning. *The Asian Values* take the airfoil from a de-colonized Asian continent, a continent which suffered from the neediness of self-rule and determination¹. They reproduce the conceptual breed of an *Asia by Asians*, an Asia created by the regional governments and not by extrinsic actors:

“[...] *Asian values*² are the cultural orientations, beliefs, norms, or attitudes unique to the Asian region that form the base of their political, economic, and cultural institutions and processes [...]. Notably, *Asian Values* are themselves multifaceted norms, and thus it is very common in the literature to mention more than one trait when defining *Asian Values*”. (Young, 2010)

Asian Values are a genotype of Asia and plunk for *Asian particularity*, despite the fact that they cannot be settled in a casing of some sort or another. The Asian countries have very different cultures and civilizations, or different construing of the same culture and/or civilization³. Then, how can a surety be pledged among all the *Asian Values*, so that some recurrence can be envisioned between them? After all, they affirm that they reside for a *genotype of Asian thinking*⁴. This genotype would include, in a very capacious manner: *the importance of collective reasoning*

¹ The shaping of *colonialism* fathered the generation of the endogenous principles of inter-state encounters and of how they should be managed.

² For this passage, the author chose to use the bold and italics for the syntagm of *Asian Values*; Likewise, the word *values* is written, with a capital letter, by the author's choosing; They did not appear in this form in the original text.

³ Depending on how the cultural centerpieces were obtained and taken up all around Asia.

⁴ We used this sneer of verbalism in order to underline the fact that the genetic constitution of *the Asian Values* emerged from the loyalty to *cultural relativism*.

and of making decisions preferably within a congregated assembly, *a penchant for hierarchy* - as the most efficient *ordering principle*, both in society and in public affairs, *a druthers for consensualism* as a method of decision-making, instead of the more discordant manners of majority ruling¹, *the confirmation of the familial setting as the most important collective organism*², *the propound for informalism as an authoritative tenet for engagements*, both inter-state and inter-personal³. If such all-embracing concepts take on a habitual acknowledgement, it is not a slight and strained idea that others will issue in accordance.

2. The Mutiny between the Singapore Democracy Model and Asian Values

The master narratives of *the Singapore Democracy Model* have to be met with the attendant of the computations of its old days and, particularly, of the earnest inquiries of how Singapore envisioned its state-building amidst the queer accents of the post-War period. Like any other state in Southeast Asia, Singapore had to go through a grossly unconventional environment of foiling and scupper. The conditions were invert – a commonality that all the Southeast Asian states had to experience⁴. On the back of the envelope of these conditions, there stood Singapore's ticket for statehood and independent action⁵. If we are to reply to the major scientific contributions regarding Malay history⁶, we have to admit that the

¹ Even if the majority decides, there is always a minority which can never find enough compensation and compliance for the decision adopted; If the majority ruling is taken by a weak or a very fragile majority, then it is likely that the indemnifications of the decision would be even fewer and points of disparity would sooner or later disunite the grouping; Against this kind of outcome, *the Asian Values* present for consideration *consensual decision-making*.

² The relations within the state or within the society have to function as the relations within a family, with the same respectful ascribing.

³ *Formalism* is thought to be a corsair of inter-personal and inter-state relations; If the agreements adopted would require a formal pout, then the trust between the participating parties is barren of actual meaning.

⁴ Certainly, variations can be drawn; Some experienced this situation more than others; For instance, the Indochinese states had to make their entrance on the global scene, by opposing the continuous liaison intercession of *the French neo-colonialism*; Indonesia was, also, not a sleight-of-hand performer in confronting outer forms of suppression: *the Dutch neo-colonialism* tried desperately to reignite its left-over flickers.

⁵ Independence, for Singapore, would share some of the padded edges that Malaysia's independence had: independence of a very unusual nature; Each and every Southeast Asian state has a very different account of the method used to achieve its independence; In the case of Malaysia, independence was achieved, by bits and pieces within almost the same pattern.

⁶ Comprising, for some years, Singapore's history.

