

## Remarks on Associate Professor Simon Tay's book, "*Asia Alone: the Dangerous Post crisis Divide from America*"

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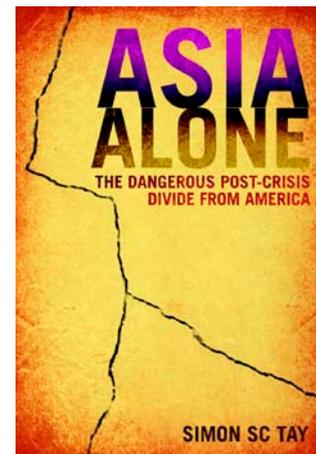
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1. I enjoy reading Simon Tay's latest book, *Asia Alone: the Dangerous Post crisis Divide from America*.
2. It is not too academic and it is sprinkled with interesting anecdotes and interviews with important opinion makers. I like his references to what he saw in Beijing, Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur, New York, and other parts of the United States of America (USA). His references to various well known names of individuals, landmarks and products which we are all familiar with, give me the familiar feel which is not usually present in reading a serious book on politics and international relations.
3. What I like most is his 14 most important pages in which he asks the following questions:
  - i. How do we see the crisis?
  - ii. What will come in the post-crisis period?
  - iii. How should the United States (US) respond?
  - iv. How should we think of US-China relations in the future?
  - v. In what ways should China and other Asians interact?
  - vi. Can Asians make their presence felt on the global stage?
  - vii. Why should Americans engage Asia, and vice versa?
  - viii. How and in what forum should Asia and the US best engage?



I urge all of you to read the book for Simon's answers to these questions.

4. Simon has emphasised the importance to one word – “and”. It is not whether the US or China should be on top, or if either one of them should be number one. Rather, he believes that both China and the US should find a way to work together and make the best out of the many opportunities arising from the changes taking place, including the financial crisis of 2008-2009.

5. As a former Secretary General of ASEAN, I appreciate the discussion on the role of ASEAN and its future. Indeed, going through the book, I thought that almost all the things Simon had presented, many of the highlights of ASEAN and the key happenings which affected ASEAN during the five years I was Secretary General of ASEAN, from 2003-2007. Therefore, I want to thank Simon for the promotion of ASEAN and bringing out what ASEAN is doing and what all these mean. This is also one of the reasons why I get a familiar feel in reading such a profound book.

6. Simon has brought out the challenges facing the US President in finding a balance of US foreign policy and US domestic concerns. It is very difficult to get the multiple centres of opinions in America to agree on how to manage the problem of unemployment and economic obsolescence, and foreign relations.

7. So what is the bottom line?

I agree that Asia is not China alone.

I agree that Asia and America must work together.

I agree that China's rise in economic terms has changed our lives and more transformation will occur as Chinese economic power is translated into a more political and strategic influence.

I agree that ASEAN's potential has not been fully realised and more can be offered by ASEAN to the peace and prosperity of the region.

Last but not least, I fully support Simon's assertion that there is an important part for India, Japan and ASEAN to play in ensuring peace and stability for all of us.

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