

Singapore: The Development Paradox

Ho Si Quy *

Abstract: Singapore is known as the 20th century miracle of the world. Following three decades of perseverance and determination of the leader, Mr. Lee Kuan Yew, the poor town of Singapore has risen to become the “capitalist heaven”. A prosperous society. A healthy environment. A government of integrity. The whole world wants to imitate Singapore but there are things that cannot be copied and things that no country would want to replicate. Singapore developed under inexplicable paradoxes, the biggest one being the fact that the country “took off” and “turned into dragon” in a relatively authoritarian environment. Freedom and democracy were under heavy scrutiny. The market economy was vibrant, but its “invisible hand” was manipulated by the state. The city-state upheld Asian characteristics but also shared Western ideologies. It paid special attention to socialism in development but also succeeded in establishing a capitalist society. The willpower of Lee Kuan Yew is regarded as the crucial factor that has helped realize Singapore’s success story. He is also the cause for which Singapore does not only appeal to the world by positive things. Prosperity, however, has overshadowed the less humanitarian aspects of Singapore’s development, concealing and erasing the “dark spots” in history.

Key words: Singapore, development paradox, Lee Kuan Yew, democracy, development, dictatorship.

When Lee Kuan Yew passed away in March 2015, the whole world talked about him, about the way he had transformed Singapore from a poverty-stricken fishing village in the 1960s into the busiest trading port 30 years after, an island country worthy as “the jewel of prosperity”. Besides the countless praises that seem to go beyond words, the “founding father of Singapore” was also subjected to criticism, from mild to violent. All over the world, especially in developing countries, controversies over Lee Kuan Yew seemed to have intensified although Singapore – “the miraculous symbol of development” – is still a model that most countries want to replicate (John

Burton, Peter Montagnon, Kevin Brown and Jeremy Grant, 2015; Carton Tan, 2015; David Reed, 1979; Tom Plate, 2011). This imitation, however, consists of the unfeasible – for the past 50 years, Singapore has been associated with the name and identity of Lee Kuan Yew. Singapore and Lee Kuan Yew are the two sides of the same coin. One cannot have one side without the other. This is itself a paradox.

The island state is very small in size, the population is only 5 million people, there are no natural resources, “a heart without a body” – those were the exact words of Lee

(*) Prof., Ph.D., Institute of Social Sciences Information.

Kuan Yew (Michel Schuman, 2009: 57). This heart had to make the world its body. And Singapore succeeded in realizing the impossible. This is the second paradox.

Many scholars regard Lee Kuan Yew as a follower of socialism. In his early years, he used to shake hands with communist movements and during his lifetime, there were various occasions when he expressed harsh criticism against capitalism. In the end, however, he devoted his entire life to building capitalism. Singapore is the striking example of the success of a “capitalist heaven”, of “clean capitalism” (James Heartfield, 2015; Nathan Lewis, 2011), a capitalism that bears no resemblance to Max Weber’s concept. This is the third paradox.

Lee Kuan Yew was a firm believer in the market economy. He once warned “never think that you can fight the power of the market” (Michel Schuman, 2009: 57) yet the Singapore he built is the typical of the state intervention in the market economy, both at the macro and micro level. It is mostly likely that the relationship between the state and the market in Singapore in the past decades has gone beyond Friedrich Hayek or Keynes’ theories on the free market. This is the fourth paradox.

Lee Kuan Yew was very fond of democracy. In his early years, democracy was the driving force behind his ideologies. He understood very well the value of democracy. Singapore, nevertheless, has taken the shape of a rather “authoritarian capitalist” model. Meanwhile, in spite of

the undeniable admiration shown by the people, Lee Kuan Yew is still considered as a leader with an “iron fist” who ran the country in a totalitarian, authoritarian manner, even though that was only a form of “soft autocracy” (Carlton Tan, 2015). His most prominent argument was that democracy itself had been flawed since the very first assumption that all human beings are equal and can contribute equally to the common good (Han Fook Kwang, Warren Fernandez and Sumiko Tan, 1998: 383). This is the fifth paradox.

Lee Kuan Yew was also a firm believer in the value of social responsibility, a core value of Confucius. He built the modern Singapore based on the model of Asian values. According to him, Western values differed significantly and hence, were unlikely to fit. Nevertheless, the Singapore of today resembles the West more than any other country in Asia, even Japan. This is the sixth paradox.

