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"Exploration of Asian Indigenous Perspective: Communalities and Differences"

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Kyoto University, Japan
International Conference of Revisited Asian Society Proceeding
“Exploration of Asian Indigenous Perspective: Communalities and Differences”

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Foreword

“Exploration of Asian Indigenous Perspective: Communalities and Differences”

Humanities and social sciences are characterized by the indigenous nature of research objects when compared with natural sciences in which universal facts are pursued. The indigenous nature is also reflected in research stance in which concepts and theories that are never free from cultural and historical constraints should be emphasized. However, major portion of study in humanities and social sciences has been affected by the concepts, theories and methodologies that were originally developed by Western researchers. Learning from the West was certainly required in the past, but it is time now when we, Asian researchers, should remind ourselves of the undeniable fact that we live in Asia, an area that consists of many countries which share historical and cultural background. It is time for us to start exploring our own studies intensively based on our own concepts, theories and methodologies.

In exploring our own way to go, we have to be careful not to exclude Western researches. Actually, a few Western researchers are already convinced that their academic activities have been bounded by their own historical and cultural background and thus it is simplistic to see phenomena in other areas of the world from their own perspective. Moreover, they are keenly interested in what and how new researches can emerge among those who have different historical and cultural heritage. It is productive to invite such Western researchers to join our challenge to explore our own way of studies.

Needless to say, many countries in Asia are different from each other historically and culturally while they have communalities. Here, differences and communalities should be examined simultaneously, that is, difference can be illuminated on the basis of communality while communality can be discovered in the investigation of differences. We should remember it without repeating the failure that was once made by Western researchers who were fascinated by Orientalism.

The need to develop Asian local-based knowledge has become an increasing necessity. The global financial crisis in the United States and Western Europe, triggered by the bankruptcy of Lehman Brothers in the U.S, indirectly raised anticipation amongst the world’s citizens for the resurgence of Asia to accelerate the world’s economic recovery. This time
is the momentum of Asian social scientists to revive something that has existed in the long history of Asian’s civilization. The effort to produce the Asian knowledge is important because as it had been predicted by some experts, within the next few years, Asia will be the determinant of the direction of world.

The forum has become possible by academic international challenges that have been attempted by three groups of researchers. First, more than twenty researchers participated in an international conference named the ‘Revisited Asian Society’ from Indonesia, Malaysia and Japan in 2009. The conference was organized by researchers in Sanata Dharma University, Indonesia, who were specialized in sociology, social psychology, anthropology, economics and historical/cultural studies. Dr. Christina Siwi Handayani (Dean of Faculty of Psychology, Sanata Dharma University) played leadership in organizing the conference. The second symposium was held in 2010 with the increased number of participants and the more enriched contents of presentations and discussions. Exploration of possibilities of Asian studies from Asian perspective was consistently a major focus in the two conferences above.

Second, more than ten sociologists, anthropologists and social psychologists gathered together at Hong Kong University from China, Taiwan and Japan in 2008. It was the first workshop named the ‘Critical Asian Studies Forum.’ Dr. Hongguang Luo, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, initiated the Forum. The second and the third Forums were held in Taiwan in 2009 and in Japan in 2010, respectively, while persistently keeping both the overcoming traditional dependence on Western studies and the creation of indigenous Asian studies to be a common major focus.

Third, researchers in four continents, North and South American, European and Asian Continents, jointly published a book that consisted of many excellent papers. The book titled ‘Meaning in Action’ was published from Springer by three editors, Toshio Sugiman (Kyoto University, Japan), Kenneth Gergen (Swarthmore College, USA) and Wolfgang Wagner (University of Linz, Austria). The three editors as well as all contributors shared a research stance in which indigenous aspects should be respected.

The project is located at a junction of the three streams of academic challenge above. Specifically, we have three purposes in the project. First, we aim at facilitating sharing concrete studies carried out in different areas or countries in Asia. Basically, the studies presented in the proposed symposium are not laboratory studies in an abstract situation but field studies that focus on a concrete phenomenon in a real concrete situation.
Only such reality-based studies can bring mutual understanding of both communalities and differences among different societies in Asia to people whose historical and cultural backgrounds differ from each other.

Second, we emphasize not only descriptive approach but also practical approach. In humanities and social sciences, it is impossible for a researcher to be neutral or independent from the phenomenon he/she observes. Interaction is inevitable between a researcher and a research object regardless of whether or not he/she wants because the object, or a part of the object, is a human being. If so, more active interaction can be assumed between the both so that collaborative practice by the both is accepted or even appreciated. Action-research that is implemented to resolve practical problems is emphasized in our symposium.