Malay people did not seal the same the same convulsing nature against the extraneous elements, of European extraction, as Indonesia did. The egress of British dominion in the Malay territories was enacted by the agreements of 1867, when the territories became parts of the British colonial possessions in Asia, alongside India¹. These security arrangements transformed the Malayan territories into protected parts of the British Empire.

The historical connection between Singapore and the Malayan territories was a convivial one, at least up to a point. The slight shelter of closeness was implemented by the desire of the British to prognosticate their hold on the colonial possessions as much as possible. The final bearing of a centralized administration in the colonies was the trigger-factor, and not, the territories` readiness to achieve unification.

The British offered abutment for the creation of the Federation of Malaya after World War II. In 1948, the federation was given entailment. Only in 1957, the federation achieved the total dislocation from British interfering and became self-directed. Riddled with points of reference to Malaya², at first Singapore was excluded from the creative process of the federation. The changing mindset occurred in 1963, when Singapore, Sabah and Sarawak gained an official admission in the federation. The entrance was quickly accompanied by noisy collisions and clanging between *the Singapore concept of state-building* and the bulk of Malayan plurality. The grounds of the resulting clangor can be explained by multiple elements that agree with each other in derivation and applied significance.

Singapore had to overcome, throughout its history, a residuum of demographic changes, buttressed by the British colonial rule. The British colonists supported the borderless movements of large masses of people, in and out their colonial

¹ The Southeast Asian tableland was, actually, a criss-cross game among the world`s major powers; In the case of the Malayan territories, Great Britain and Holland disputed with alacrity the opportunity for control; At first, perhaps, the aim was not total control; Their disputations were terminated through *the Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824*, which placed the Northern parts of the Malayan territories under British Rule; Certainly, India had a very different heap of store, compared to the Malayan territories, as far as the British conception of exploitation and domination was concerned; The imposition of colonial rule in the Malayan territories and in India was based on a quasi-chronological coincidence, as the British rule was introduced in India in 1858, while the Malayan territories became over-flown with British control, ever since the decision to place them under the administration of the British Colonial Office in 1867; When India no longer represented a picket for the British running costs, the Malayan territories gained a whole new significance.

² Especially, in terms of culture.

possessions. This approach was given an official form of address, as: *unlimited immigration*. This would forever curb and remodel the ethnic balances of Singapore's population¹. A concourse of many ethnic groups settled in Singapore, opening businesses and creating a life of their own, while trying to mix and join with the aboriginal people². The largest mass of these ethnic groups was the Chinese one. Singapore very rapidly, became *a Chinese island in a Malay Peninsula, if taking into account the demographic considerations*. On the 16th of September 1963, when Singapore entered the Federation of Malaya, it was clear that the smoldering encounters of opinion would be taking place. The wormwood of discontent was beginning to sow. Singapore could not agree to betray its rather socialist whereabouts in the public spheres of policy-making. Its ideas did not receive the basic valuation needed for mutuality to surface. Consequently, the umbilical cord between Singapore and Malaya was cut off on the 9th of August 1965³. The expression of national humiliation and of treachery – as conceived by Singapore's leaders - did not go away without expressage. These historical books of facts are extremely important to understand *the Singapore model of democracy* and how it is replicated in security doctrines for the island-state.

Becoming only a small tip of the Malay Peninsula, Singapore used the testimonial of strategic helplessness, in order to formulate its political regime and the follow-in security strategies⁴. As Seng See Tan and Alvin Chew explain:

“[the] *newly independent Singapore, cast adrift from its hinterland moorings following an unceremonious expulsion from the Malaysian Federation in 1965, adopted the pugnacious image of a “poison shrimp”--small, not invulnerable, but certainly no pushover*”. (Seng, & Chew, 2008)

Singapore started searching for the maximum leverage it could find in order to secure its statehood, both internally and externally. This search would continue undisrupted and would be characterized by the feeling, method and measure of uttermost protection, by a pure and straight *we feeling*. Within the circumference of

¹ Like in the case of other Southeast Asian states, demography affixed a permanent engraving of the country's destiny; Other references can be given, by inferring the separatist movements in Western Papua (Indonesia), or in Mindanao (Philippines).