As a person, Lee Kuan Yew is known to be simple to the point of easy-going, realistic to the point of pragmatic, open to the point of liberal, intelligent to the point of wise, determined to the point of uncompromisable. But he is also a person who cannot “do anything sloppily, from wearing an overly shiny pair of shoes to making an important decision”; a person who does not limit himself to any theory or advice, even Macchiavelli or Confucius, the two theories that he was very much fond of. He avoided debates on doctrines and only pursued actual

solutions to development issues (Michel Schuman, 2009: 58). The renowned magazine *Life* commented on Lee Kuan Yew in 1965 – a comment that has been quoted by many so far – that he was “the most brilliant man around, albeit just a bit of a thug”⁽¹⁾. This is the seventh paradox.

During the 31 years under Lee Kuan Yew’s premiership, Singapore developed remarkably under the seven inexplicable paradoxes listed above. The personal character of Lee Kuan Yew was no doubt an important factor, if not a decisive one. Although the country followed the same development model as South Korea and Taiwan, the biggest paradox of Singapore was how the country grew and “took off” under relatively authoritarian circumstances. A few generations were sacrificed for development. South Korea “took off” with harsh labor, with tears and even blood. Taiwan “took off” when its leaders were startled by their credits as well as sins. Singapore, on the other hand, is said to have paid the most “tolerable” price in return for its “take-off”. Real prosperity has concealed historical “dark marks”, nevertheless, the authoritarian, totalitarian and hostile acts as evidenced in the following sections, can hardly be forgotten, especially for those who were involved.

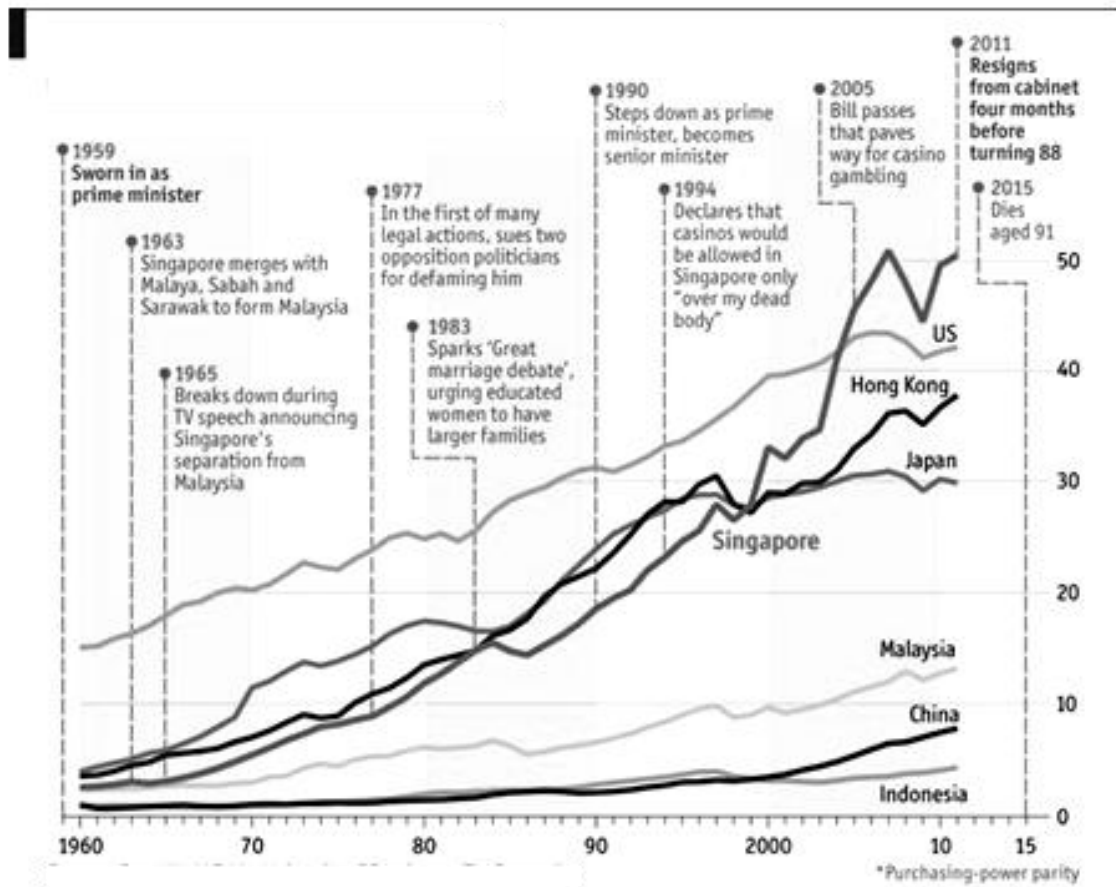
In the 1960s, the real gross domestic product (GDP) of Singapore was USD 500 per capita. Singapore at that time was extremely poor, struggling to find a development pathway in the aftermath of independence and the shocking split from

