

## **APPENDIX C**

### **Reading Text 2**

#### **Historical development**

If we classify civil servants according to whom they are, then based on European experience, civil servants typically evolved from being servants of the emperor to servants of the State (beginning in the seventeenth century), and then servants of “the people” (beginning in the late eighteenth century). In Europe and other developed countries, civil servants have also become more protected from political parties (from the middle of the nineteenth century) and more professional (during the twentieth century) (Raadschelders and Rutgers 1996, pp.67-69).

Evidence from the Asian civil services studied here indicates that they too have followed part of this traditional path. In all of the countries considered, civil servants were first “servants of the emperor” on one form or another. Civil servants became “servants of the (feudal) State” at various times according to developments in individual countries. In Bangladesh the transition came the beginning of Mogul rule and in India the medieval age (thirteenth century). Other countries have passed into this stage more recently (China in 1911, Japan in the 1860s, Laos in 1893, the Philippines in 1898, South Korea in 1910 and Thailand in 1932). In all the countries studied, except for Bangladesh and India, civil servants became servants of the State only relatively recently, for the most part just over one hundred years ago, much later than Europe.

As we have seen, civil servants were also servants of the colonial State in many Asian countries. Although the colonial legacy in some countries produced civil services that were based on meritocracy and competition (in Bangladesh and India under the British), colonialism also institutionalized racism and cultural superiority. Some colonial powers have had more impact than others on civil service systems. The

United Kingdom, for example, left behind political institutions and legal systems in its colonies in Bangladesh, China (Hong Kong) and India, that became relatively well entrenched. The United States has also had an impact on political and civil service institutions in Philippines. In other cases such as Laos and South Korea, the impact of the colonial power on political and civil service institutions has probably been minimal. The civil services of the eight Asian countries studied also evolved into “servants of the people” generally only in the mid-twentieth century, much later than in Europe. The transition took place in Bangladesh in 1947, in China in the 1930s, in Japan in 1946, in Laos in 1975, in the Philippines in 1946, in South Korea from 1948 to the 1960s and in Thailand in 1973. In some cases, the catalyst for change was independence from colonial rule, while in others it was the overthrow of military dictatorship. In Japan, the transition dates from defeat in the Second World War and the United States’ occupation of the country.

Further evolution of the civil service systems in Asia to become more protected and professional has occurred in Bangladesh, India, Japan, the Philippines, South Korea, and Thailand. Although these countries have adopted policies in these areas, the extent to which they have been implemented has varied substantially from State to State and across time. Because communist parties manage both China and Laos, however, their civil services are neither “protected” nor “neutral” Indeed, such a policy makes no sense in these political environments. Authorities expect the civil service of these countries to vigorously implement party policy. Although party membership is not a requirement for becoming a civil servant in either China or Laos, membership definitely helps in getting ahead and along in the bureaucracy. Still, as a result of civil service reform in both China and Laos, it is likely that their civil services have become more professional, in line with world trends.