² These shifts were predominantly noticeable between 1890 and 1920.

³ The Malayan leaders could not iron securely a place, within the federation, for Singapore.

⁴ The sense of a state destitute of help and of strength would continue to be a matter of constant cropping in Singapore's self-delivered national portrayals.

this chronic protectiveness, we must understand the underlying principles of *the Singapore democracy model*.

The Singapore democracy model is not a framework which refuses to settle down any determination. Compared, for example, with the Malaysian democracy model, it is a particular version, a product manufactured to bear some resemblance with other ways of molding democratic principles, but which assumes different values, constructed for the purpose to give some representing relations between the state of Singapore and other Southeast Asian states. Indeed, Singapore was able to create its own style of democracy, by introducing some principles, worthy of imitation and by giving them unlike features within the national context. These circumstances may have created a sense of sundry-like occasions for implementation. If our assertions may sound too assorted from a conventional characterization, then how can *the Singapore democracy model be characterized*? How unconnected is it with the familiarities of *Confucianism*? Is it delirious for a unique experimental value? Does it have a judicious infirmity to a socialist appertaining? How many questions referring to the socialist discourse regarding democracy does it have? How guilty can it be found for the landing on socialist principles?

There is some probity, as far as *the Singapore democracy model* is concerned, which is scheduled in transportation. It is quite hard to divide the quintessential, original products of *the Singapore democracy model*, from the ones which were added proportionally from other sources. The historical parameters that were introduced in the beginning may offer us some explanations¹. They gave *the Singapore democracy model* an important face and voice for the collection of the principles contoured within the temporal progressions of statehood.

¹*Democracy* – in Singapore's pouts and statements – has to be, first of all, explained by a consanguinity with the historical facts; The point of departure of Singapore's history as a modern nation and as an independent state, marked the beginning of the prospection and of the development of the regime that the new state chose to implement; For the first time in its history, after the secession with Malaysia, Singapore could use the political freedom it had to ramp up and accumulate principles of statecraft that were best applicable; It all started out as an experiment; It is the author's creed that Singapore, of all the Southeast Asian states, had and still has the best availability to reinvent; This is why the ideology and approach of the founding fathers of the nation could have suffered important divagations in the future, or it could have altered drastically, if the grounds for effectuation were not that fertile.

The assizes of Singapore's statehood and, in the lines of consequence, of *its democracy model*, were a combination of factors. First of all, it was the need for security recovery and the sense of perpetual invulnerability¹.

Singapore was hallowed by the discourtesy made to it by Malaysia and also by the fact that it had to train itself against the impudence of other states, too. The flashier the security dilemma got, the biggest the challenge! The legitimacy of the new rulers and their continuance would have to create a natural appreciation among its citizens for being part of a collective structure. In this way, perceiving changes would occur in a manner less shaky and less instinctively hostile. It was a sound practical judgment of those in charge with the leadership of the country.

At the time, the cognition of danger, as far as the regional leaders were concerned, came from China. The habits of speculation revolved around Chinese actions in the region: what could China do next, in order to impose Communism and disperse it in Southeast Asia? Singapore was a state with a large Chinese population and, naturally, the atmosphere of distrust, had permeated its regional standing and reputation. Having been too riddled with the copious accusations that it can become the next regional outpost for China to export *its model of communism*, Singapore began a campaign to create a trademark of a multi-ethnic, multi-civilization state. In order to proclaim ownership of such an approach, Singapore's leaders became influential followers of the ideas of *communitarianism* – a view upon which harmony can be instilled among different groups in society, based on the conventional rituals of tolerance, understanding and acceptance.

The medium of making these underpinnings a reality would eventually lead to the loss of individuality and total free spirit. An individual would have to create a place for itself, by accepting others and by working with others for the higher value of *common good*. *Common good* refers to collectivity, both in spirit, reflexive thinking and in action. Each individual can become the custodian of the other, if the other does not and cannot procure the means to achieve his/her goals and ideas in life. The state is the ultimate protector! The adherence to the conventions of the

¹ This trait is one that most analysts think it has still major prevalence nowadays; In the beginning of its independent history, Singapore's answers to the security environment of the region, were thought to be highly affective, given by a state prepared to experience in anticipation external dangers, which could subside with its virtual elimination.

use of force can be put into practice only by the state, especially if the individuals prove to be unsuccessful at the endeavors of acting for their own good¹.

