

Maryland in Europe -- Maryland in Asia: So Much the Same -- Yet, So Different

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September 2020

A question often asked of folks lucky enough to have lived several years in Asia and several in Europe is: Which do you prefer, Asia or Europe?

With UMUC, I lived/worked for 20 years in Asia (1967-1970, 1975-1981, 1996-2007) and another 20 in Europe (1970-1975, 1981-1996). Before joining Maryland, I had lived two years in Asia, and since departing Maryland in 2007 I have lived another 12 years in Asia, while also spending considerable travel time in Europe.

Regarding the question, "Which do you prefer, Asia or Europe?" my anecdotal sense is, assuming the person enjoys both, he/she almost always prefers the geographic area they knew first---when one's eyes are wider. However, I have no empirical evidence to support this impression.

In this memoir, I will offer some information and thoughts about "Maryland in Europe" and "Maryland in Asia." I taught with Maryland in both Asia and Europe and also served as an administrator in both geographic areas---including about 16 years as Director in Asia and about 16 years as Director in Europe. My comments apply primarily to the 1967-2007 period, the 40 years that I worked overseas with Maryland. Since 2007, I have not been involved in any way with the program and will offer no comments about this later period.

GENERAL INFORMATION

The University of Maryland Overseas Program began in October 1949 when classes were first offered at several locations in Germany. In the next few years, the program expanded to several other European countries. In 1956, Maryland's then Far East Division began offering classes, replacing the University of California, Berkeley, which had been offering a quite limited program in Asia since 1950. Thus, since 1956, the University of Maryland has been, "The University Upon Which the Sun Never Sets."

In Europe, the administrative headquarters were located in Heidelberg from 1949 until 2014 by which time the American military presence in Heidelberg had ended. UMUC then moved its headquarters to the Kaiserslautern area, where it remains. In Asia, Maryland's headquarters have always been on a military facility in the immediate Tokyo area and since 1975 at Yokota Air Base.

Both geographic units operate under the auspices of separate contracts with the United States military. Geographically, Maryland divides its overseas world as does the U.S. military. Namely, if the installation/country is in an area that the U.S. military designates as being part of "PACOM" (Pacific Command), then the Maryland program is administered through UMUC-Asia. If the installation/country is in an area the U.S. military has designated as part of "EUCOM" (European Command), UMUC-Europe has responsibility.

To illustrate, when in 1982, Maryland began offering classes on Diego Garcia in the Indian Ocean, UMUC-Asia delivered the program because Diego Garcia was part of PACOM. Earlier, in the 1960s, when Maryland was in Pakistan, the European Division administered the program because, yes, Pakistan had been placed within EUCOM. In the Middle East and Africa, UMUC-Europe has delivered the Maryland program.

Over these decades, student enrollments have generally been larger in Europe than in Asia.

COMPARISONS: MARYLAND IN ASIA/MARYLAND IN EUROPE.

FACULTY

The single greatest strength of the Maryland Overseas Program has always been its faculty. Of this, there is no doubt. And, the UMUC faculty in Asia and in Europe has been basically identical with regard to academic background, commitment to the program, etc. Indeed, during my 40 years overseas with UMUC, around 200 or so full-time faculty, taught in both Asia and Europe, transferring between the Divisions.

Both geographic areas also utilized the services of adjunct faculty. Both foreign language programs, for example, used almost exclusively local, native-speakers as classroom teachers, Italians in Italy, Koreans in Korea, etc. In addition, many active-duty military and DOD civilians, as well as their spouses, taught as adjuncts. Faculty at local universities also taught as adjuncts in both divisions. In Europe, because of the greater fluency in English, more local nationals taught as adjuncts than in Asia.

In terms of logistics and life style, there were differences for faculty between the two geographic units. In Asia, courses were offered in widely separated locations, such as Japan, including Okinawa, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, Thailand, Australia, Guam and other smaller islands. This 'geographic separation' contrasted sharply with the relative geographic unity and proximity of the European Division, particularly before the coming in the 1990s of the 'down-range' locations in the Balkans and the Middle East. Indeed, for many years, enrollments in Maryland's European program were concentrated in Germany---with Belgium, the Netherlands, as well as much of Italy and the U.K., being within driving range of the headquarters in Heidelberg.

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Hence, it was generally easier for faculty in Europe to meet one another and to develop a closer sense of collegiality than was the case in Asia. Okinawa was, however, the definite exception. A combination of large student enrollments and being sequestered on an island meant faculty in Okinawa had ample opportunity to know one another in an environment somewhat similar to a small traditional campus in the States.

To illustrate the above, when with Maryland in Asia in the late 1960s, I taught in Korea, Vietnam, Thailand, Taiwan, and Japan. I flew from one assignment to the other, and used local transportation to handle my teaching schedule. But in Europe during AY 1970/71, I had to buy a car during the first few days of New Faculty Orientation and pass the required driving exam. I then drove from Heidelberg to Turkey for my Term I assignment in Karamursel, then drove to Naples for Terms II and III, on to Ramstein for Term IV, and another car journey to Bitburg for Term V. So, for me and all Maryland faculty: Very different logistical/life-style experiences.