Malaysia. Two decades later, in 1985, Singapore’s GDP per capita stood at USD 10,811, surpassing the poor country threshold (USD 960/capita according to United Nations’ standards, or USD 875/capita according to the World Bank’s standards). By being able to avoid the middle income trap, Singapore continued to develop and become a newly industrialized country (NIC), one of the four Asian tigers, and a miracle of the 20th century. By 2003, Singapore’s GDP per capita in purchasing power parity (PPP) was recorded at USD 29,663 while the country’s human development index (HDI) of 2005 was 0.925, ranking 25th out of 177 countries. In 2007, the country’s per capita GDP (in PPP) reached USD35,163, the HDI of 2009 was 0.944, ranked 23/182. In 2011, the per capita gross national product (GNP) in purchasing power parity of was USD52,569; HDI 0.866, rank 26/183. In 2013, the per capita GNP (in PPP) reached USD52,613; HDI reached 0.895, rank 18/186. In 2014, the respective figures were USD 72,371/capita/year, 0.901, and 9/186⁽²⁾ (UNDP, 2003, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2013, 2014).

⁽¹⁾ *Lee Kuan Yew, Prime Minister of Singapore: brilliant, but a Bit of a Thug.* “Life” No 16, July, 1965, p. 43. <http://www.oldlifemagazines.com/july-16-1965-life-magazine.html>.

⁽²⁾ Annual GDP figures in Human Development Reports might be inconsistent as UNDP changed its computation methodology in 2010. Compared with data from WB, CIA or IMF, statistics on GDP and GNP also vary due to conversion into USD PPP (Purchasing Power Parity).

Figure 1: Singapore in the Lee Kuan Yew Years



Source: The Economist, March 22, 2015⁽³⁾

Singapore's governance system is considered as the most politically transparent and least corrupt in the world. In the annual rankings of Transparency International, Singapore has remained constantly in the top of least corrupt countries. In 2005, Singapore's corruption perception index (CPI) of 9.4 put it in the top 5 most transparent countries, only after Iceland, Finland, New Zealand and Denmark. In 2012, with a CPI of 87, Singapore was among the top 5 most transparent country in the world. In 2014, the brightest spot of East Asia continued to belong to Singapore, with a CPI of 84

(despite this being lower than the country's own records in 2011 and 2012), only after six countries, namely Switzerland, Norway, Sweden, Finland, New Zealand and Denmark. Singapore remained the world's leading transparent country⁽⁴⁾.

In order to achieve this, Singapore had to go through a tireless battle ever since Lee Kuan Yew took office. Lee understood

⁽³⁾ *Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore: An Astonishing Record*, <http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2015/03/lee-kuan-yews-singapore>

⁽⁴⁾ *Corruption Perceptions Index 2014*, http://www.transparency.org/cpi2014/in_detail.

better than anyone the perils of corruption, that failure in combating corruption would mean never achieving any development goals. His iron fist was aided by an effective mechanism. When Lee passed away, the webpage *corruption.net* assessed that, of the successful and unsuccessful leaders in history, no one had a better antidote to corruption than Lee Kuan Yew⁽⁵⁾.