Singapore could not have avoided the omission of the importations of the ideas of *communitarianism*, on the Chinese Confucian branch. *The Confucian values* did not premit the values of *filial piety*², the need to mend the societal pathologies inferred by the lack of order and coordination in society and by the establishment of five different types of hierarchy: *ruler-ruled, husband-wife, parent-child, elder brother – younger brother, friend-friend*. As Rachel Mc Devitt underlines:

“The teachings of Confucius advocated behavior that showed obedience and respect for superiors, be they elder family members, ancestors, or leaders. Confucius believed that humans are inherently social beings.” (Devitt, 2007)³

The maintenance of hierarchy is achievable only if *virtue* – or *ren* – is preserved. A leader has to offer to the others exemplar guidance and a moral compass in attitude and behavior. He can make others resort to acts of inner reformation, only if this is executed firstly by himself, within his own life and social interactions. Leadership cannot be questioned, by all means if *ren* is constantly ensured observance to, by all the members of society, especially by the leader.

Confucianism represented a potent source of knowledge and legitimacy for the Singapore leaders. Its reconsiderations were not actually embraced by the leaders as any vitiating act would bring with it an undermining of the state’s ability to interfere in the private spheres of citizenship and secluded areas of the individuals’ life. Another very important refining of the Confucian thought was brought on by Mengzi – one of the followers of Confucius⁴. The equilibrium in the societal order is not a thing which can be kept on by the people’s relationship of intimacy with the decisions made by the political conductors of social norms. The people are not absentees from the pitch contour of the social order:

¹ The preservation from loss and injury can be enacted by the state if it so choses and given the appropriate circumstances.

² Which means the reverence towards one’s elders and the duty to manifest utter devotement to one’s elders, by giving them the appropriate respect and, at times, protection.

³ http://www.asian-studies.org/EAA/Confucianism_Handouts.pdf, Accessed on 15th of May 2013, 23:44 p.m.

⁴ Mencius kept on with Confucius’ teachings and also masterminded the important servicing aim of the leadership; The imperative that the people come first introduces the imperative of an hierarchy plateful by the popular consent; In other words, the popular support of a political leadership can ensure *ren*.

“Mengzi is generally acknowledged to be the most creative and influential follower of Kongzi (Confucius, 551-479 BCE), born about one hundred years after Kongzi's death. [...]Mengzi argued that the political legitimacy of a government derives from the acceptance or consent of the people. He stated clearly that the people may always justly overthrow a ruler who harms them”. (Doran, 2010)¹

In the post-colonial setting, Singapore tried to give implementation of these principles, but without drawing up any indictment against the leadership of the nation. A small-sized, encirclement-prone state, Singapore could not afford allowing the scheduling of people's lack of satisfaction to appear and fester. Singapore had to create the institutional vehicles for the departure of those security arrangements most appropriate, for not being engulfed into the regional conflicts, fermenting during the harshest periods of the Cold War. To put it in another way, Singapore had to create the means of a journey already begun.

The question was how to supply not just any means, but the desired means for its statehood. Indonesia developed its ***national resilience – ketahanan nasional***². What and how could Singapore use as a frame for the inescapable relation between the political leadership and the political leadership's buyer and protection of people's interests and actions?

We have to remember the fact that Singapore did not benefit from the same material grist of another Southeast Asian state, comparable in size and geographical stretch: Brunei. Singapore did not enjoy the same concentration of resources that Brunei had³. Nor was Singapore privileged with the British protection sensor that Singapore was bestowed upon. It had to stretch more its craftsmanship as far as its state-building ability is concerned. The break between Singapore and the Federation of Malaya was brought in, mostly, by ethnic dissent⁴. The small piece of land, located in the southern tip of the Malay Peninsula would

¹ The author of this article provides a thorough contemplation of Dr. Lim Boon Keng – a Singapore enlightened intellectual personality, born in a family of expats from Malaya, of Chinese descent; Christine Doran utilizes his work in order to draw a portrayal of the Confucian principles, through the prism of one of the most specialized connoisseurs; Dr. Lim, in his explanations of the Confucian principles, correlated with the art of conducting state affairs, makes the comprehensive link between the ***Mencian definition of the people's right to rebel*** and John Locke's concept of ***revolution***; People's rebellion is an auxiliary mechanism for ***ren*** to prevail.