Another life style difference was that from the 1950s well into the early 2000s, faculty in Asia were generally, although not always, able, if they wished, to live on base in military housing, usually BOQs. This was the case at most military installations in mainland Japan, Okinawa, and Korea. Indeed in the 1960s, up until about 1970, Maryland faculty in Asia were able to maintain a permanent BOQ room at Fuchu Air Station, the then Far East Division headquarters, even when not teaching in the Tokyo area. In Europe, on-base housing had often been available at military installations in the 1950s, 1960s and in some locations into the 1970s. But, by the 1980s in Europe, on-base housing was rarely available for faculty. Rather, they needed to shift for themselves on the local economy.

ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF

The administrative staffs at the two headquarters -- Heidelberg and Tokyo -- were also very similar and yet very different.

In each geographic area the term, "senior staff" was used to encompass the Director, Area Directors, Academic Discipline Chairs, and the heads of major internal departments such as Business Office, Human Resources, I.T., etc. Thus, in Europe

and Asia the academic/professional backgrounds of the persons in these roles were the same and they worked in the same manner. No difference at all.

In fact, the same individuals often held the same position, or other senior administrative positions, in both Divisions. To illustrate, Augustus Prahl, Mason ("Bob") Daly, Ben Massey, Paula Harbecke and I served as Director of each Division. Joe Dellen and Julian Jones both served as Director in Asia after earlier working with Maryland in Europe.

In addition, during the 1960s, 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and early 2000s many senior staff served in both geographic areas, among others: Paul Brewer, LeAnn Cragun, Steve Crouch, David Glaser, Larry Hepinstall, Rick Hess, Jim Humphreys, Ruby Kelly-King, Christie King, Anand Krishna, Doug Lemmon, John Mack, Paul Phillips, Margaret Sanders, Martie Schull, George Sidney, Sam Thompson, Beverly Wehr, and Monika Zwink. Thus, obviously, the values, style and commitment of such administrators were very much the same in Asia and Europe. This was reflected positively in the nature and stability of the two programs in the field.

There was, however, a considerable difference in the makeup of the employees who reported to the members of the two senior staffs. In Asia, in the early years of the program, Japanese Nationals filled many of the less senior, but vitally important, staff positions. But by the mid-1970s, with Japan's increasing economic prosperity, few younger Japanese were attracted to working with Maryland. Higher paying jobs were readily available on the Japanese economy. In Europe in the 1950s about 1/3rd of the non-senior staff were German nationals. But, by 1970 only a few German nationals continued to work in the Maryland administration in Heidelberg.

The greatest difference between the two support staffs, however, was that in Asia, the great majority of the non-senior staff employees were family members of active-duty military. In Heidelberg, while some family members of active-duty military worked with the European Division, the significant majority of non-senior staff positions were filled by Americans and other non-German NATO nationals, who for personal reasons wanted to live in Germany. Specifically, they loved Germany/Europe and/or loved a German or a European. Furthermore, working with Maryland, an organization covered by the Status of Forces Agreement (SOFA) between the U.S. and Germany, meant that employees could live and work in Germany without a visa and, in addition, could have access to U.S. Army and Air Force Exchanges (AAFES), the APO system, military hospitals, and most other facilities on American Military installations. Thus, Maryland enabled employees to live and work in Germany/Europe while having "...the best of both worlds."

Why was the above not nearly as often the case in Japan? First, in earlier decades, far fewer young Americans backpacked around Asia compared to the many who did so in Europe. When in Europe, they would somehow hear about Maryland and find their way to the Heidelberg office to apply to work. Also, in Asia, the Maryland offices were always located on a U.S. military installation and even if world

travellers heard about Maryland, it was quite difficult to gain access to the base to apply. Whereas in Europe, Maryland's headquarters were in the city of Heidelberg itself rather than on a military base. During my years in Heidelberg, it would have been an unusual week, particularly during the summer, when two/three persons did not come to the headquarters to ask about a job with Maryland.

In Asia, family members typically worked with UMUC-Asia for two/three years and then, when their military spouses were reassigned elsewhere, they resigned. In Europe, in contrast, many non-senior staff members worked with Maryland for extended periods. For many senior staff members, Maryland was a professional, life-long calling. In Europe, this was also the case with dozens/scores of key non-senior staff. Several such employees worked 20-30 even 40 years in Heidelberg. Their competence, commitment and loyalty were extremely important to the success of the European Division. In Tokyo, by contrast, such longevity at the non-senior staff level was much less common, although for those who did work many years with Maryland, their contributions were no less valuable.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANIZATION

Whereas initially, the internal organization of the two divisions was quite similar in that all administrative offices and responsibilities were located in Heidelberg and Tokyo respectively, over time the structures varied. By the late 1950s, the program in the U.K. was large enough to encourage Maryland to set up a "U.K. Area Director's Office" in London. All other administrative offices continued, however, to be located in Heidelberg---to include the offices of the respective Area Directors for different geographic regions of the European program.