Among the three elements constituting corruption, in the 1960s, Singapore was unable to do anything with the wage levels as the country was still poor. Therefore, the government chose to tackle the remaining two factors: minimizing the chances of corruption and raising sanctions and penalties. The new anti-corruption law had 32 sections, replacing the old act of 1937 which had only 12 sections. There were significant amendments including longer imprisonment or the obligation that the bribee has to return all the bribes received. The Corrupt Practices Investigation Bureau (CPIB) was empowered with more rights and had the ability to investigate “all bank accounts” of those suspected of illicit acts. A person can be charged with corruption even if he has yet received any bribery, if the intention of violation is sufficient for the charge. Singaporean citizens accused of receiving bribery abroad are also subject to the same penalties as with violations taking place within Singapore. Even if the defendant has passed away, the court still has the right to confiscate corrupted assets.

Only until the 1980s when the economy was sufficiently developed, Singapore was

able to tackle the remaining puzzle in its strategy for preventing corruption, that is, raising the salary of civil servants. In March 1985, Prime Minister Lee Kuan Yew stated that political leaders need to be well paid in order to maintain a clean and honest government. He said that the best way to prevent corruption was to “move with the market”, in replacement of human hypocrisy which has paved the way for corruption (Jon S. T. Quah, 2012; Joshua Berlinger, 2012).

According to Prof. Jon S.T. Quah of the School of Political Science of the National University of Singapore, the Singapore experience can hardly be replicated in other countries due to the specific features of the former and the political and economic costs of high salaries. However, there are six lessons that could be used for reference, namely:

- The leadership apparatus has to genuinely fight corruption and punish anyone with disreputable behavior.
- Anti-corruption measures need to be complete with no gaps, and should be regularly revised and amended, if needed.
- The anti-corruption authority need to be clean and honest. There need not be too many employees, and any corrupted inspector should be sanctioned and sacked.
- The anti-corruption authority need to be separate from the police authority.
- In order to reduce the chances of corruption at vulnerable sectors such as

⁽⁵⁾ *Lee Kuan Yew's Fight Against Corruption*. <http://www.corruption.net/section/politics/singapore-lee-kuan-yew's-fight-against-corruption/154>.

customs, taxes, traffic police, these agencies need to undergo regular inspection and changes in working regulations.

– The motive for corruption in civil servants and government officials can be reduced if their salaries and allowances are as competitive as in the private sector.

The People's Action Party (PAP) in power is not the only party in Singapore, but it is the only one assuming leadership and regarded as irreplaceable for the development of the island-state, at least to date. The People's Action Party has enforced many measures to liberalize the economy and attract foreign investment, promptly restructuring the economy, society and improving the living standards of the people. However, it is also regarded as totalitarian and equally authoritarian.

The government's role in macro-economic regulation is seen in all aspects of the economic life, making Singapore a typical example of the potentially positive relationship between the state and the market, between the tough hand of the law and the free lifestyle of the public, between personal responsibility and social discipline, between transparency and economic development: the government plans the budget for all activities from international finance to litter collection; the government owns, controls, regulates or allocates land, labour, and capital; the government sets or influences various prices to lay out the basis on which private investors decide on investment and business opportunities.

The intervention of the state in the

economy has generated positive impact not only for the interests of private enterprises but also for the welfare of the citizens. Beside generating jobs in the private and public sector, the government also allocates social houses, provide education, healthcare and entertainment services as well as public transport. The government decides on the annual salary raise and plans allowances above the minimum wage in the public and private sector. It also administers the pension savings fund via Central Provident Fund and Post Office Bank, and helps individuals own corporate shares.

As mentioned before, the changes experienced by Singapore are associated with Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's Prime Minister during 1959 – 1990, the person who used his power to influence all aspects, all activities, even all corners in the lives of the country's population. For some citizens of Singapore, this might be a normal thing, for others, it was as if their freedom was severely violated. When Singapore "turned into dragon", all the harsh and unreasonable interference of Lee Kuan Yew and the Singaporean political regime turned into credits.

In an effort to control population growth, in the 1960s and 1970s Singapore, women giving birth to the third child were entitled to a shorter maternity leave and at the same time, subjected to higher hospital fees and different tax deductible rights. Particularly, the government of Singapore awarded SGD 5,000 to any couple undergoing sterilization after the second child. They would also be given priority when buying low-cost housing

while their children would enjoy other preferences at school. Christians could hardly accept such policies. Their protests, however, were all in vain. In 1983, Lee Kuan Yew had a change of mind: he said that educated women should have from 3 to 4 children and encouraged Singaporean men to marry educated female counterparts. This sparked huge debates in the Singapore society. Even educated women felt insulted and strongly opposed the call.