² A concept born out of its longing for bargaining a regional influence, with the need to fight all forms of outside pressure: neocolonial or even regional, if the need will arise.

³ With special emphasis on energy resources.

⁴ The uncompromising relation between the Chinese and the Malay.

prove to be a very interesting mix between the Oriental elements and the Western ones. Just as Seng See Tan and Alvin Chew have demonstrated, Singapore was determined to prove its exceptional nature and the fact that it, undeservedly, was considered a pariah¹:

“Singapore's leaders were interested not only in surviving external attacks, but also winning over the enemy. “We are not just a poisonous shrimp”, as Lee Hsien Loong noted in 1984, “We do not go on the basis that if somebody attacks us, we will hit them and will hurt them. But we will go on the basis that we will hit them and we will be around to pick up the pieces at the end.” (Tan & Chew, 2008)²

If one could take the overbearing generalization – that all island states have always displayed a practice of dissent – to be true, then this could easily be the most methodical manner to explain Singapore's actions and why it was ousted from a federation where it wished to belong to, as it represented the uttermost fall-back arrangement, in terms of security. However, the explanations of Singapore's actions and of its adjudications to introduce *a model of democracy*, with a Confucian intake, have also to be coupled with explanations of the Singapore's constitutional bodily structure, in order to be the most effective. *Confucianism* can explain the irregularities from *the liberal democracy model*, but it cannot explain the irregularities from the fineness of *Asian Values*.

The roots of the constitutional model led in by Singapore can be ferreted out by the specific traits of *the Westminster model*³. Singapore has set up a paradigm of *parliamentary democracy*. While the system is unicameral, the position of President is only a position required by the ritualistic protocol. The President's areas of decision are very narrow, indeed⁴. The position of President is an elective one, with the popular legitimacy attributed to its constitutional standing.

The members of the Parliament are selected through a very controversial system: they are either elected or nominated. For those who are nominated, their

¹ The consideration belonged to the Malay leaders who were responsible for the decision of its expulsion.

² The authors of this article comment upon the fact that Singapore tried to render as many beneficial outcomes as possible, from the break from the affiliation with Malaysia; Indeed, the legislative British inheritance could be easily seized in the formalities of the constitutional assemblage that Singapore introduced in the first years of statehood; This legislative framing was aiming to accommodate and shelter the *Asian Values* to which Singapore's leaders have shown adherence.

³ Within the same exchange of influences that India, Malaysia or even Myanmar have gone through as colonies of the British Empire.

⁴ For instance, he can make judiciary appointments.

designation is given by the President and their legislature is shorter: only two and a half years, compared to the longer period of the members of the parliament that are elected by popular suffrage, who enjoy a five-full-year term in office. Even from the beginning of the shaky independence years, in Singapore, the rife political power has been concentrated in the hands of the *People's Action Party*¹.

The People's Action Party's trajectory to total laterality and political monopole is owed to the political eminence of Lee Kuan Yew. In 1959, Lee became Singapore's first prime-minister. His period in office totaled three decades². He is affectionately addressed in public speeches, and even in the scientific literature, as the father of the modern state of Singapore³. He made Singapore politics a patriarchal vault where the *People's Action Party* could write the cenotaph principles and informal norms. Allegations of manipulations and electoral fraud are all too present in the history of the *People's Action Party*. Some may say that its existence is, actually, due to them. The question posed is: how else could the political rotation to power, be so severely held in contempt by it?