In Asia, initially all admin responsibilities were located in Tokyo. But, with the coming of the Vietnam War, Maryland was increasingly called upon to offer courses in Vietnam itself as well as at the several U.S. military bases in Thailand. In response, the Far East Division ultimately moved the office of the Area Director, Southeast Asia to Bangkok. By the mid-1970s, the Asian program had developed in such a manner that---generally speaking---about one-third of the enrollments were in Japan (Honshu and Kyushu), one third in Okinawa and another one third in Korea --- with, of course, additional, much smaller, enrollments scattered from Midway to Guam to Singapore to Australia, etc. This development prompted the Far East Division to establish Area Director offices in Seoul and on Kadena Air Base on Okinawa with support staff in each location.

In Europe, there was no need for such an administrative/geographic structure and, with the exception of the Area Director's Office in London, all admin offices and responsibilities continued to be based in Heidelberg.

PERSONNEL

In the early years of both programs, the great majority of full-time faculty, as well as basically all "Senior Staff" were male. Reflecting the institutional sexism and cultural biases of the 1950s and 1960s, Maryland tended to think that women could not handle the rigors of teaching overseas. These rigors included isolation, the need to move frequently, dealing with foreign cultures, and the challenge of fitting into to the American military world. The reluctance to employ women as full-time faculty also meant that women were effectively eliminated for consideration for senior staff positions, as almost all senior staff came from the full-time faculty.

But beginning around 1970, Maryland began to offer women full-time teaching positions in both Divisions and by the mid/late-1970s, women such as Rosemary Hoffmann, Christie King, and Lynne Whitaker had assumed key senior administrative roles in Europe, while in Asia, Margaret Sanders and Monika Zwink did the same. Three women need, however, to be mentioned as they were earlier exceptions---Eleanor Seidel who began with Maryland in 1959 in Asia and Vida Bandis and Rose Beyer, both of whom began in Europe about 1960.

In future decades, Ellie and Vida were each to wear various administrative hats and each played vitally important roles in College Park that related directly to the overseas programs. Rose was to serve in Heidelberg as Academic Coordinator of the Math/Science Program into the 1980s.

By the mid/late 1970s, women were routinely teaching as full-timers in both Asia and Europe. By the mid-1980s, more than half the senior staff positions in Heidelberg were filled by women. In Asia in the 1980s, women were Area Directors in Korea and Okinawa, while at Yokota, Lorraine Suzuki held several different key senior positions. In 1990, Paula Harbecke, who had joined the administration in Europe in the early 1980s, transferred from Heidelberg to Tokyo to become Director, UMUC-Asia---the first woman to serve as an overseas Director.

WHICH DO YOU PREFER---ASIA OR EUROPE?

There is, of course, no "right" answer, but to end on a personal note: When in Europe with Maryland, I loved Europe---and very much still do. For many years, Amsterdam was my favorite city in the world and in some ways, it still is. If I spoke even passable French, living in Paris would be just short of heaven. Even with no Greek, I could easily spend six months a year in Crete and Mykonos.

If forced to choose the job with Maryland that I enjoyed/loved the most, I would be hard pressed to decide between my 1967-70 faculty years in Asia and my 1981-1996 years as Director in Europe.

So, why Asia to live? To harken back to an observation offered to begin this memoir, I first visited Asia in 1962, Singapore for only 24 hours, but in some ways, it

seems just a month or so ago. On that same round-the-world trip, I also spent a couple of weeks in Europe and was captivated by Venice, Paris, London, etc. But, I had "felt/tasted" Asia before I "felt/tasted" Europe.

Why Thailand? If money and visa issues were not problems, might well have 'retired' in Tokyo, but unfortunately, reality does sometime enter the scene. More pointedly, it was here in Bangkok in the spring of 1967 that I had my first interaction with Maryland. After serving with the Army in Vietnam, I was working in Thailand as an analyst for an American research group. Joe Mabbett, then Maryland's Area Director for SEA, came on a TDY to Bangkok. I do not recall how it was arranged, but Dr. Mabbett and I met for a breakfast interview for an adjunct position in Bangkok.

Without at the time knowing it, Joe Mabbett sealed my fate when he mentioned, really in passing, that there was a group of full-time Maryland faculty who moved throughout Asia teaching in Japan, Korea, Taiwan, Vietnam, etc. I listened, asked a couple of questions and then, "Dr. Mabbett, I would like to apply for a full-time teaching job with Maryland."

After a few more months in Bangkok, I made my way to Tokyo and in AY 1967-68 began my 40-year love affair with the University of Maryland.

(Postscript: those interested in knowing more about Maryland's early years in Europe and Asia are encouraged to read Sharon Hudgins's well written, highly informative, "Beyond The Ivory Tower." It provides an excellent account of UMUC's first 60 years overseas.)