With respect to social order management, acts such as littering, smoking and spitting in public areas were subject to pecuniary penalties, even caning, and applicable to foreign residents as well. In 1994, the corporal punishment sentenced on Michael Fay, an American citizen, forced President Bill Clinton and many US senators to speak up.

A legal act enforced by Lee Kuan Yew forced laborers to save a forth of their monthly salary. This amount can only be withdrawn when the laborer reaches 55 years old. The government will administer this money in the interest of the public.

In Singapore, there are many acts, regulations and rules that other countries would consider as violations to human rights and citizen rights. People have joked that, in other countries, what is not forbidden can be done, but in Singapore, what is not forbidden has to be done, and what is forbidden should be abstained until travelling abroad⁽⁶⁾.

Commenting on Lee Kuan Yew, Tom Plate, the widely renowned journalist of the *Los Angeles Times* wrote:

“The 20th century witnessed countless lives and souls ruined by leaders who blindly worshipped a single truth. Lee Kuan Yew did not want to be such a leader. Rather, it is the dance of brilliant ideas that mesmerizes him, not some goofball, goose-step dance of the devil. Not remotely is he some crackpot Pol Pot, nor some hair-brained Little Hitler”etc. Lee Kuan Yew is “like the great Muhammad Ali, floats like a butterfly and stings like a bee (don’t get on his Serious Bad list or he’ll maneuver you into a corner, sue your brains out and you’re done for)”... “Singapore is certainly no utopia for drug dealers or drug users; it’s anything but heaven on earth for opponents of the governing party and government. Among other privileged acolytes you find preening in the West, criminal trial lawyers are given much less rope in Lee’s Singapore. First Amendment absolutists will find no utopian joy in the generally subtle but clearly limiting red lines placed around the news media” (Tom Plate, 2011: 254, 260).

These lines had been read and edited by Lee Kuan Yew before publishing. This means that he acknowledges them and by this, readers can understand, deduce, and verify many things. We highly appreciate Tom Plate. Through these lines, Tom proved that he is an outstanding writer, he was smart enough to stop his pen from losing its objectiveness but nevertheless did

⁽⁶⁾ *A Guide to Singapore’s Wackiest Laws.* <http://www.hotelclub.com/blog/singapore-weird-laws> <http://www.economist.com/blogs/graphicdetail/2015/03/lee-kuan-yews-singapore>

not ruin the fundamental – a chat with Lee Kuan Yew, interrogating him about everything that has helped create a miraculous Singapore. It can hardly be denied that, for Lee Kuan Yew and the People's Action Party, Singapore is no home to their opponents. If one is put into the blacklist, he will be maneuvered into a corner and be done for. This political regime exerts no leniency over criminal sentences and openly limits lawyers' defending rights. There is a subtle but clear red line placed around the press... Perhaps, any country in the world today that would adopt such policies would be considered as violating human rights. But Singapore is a small island-state, a city-state to be precise, even a small city if compared to Bangkok, Hanoi or Ho Chi Minh City, and thus, anything that bulges could be easily concealed by a wealthy, clean and developed Singapore.

In practice, Lee Kuan Yew has been subject to constant criticism for imposing harsh measures to suppress opponent parties, freedom of speech, for banning meetings, public demonstrations (authorized by the police itself), restricting publications that displease the authorities and abusing defamation acts to deliberately force political oppositions into bankruptcy by all means. Speaking on these acts, Devan Nair, former President of Singapore (1981 – 1985, resigned due to differences of points of view with Lee Kuan Yew, took residence in Canada since 1995), shared that Lee Kuan Yew's dirty trick was to sue his opposition, put pressure on the courts and

lawyers' offices, tie the opposition to the countless litigation procedures and costs until they go bankrupt or have nothing left. By doing so, Lee managed to nullify the political rights of his opponents. According to Devan Nair, as time went by, Lee Kuan Yew became "an increasingly self-righteous know-all". Similar to other dictators, Lee was also surrounded by "department store dummies". Devan Nair made these remarks in 1999. He also shared that "Singapore today is a soulless place whose only ideology is materialism". Irritated by these remarks, Lee Kuan Yew filed a suit against Devan Nair⁽⁷⁾.