The People's Action Party (PAP) was the only one to produce the influential figures for the position of prime-minister and for the most important ministerial positions in Singapore. It is also responsible for the self-assured and bold character of Singapore's foreign policy. In addition to this, it has achieved that by creating a sway of containing of the military sector by the civilian leadership, as compared to its neighbors in Southeast Asia, Myanmar being a noteworthy example, in this case⁴. In foreign policy terms, Singapore views the global arena as a place of concentration, composed of selfish, interest-absorbed actors. Competition persists

¹ There are other political parties on the political scene: *The Worker's Party, The Singapore Democratic Party, The Singapore Democratic Alliance*; Their slate was drawn as acceptable in order to show out political diversity; As far as their political relevance goes, we can actually characterize it as valueless.

² Goh Chok Tong would become Singapore's second prime-minister in 1990.

³ The need for political symbols is a constant aspect in Southeast Asia; The same showing of regard was given to Malaysia's Mohamad Mahathir, for instance.

⁴ The preside of civilian elements over the military sector is now declared to be enhancing, in Myanmar, too; Nonetheless, this is viewed to be happening with baby steps; The dismissal of the military junta from the reins of power is not a totally successful process, as the remotion left some personalities of the old regime not totally out of the lustering of political influence.

with engrossment and Singapore has to be resourceful enough in order to be in line with the requirements of the competition¹!

In domestic foreign policy, the focus-factor of the **PAP** has been streamlined by restraining civil rights and liberties, more often than not, under the umbrella of **communitarianism**. For instance, Singapore's Internal Security Act of 1985² makes, under blatant specifications, clear the following facts:

“The Minister may, if he considers it in the national interest to do so, by order prohibit the manufacture, sale, use, wearing, display or possession of any flag, banner, badge, emblem, device, uniform or distinctive dress or any part thereof” (Art.7.(1)³);

or: *“Where it appears to the Minister charged with the responsibility for printing presses and publications that any document or publication:*

- a) contains any incitement to violence;*
- b) counsels disobedience to the law or to any lawful order;*
- c) is calculated or likely to lead to a breach of the peace, or to promote feelings of hostility between different races or classes of the population; or*
- d) is prejudicial to the national interest, public order or security of Singapore” (Art.20. (1)⁴.*

The authoritarianism rating in Singapore is very high. The excerpts introduced above are only some examples of the infringement of human rights and liberties that were carried on by the **PAP**, with the compulsion of legislation.

We can freely use the remark that Singapore has one of the highest rates of execution in the world¹. Between the time frame of 1972-1988, Singapore acquired

¹ The author thinks that the fight for survival no longer stands in explaining Singapore's foreign policy; Moreover, it is **the fight for statehood solidity** that has replaced the fight for statehood converging that the **PAP** has realized for Singapore during the formative period of the state's identity.

² Within the revised formulations of 1987.

³ *Article 7. (1), Chapter I, Part II, Internal Security Act,*
<http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/aol/search/display/view.w3p?page=0;query=DocId%3A5ba26ddb-fd4c-4e2e-8071-478c08941758%20Depth%3A0%20ValidTime%3A18%2F06%2F2013%20TransactionTime%3A18%2F06%2F2013%20Status%3Ainforce;rec=0;whole=yes>, Accessed on *18th of May 2013, 14:45 p.m.*

⁴ *Article 20.(1), Part II, Chapter III,* accessed at:
<http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/aol/search/display/view.w3p?page=0;query=DocId%3A5ba26ddb-fd4c-4e2e-8071-478c08941758%20Depth%3A0%20ValidTime%3A18%2F06%2F2013%20TransactionTime%3A18%2F06%2F2013%20Status%3Ainforce;rec=0;whole=yes>, Accessed on *18th of May 2013, 16:45 p.m.*

an average 4.65² points, by the measurements taken, within *the Civil Liberties Index* of the Freedom House³. All media is controlled by the state. Human rights and civil liberties are crippled by the interference of organic laws which hint at the wider perspective of the Singapore`s society *welfarism*⁴, in order to explain their restrictions. The means of association do not inclose plural forms⁵.