Third, possibilities of new theoretical perspective are discussed. Western perspective has been characterized by the reduction of phenomena into elements and the attempt to reproduce the phenomena by synthesizing knowledge of the elements. Even most system theories are not exceptional for this. But, more holistic perspective might be possible. For example, it might be possible to assume that an individual person is not a fundamental element of a group or society but is crystallized as something like a point that is characterized by multiple belongingness to a unique set of groups, organizations and communities.

The conference invite multi-disciplines perspectives and methodology of social and humanities disciplines including economic, politic, sociology, anthropology, history, psychology and etc. And the list keynote speakers are:

Japanese Professors:
- Prof. Toshio Sugiman (Graduate School of Human and Environmental Studies, Kyoto University, Japan)
- Prof. Akiko Rakugi (Okayama Prefecture University, Japan)
- Prof. Masahiro Tsujimoto (Department of Psychology, Faculty of Arts and Letters, Tohoku University)

Indonesian Professors:
- Prof. Hamdi Muluk (University of Indonesia, Faculty of Psychology, Jakarta)
- Dr. Nani Nurachman (Atmajaya University of Jakarta, Faculty of Psychology, Jakarta, Indonesia)
- Prof. Suryanto (Airlangga University, Faculty of Psychology, Surabaya, Indonesia)
- Dr. Christina S. Handayani (Sanata Dharma University, Faculty of Psychology, Yogyakarta, Indonesia)

**Chinese Professor:**
- Prof. Hongguang Luo (Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, China)

**Philippines Professor:**
- Prof. Elizabeth de Castro (University of Philippines Diliman, Philippines)

**Singapore Professor:**
- Prof. Roxana Helen Waterson (Dept. of Sociology, National University of Singapore, Singapore)

**Korean Professor:**
- Prof. Sam-Sang Jo (Institute of Korean Studies Pusan National University, South Korea)

**European Professor:**
- Prof. Wolfgang Wagner (Dept of Social and Economic Psychology, Johannes Kepler University Linz, Austria)

The conference discuss how best to work together to contribute to the Asian knowledge production that to be responsive to social changes and problems in Asian society. More precisely, the activities are to be held for four following targets: (a) First, we aim at facilitating sharing concrete studies carried out in different areas or countries in Asia. Only such reality-based studies can bring mutual understanding of both communalities and differences among different societies in Asia to people whose historical and cultural backgrounds differ from each other; (b) Second, exploring a new theoretical perspective are discussed. Western perspective has been characterized by the reduction of phenomena into elements and the attempt to reproduce the phenomena by synthesizing knowledge of the elements. Even most system theories are not exceptional for this. But, more holistic perspective might be possible; (c) Third, exploring a new way of academic activities are discussed. We emphasize not only descriptive approach but also practical approach. Action-research that is implemented to resolve practical problems is emphasized in our symposium; (d) Fourth, developing a network of Asian researchers who share the goals with us.

The anticipated results of the conference are: (a) The networking to encourage the Asian scientists to produce the Asian knowledge that responsive to social change and problems in Asian society; (b) The establishing an academic association on Asian Studies to implement the missions of Asian knowledge production in face-to-face trust relationships,
at once to preserve diversity and cultural heritage in the context globalized society in this region.

Yogyakarta, June 30, 2011

Christina Siwi Handayani  
Toshio Sugimara  
Hamdi Muluk
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Learning Model of Tolerance Based on “Tepa Sarira” in the Elementary School Children
(An Alternative of Character Education)

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Abstract: Living Values Education (LVE) becomes one of the strategies to face pluralism, liberalism and secularism. This study aims to develop learning model of tolerance based on “tepa sarira”, as one of the alternative of character education. This research method used research and development, exploring and researching the potential of local wisdom to be developed in a learning model that supports the development of life skills and social skills of elementary school students. The respondents of this study are groups of students, teachers, and parents. The data collection through several methods, they are Focus Group Discussion, questionnaire, desk evaluation, and observation interview. The results showed that: (1) There was equation of tolerance presented by parents and teachers, though in reality most students lack of a good understanding about these concepts, (2) tepa sarira or tepa slira as the roots of tolerance had very rarely introduced by teachers or parents; (3) learning model of tolerance in these study consists of 15 learning activities in the form of art appreciation, feedback, self-reflection, games, storytelling, and structured observation. It can be applied independently or be integrated into lesson plan (RPP), which conceived and developed by teachers. It is advisable to follow up the results of this study to know effectiveness of using this module in empirical study. Keywords: learning model, the tolerance value, tepa sarira

Introduction

Recently, the development of society is toward a permissive situation where life is more colored by the bad values such as hostility, violence, fraud, deceit, injustice and disobedience. The character education is education to shape one's personality through moral education, which is expected to urge the desire of each child in order to do good things
learning model of tolerance conducted in the form of art appreciation, feedback, self-reflection, games, storytelling, and observations structured and integrated into lesson plan (RPP). Since the module is judged only by experts, it is advisable to follow up by empirical study of tolerance value learning in children of elementary school.

References


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