There were instances when, after the appeal court dismissed the verdict in favor of Lee Kuan Yew, the government annulled any appeal rights. During his premiership from 1965 to 1990, Lee Kuan Yew imprisoned Chia Thye Poh, a former Member of the Parliament pertaining to the opposition party Barisan Socialis, for 22 years without hearing under the Internal Security Act. Chia Thye Poh was only released in 1989. To grant absolute power to the judges, Lee Kuan Yew abolished "trial by jury" (Uri Gordon, 1977).

According to George T. (Thayil Jacob Sony George), Editorial Advisor of *The*

⁽⁷⁾ *Former president criticises suppression of dissent.* <http://www.singapore-window.org/sw99/90329gm.htm>. // Uri Gordon (1977). *Machiavelli's Tiger: Lee Kuan Yew and Singapore's Authoritarian Regime.* <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/apcity/unpan002548.pdf>. // Sim, Soek-Fang (2001). *Asian value, Authoritarianism and Capitalism in Singapore.* The Public Vol.8, 2, c.45 - 66. <http://javnost-thepublic.org/article/pdf/2001/2/3>

New Indian Express, a dedicated writer on politics and politicians' biographies, in his book "Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore", he remarked that, in order to regulate Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew did not hesitate to use tricks on his opposition and even on the public. When eliminating the enemies, his tactics were compared to the use of a nuclear bomb on a mosquito. In an election in early 1963, he used the Internal Security Act to imprison 100 key members of left-wing socialist-friendly Barisan Socialis group, originally separated from PAP. The ones remaining after the election were only given administrative positions with no actual political power (George T, (1973).

After the 1997 general election, the candidate of the Workers' Party Tang Liang Hong was faced with a lawsuit from 11 PAP members, including Prime Minister Gong and Senior Minister Lee Kuan Yew. Tang was charged with libeling Christianity and Islam during his election campaign⁽⁸⁾. J.B. Jeyaretnam, leader of the Workers' Party from 1971 to 2001, was also faced with a series of libeling charges. In 1981, he became the first opponent politician in Singapore's Parliament when he defeated PAP's candidate. He got re-elected in 1984 but lost his parliamentary seat in 1986 when he was convicted for falsely accounting the party's funds (a conviction that was subsequently overturned by the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council). He returned to Parliament after the 1997 general election. However he was stripped of his Member of Parliament

seat in 2001 when he was declared bankrupt after failing to keep up with payments for damages owed to PAP leaders as a result of a libel suit⁽⁹⁾. Chee Soon Juan, leader of the Singapore Democratic Party (SDP), recipient of the "Defender of Democracy" award in 2003 and of the "Prize for Freedom" award in 2011, was arrested and jailed several times for his political activities, mainly for making open political speeches and staging public demonstrations. He was also sued for defaming PAP and consequently, was declared bankrupt in 2006 after failing to pay for damages from a lawsuit owed to Lee Kuan Yew and Goh Chok Tong, although he and his wife had to sell their house to pay for the lawsuit. As Chee said, in Singapore, the government controls everything and this is what terrifies the public (Nadel A., 1997; Bell, Daniel A., 2000).

In March 2000, Uri Gordon, lecturer of the Loughborough University, United Kingdom, and also a researcher of the Institute of Political Science of Tel Aviv University, Israel, released a research comparing the methodologies, measures and tricks used in dictatorial political regimes which were illustrated in the works of Niccolo Machiavelli and in the pragmatic authoritarian regime of Lee Kuan Yew in Singapore.

Despite the timelag between the 15th

⁽⁸⁾ Singapore. *How to Earn a Living, Singapore Style*. <http://singaporeddissident.blogspot.com/2010/01/singapore-how-to-earn-living-singapore.html>.

⁽⁹⁾ J. B. Jeyaretnam - *Lawyers' Rights Watch Canada*. www.lrwc.org/j-b-jeyaretnam

century Italy and 20th century Singapore, analyses of Niccolo Machiavelli's works and Lee Kuan Yew's leadership style uncovered staggering similarities. As Lee Kuan Yew was very fond of Machiavelli, this was what urged Uri Gordon to compare Lee Kuan Yew with "Machiavelli's principles".