The PAP renders protective armor for the people of Singapore, but, at the same time, it applies principles of *the Asian Values*, only in their mythological tenure. An authentic conversation with the human rights record is not passed by a legal denunciation, nor by the public determining acts of perception of the ruling party. The biggest and most important contortion from *the Asian Values* is that the priority hierarchy, which places the voice of the people on the highest echelon, is turned aside from. *Singapore`s model of democracy* is, in fact, a melange of miscallanea elements, which profess ground tones of heterogenous ranging: *the stress-mark on the Asian Values* and the err and veer of how these values are politicized and legislated, *technocratic professionalism in the public service*⁶, the socialist ideology of the *PAP*, the acceptance of informality in the public media of interactions⁷. The *PAP`s* ideology is a socialist one and the predilect structural and formal agency is Leninist in essence. However, the *PAP* has syndicated the domestic interior for progress, for economic reform, by providing enough entailings to represent a hybrid economic force: not so much capitalist as the countries in the Western hemisphere, yet not so socialist in application that it can

¹ In some estimation, it is believed that Singapore actually has the highest rate of execution of all the countries in the world.

² In the measurements taken, 1 meaning the strongest indicator and 7 the weakest.

³ According to the data provided by: http://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Singapore/indicator-civil_liberties/, Accessed on 9th of June 2013, 12:34 p.m.

⁴ A concept that would, theoretically, designate the employment of collective benefits, so that everyone can feel and ripe the benefits of *communitarism*; The profit and prosperity for all, which is what this concept is directed at realizing, cumbers freedom of speech, as an act of necessity; Criticisms against the government suffer from public exposure; The *Asian Values* do not make the placing of limits on people`s power of expression a conceptual kernel.

⁵ There is only one associative organization – which militates for the rights of all the trade unions in Singapore – which is, unfortunately, controlled by the state.

⁶ *Meritocracy* and professional advance by *meritocracy* are promoted; Some captious judgments may hint to the fact that corruption plagues the insertion of this criteria and also the actual abidance to them.

⁷ We are consigning the use of informal dealings in day-to-day occurrences – a dwelling relation point with other Southeast Asian states. In Singapore, they are accepted only as long as they do not intermeddle with the consensus that, the state may intervene, when it considers necessary, even in these substances.

abbreviate private economic enterprise. One of the best description of the kind of capitalism that *Singapore`s model of democracy* has created is summed up here:

“Asian Capitalism appears be more hegemonic than Asian Democracy¹. Asian Democracy did not succeed in de-legitimising counter-authoritarian (democratic) values; it only succeeded in postponing their realisation. Asian Capitalism, on the other hand, successful renders counter-capitalistic ideologies (welfarism) as unthinkable and undesirable”. (Soek-Fang, 2001, pp. 45-66)

Despite the fact that, after *the Asian Financial Crisis of 1997²*, the *Asian Values* of the *newly industrialized countries* (NIC) of the Asian continent³, lost the positive condescension of the rest of the world, Singapore was able to quickly bounce back and regain its status of a *Tiger Economy*. The misconfiguration between *Asian Capitalism* and *Asian Democracy* still leaves Singapore`s practically unresponsive to the need of resolving this paralellism⁴ and for the need of gap-bridging measures.

Concluding Inferences

Singapore`s model of democracy had used *the Asian Values* as a launching pad, yet it has produced else results in their application. How could Singapore have achieved something so divergent from the hypothetical conditions from which the approach wandered from? The answer is that, just like in other cases, it all comes down to the gutter and the narrows used in the fruition. Singapore is a country born

¹ The concepts in italics are of the author`s choosing; They did not appear in this manner in the original text.

² The *Asian Financial Crisis* was one of Asia`s most conspicuous events; It checked off the downgrading of what was called *the Asian Miracle* – which meant the economic ascendancy in the global arena of some Asian economies; Speculative attacks on the Thai baht, quickly grew in rank and comprised all of Southeast Asia and South Korea in Northeast Asia; The crisis showed that the parochial organization of the regional business sector, with evidences of favoritism, patriarchal forms of engagement, business-planning and incessant corruption, could not foster prosperity for too long; Another very important upshot of the crisis was that it paved the way for the Western criticism that *capitalism* can grow vigorously only in un-authoritarian regimes; The *International Monetary Fund* had to intervene with a series of bailout plans, which imposed heavy-handed measures in the region. In Southeast Asia, before the crisis, the economies that were thought to have the most success were given the nominal recommendation of *tiger economies*; Singapore was *a tiger economy* and registered one of the smallest numbers of failures during the crisis.