Before discussing the comparison of Uri Gordon, a few things should be noted about Machiavelli. Niccolò di Bernardo dei Machiavelli (1469 – 1527), the founder of modern political science, a diplomat, philosopher, "a giant of the Renaissance" (F. Engels). He is known for his remarkable theories which uncovered the real sides of political realism (in *The Prince*) and the nature of republicanism (in *Discourses on Livy*). The two works together with *History of Florence* have become a classic model followed by many authorities and political analysts from the 16th century to date. According to Machiavelli, "A prince, therefore, being compelled knowingly to adopt the beast, ought to choose the fox and the lion; because the lion cannot defend himself against snares and the fox cannot defend himself against wolves. Therefore, it is necessary to be a fox to discover the snares and a lion to terrify the wolves" (Niccolò Machiavelli, 2005: 85, 94, 95, 134, 175, 179, 180). Lee Kuan Yew was very fond of this ideology, he commented on Machiavelli that: "Between being loved and being feared, I have always believed Machiavelli was right. If nobody is afraid of me, I'm meaningless" (Uri Gordon, 2000).

Machiavelli's principles are principles of a capitalist dictatorship. Everything is determined by man's willpower, spirit and actions. The exemplary politician should be fearlessly critical, a non-religious rationalist, one who resents the parasitic aristocrats and who wishes to build the country (at that time, Machiavelli was referring to Italy) into a united, free and equal nation with a powerful government that uses violence to establish the new order. According to Machiavelli, a man is only worthy of a man when he steadily approaches his goals. The goals will prove the soundness of the means. Machiavelli also gave many suggestions on the tricks that the princes should employ. Those who want to succeed should learn to set aside their kindness, whether or not to use it depends on the context. A prince should know the right time to be kind or evil, but should make believe that he has all the virtues. The most important thing for a prince is to avoid being despised and loathed. Machiavelli also saw the importance of gaining "popularity". "In politics there are no perfectly safe courses; prudence consists in choosing the least dangerous ones" – this is also seen as one of Machiavelli's principles (Niccolò Machiavelli, 2005: 85, 94, 95, 134, 175, 179, 180). As Uri Gordon put it, the principles and political actions of Lee Kuan Yew are convincing explanations of the effectiveness of "Machiavelli's principles". Lee was always proactive in applying Machiavelli's principles, even in introducing the "Asian values" doctrine.

In practice, PAP has always pursued political actions that would help maintain an authoritarian regime, diffusing discontent and crushing opposition. Singapore is a country where human rights have come to be seen as nonessential in the race towards national economic excellence. Riding on the wave of Singapore's modern capitalism, the government provides its citizens with welfare at the cost of chaining their lives and minds. "The opposition has been reduced to dust by political imprisonment, structural control of the election process, and governmental defamation lawsuits that turn any utterance against the authorities into an act of political suicide. Subduing the population to a comfortable life of self-censorship, Lee and his aides can be seen as devout disciples of the Florentine" (Uri Gordon, 2000).

When Singapore is admired by the world as a wealthy, safe and clean island-state, a place that houses the world's most powerful multinational corporations, one would conclude that without a leader such as Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore would have needed much more time to realize the achievements now witnessed and wished for by the world. In our opinion, if Uri Gordon was not biased, it is indeed that Lee Kuan Yew was proof of capitalist dictatorship ideologies – The goal can justify the means, even though the means might be by all means legitimate.

Ever since the Athens democracy, the humankind has embarked on the road to freedom and democracy for over 2,500

years, a history filled with blood and tears. More and more nations have become aware that "human rights, freedom, democracy are irreversible trends which requires for subjectivity from the human society". Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung of Vietnam has firmly confirmed this fact⁽¹⁰⁾. Democracy itself can generate resources for development. Democracy in development is the most effective means to avoid losses. Democracy has the power to generate reasonable happiness for societies, for each human being, from leaders to citizens. Nowadays, no argument can justify for a development that needs to sacrifice the people, being it an individual, a community or an entire generation. South Korea and Taiwan are nowadays societies with high levels of democracy in Asia. The Singapore paradox may be inexplicable, but it is neither solid proof that one should go against democracy and freedom.

References

1. John Burton, Peter Montagnon, Kevin Brown and Jeremy Grant (2015), *Lee Kuan Yew, Singapore's Founding Father, 1923 - 2015* <http://www.ft.com/intl/cms/s/0/24145cfe-b89d-11e2-869f-00144feabdc0.html#slide0>
2. Carlton Tan (2015), *Lee Kuan Yew Leaves a Legacy of Authoritarian Pragmatism*.

⁽¹⁰⁾ Democracy is irreversible. Prime Minister Nguyen Tan Dung stated in an interview at Koerber Institute, Berlin on October 15, 2014. <http://vietnamnet.vn/vn/chinh-tri/202481/thu-tuong--dan-chu-la-xu-the-khong-the-dao-nguoc.html>

<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/mar/23/lee-kuan-yews-legacy-of-authoritarian-pragmatism-will-serve-singapore-well>

3. David Reed (1979), *Singapore: Jewel of Prosperity*, "Reader's Digest", November 1979.

4. Tom Plate (2011), *A Dialogue with Lee Kuan Yew*, Youth Publishing House.

5. Michel Schuman (2009), *The Miracle: The Epic Story of Asia's Quest for Wealth*. Harper Collins Publishers. p.57.

6. James Heartfield (2015), *The Communist who made Singapore a Capitalist Success. Lee Kuan Yew Transformed a Small Trading Post - but at a Cost*. <http://www.spiked-online.com/newsite/article/the-communist-who-made-singapore-a-capitalist-success/16806#.VSLFZ5SsUrM> // Nathan Lewis (2011). *Moving Toward 21st Century Capitalism*. <http://www.forbes.com/2011/01/12/capitalism-hong-kong-gdp-opinions-contributors-nathan-lewis.html>

7. Michel Schuman (2009), *The Miracle: The Epic Story of Asia's Quest for Wealth*. Harper Collins Publishers. // *Can authoritarian capitalism outlive Lee Kuan Yew?* <http://demdigest.net/blog/can-authoritarian-capitalism-outlive-lee-kuan-yew>.

8. Han Fook Kwang, Warren Fernandez, and Sumiko Tan (1998), *Lee Kuan Yew: The Man and His Ideas*. Singapore: "Time Editions", p.383.

9. UNDP, *Human Development Report 2003, 2005, 2007, 2011, 2013, 2014*.

10. Jon S.T. Quah. *Corruption in Asia with special Reference to Singapore: Patterns and Consequences*.

<http://www.jonstquah.com/images/Corruption%20in%20Singapore%20AJPA.pdf>

11. Joshua Berlinger (2012), *Why China Should Study Singapore's Anti-Corruption Strategy*. <http://www.businessinsider.com/why-china-should-study-singapores-anti-corruption-strategy-2012-12>.

12. Tom Plate (2011), *Conversations with Lee Kuan Yew*, Youth Publishing House, Ho Chi Minh City, pp. 254, 260.

13. Uri Gordon (1977), *Machiavelli's Tiger: Lee Kuan Yew and Singapore's Authoritarian Regime*. <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/apcity/unpan002548.pdf>. // Devan Nair acted strangely Lee Kuan Yew. <http://news.google.com/newspapers?nid=1309&dat=19880630&id=ElpPAAAAIIBAJ&sjid=JpADAAAAIIBAJ&pg=5119,3332621>.

14. George, T. (1973), *Lee Kuan Yew's Singapore*. London: Andre Deutsch. C. 68-9.

15. Nadel, A. (1997), 'Singapore's Voice of Reason'. *South China Morning Post* (March, 1.). <http://www.singapore-window.org/chee.htm>

16. Bell, Daniel A. (2000) *East meets West: Human Rights and Democracy in East Asia*. http://cs5538.userapi.com/u11728334/docs/30c79ab07cf7/Daniel_A_Bell_East_Meets_West_508055.pdf // Asia Profile: *Singapore democracy activist Chee Soon Juan*. <http://www.radioaustralia.net.au/international/radio/onairhighlights/asia-profile-singapore-democracy-activist-chee-soon-juan>.

17. Niccolò Machiavelli (2005), Labour Publishing House.

18. Uri Gordon (2000), *Machiavelli's Tiger: Lee Kuan Yew and Singapore's Authoritarian Regime*. <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/apcity/unpan002548.pdf>.