³ An appellation which comprised: South Korea, Indonesia, Thailand, Malaysia and Singapore.

⁴ By this, we mean the lack of concurrence between *Singapore`s model of capitalism* and *its model of democracy*.

out of an intuitive understanding of its weaknesses – whether ethnic, civilizational, domestic, regional or geostrategic. Fear was not only a general atmosphere, but also an active experience. The hue and timber of this feeling did not smoothen over time. If one is optimist, he can say that the feeling, by and large, stood in a resemblant state. If one likes to coat in the negative aspects also, she can say that time has gone by for the worst¹.

Singapore's model of democracy and *Singapore's model of capitalism* developed in discrepancy, with the latter being given more space for filing its own specificity. Singapore was, in several occasions, called in as an example as far as *its model of capitalism* was concerned and given very bad reviews as far as its interpretation of *Asian Values* went. Even during *the Asian Financial Crisis*, Singapore was in the position to publicly countersign the measures taken by *the International Monetary Fund* in South East Asia, much to the rebuttal of other Southeast Asian countries. If one can ask the eonian question: which comes first *democracy* or *capitalism*? which is the primordial cause of the other? - in the case of Singapore, there is no definite answer. *The Singapore's democracy model* strives in its hybridity – it is mightily autocratic, yet it claims the soft Confucianist values of collective emancipation and social cohesion. By way of addition, it has some extraneous elements, compared to *the economic model of capitalism*, which Singapore also label-made, as it is not conceived within the same relative looseness.

References

- Bhala, Kara Tan (1999). Twilight of the Despots: Authoritarians and the Need for Enlightenment. *Harvard International Review*, Vol. 21, No. 2, spring.
- Doran, Christine (2010). The Chinese Origins of Democracy: Dynamic Confucianism in Singapore. *Nebula*, December, Vol. 7, No. 4.
- Jones, David Martin (2007). The Southeast Asian Development Model: Non-Liberal Democracy with Market Accountability. *Southeast Asian Affairs*, 1st of January.
- Kim, So Young (2010). Do Asian Values Exist? Empirical Tests of the Four Dimensions of Asian Values. *Journal of East Asian Studies*, May-August.
- Mc Devitt, Rachel (2007). Confucianism: Understanding and Applying the Annalects of Confucius. *Education About Asia*, Vol. 12, No. 1, spring, on-line source: http://www.asian-studies.org/EAA/Confucianism_Handouts.pdf, Accessed on 15th of May 2013, 23:44 p.m.

¹ One can cite: the current relationship between Singapore and China, in order to take an unbroken missive of the situation.

Sheridan, Greg (2000). *Asian Values, Western Dreams: Understanding the New Asia*. Crows Nest, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, March.

Soek-Fang, Sim (2001). *Asian Values, Authoritarianism and Capitalism in Singapore*, Vol. 8, pp. 45-66;

Tan, See Seng & Chew, Alvin (2008). Governing Singapore`s Security Sector: Problems, Prospects and Paradox. *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, Vol. 30, No. 2, August.

Wee, C. J. L (1999). Asian Values, Singapore, and the Third Way: Re-Working Individualism and Collectivism. *SOJOURN – Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, Vol. 14, No. 2, October.

Online sources

http://www.theglobaleconomy.com/Singapore/indicator-civil_liberties/, Accessed on 9th of June 2013, 12:34 p.m.

Singapore`s Internal Security Act, accessed at:

<http://statutes.agc.gov.sg/aol/search/display/view.w3p?page=0;query=DocId%3A5ba26ddb-fd4c-4e2e-8071-478c08941758%20Depth%3A0%20ValidTime%3A18%2F06%2F2013%20TransactionTime%3A18%2F06%2F2013%20Status%3Ainforce;rec=0;whole=yes>, Accessed on 18th of May 2013, 14:45 p.m.