

Committee II
Ethnocentrism vs. World Unity:
Impacts on Socialization and
Education

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DISCUSSION PAPER

on

SESSION II

**METHODS AND VALUES FOR COMPARISON:
CONCEPTS AND STRATEGIES**

by

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The contents of these three papers were actually a surprise for me.

The issue dealt with by Dr. Kozma in his paper "Dimensions of Multiculturalism--The Emergence of A New Educational Ideology" does not exist in Japan, which has a homogeneous culture. There is, of course, the Ainu people as a small minority who were the first inhabitants of Japan. However, they have become acculturated and are almost identical with the majority of the Japanese. Their language is also about to become obsolete. We might say that it is the Japanese government and the Japanese people who are making efforts to preserve this unique language.

There is a considerable number of Korean people in Japan. Those who support North Korea have their own educational system from primary school to university. They wear their traditional costume, making it apparent that they are students of the North Korean schools. These schools offer education based upon communist principles, but there is no conflict with the Japanese.

There are no independent schools for South Koreans. They attend Japanese private and public schools. They are not requesting for bilingual education in these Japanese schools. The South Korean people living in Japan lead a Japanese-style life while maintaining loyalty toward South Korea.

When it comes to the topic of Ethnocentrism in international relations as taken up by Drs. Bernardi and Shtromas, this is an issue that the Japanese must consider as well.

We may say that in the course of history, various races came to Japan

and mingled to become homogeneous. Therefore, Japan has the capability to assimilate differing races to a high degree. From the eyes of a Japanese, it seems that America and Europe are going the way of the Multiculturalism Dr. Kozma speaks of, while the Japanese take an assimilative method in dealing with heterogeneous races.

At our university in Tokyo, International Christian University, there are students from 25 countries worldwide. Thus, I have the chance to advise the graduation theses of students from the Republic of Gabon, Turkey, the Philippines, and Africa. For me, there is no difference between Japanese students and these students. I can love them as my own sons and daughters. Their Japanese is usually very fluent.

In a culture, there is the moving part or the 'flow' and the unmoving part, or 'stock,' to my mind. The 'flow' includes science, technology, language and so on, which are more easily understood by those of other cultures, while the 'stock' includes religion and indigenous customs which are not so easily understood by different cultures.

The relationship between the students from overseas and myself does not go into the area of culture as stock. A relationship of trust is built at first, mutually based upon our characters. ~~Then~~ based upon this trust relationship, exchange of culture as flow is made. I believe this lies at the bottom of being able to treat overseas students as being the same as Japanese students.

In his paper, Dr. Kozma says in 4.1 (p. 11):

"Multiculturalism in education ^{em}—sometimes also called cultural pluralism, pluralist education, or even multinational, transnational or international education... ^{em}—is a self-expression of interest groups and social forces which engaged in the new situation mentioned."

International education is the New Ideology, according to him.

As mentioned on p. 12, Dr. Kozma distinguishes between Multiculturalism in Education and International Education:

"...multicultural education wants to preserve those minority cultures while it works with them. International or transnational education, on the other hand, tries to overcome historically preserved but existing dysfunctional traditions."

As goals that multicultural education should follow, he gives four:

- To develop multicultural personalities.
- To preserve the minority cultures including their values.
- To develop and support the so-called "overarching values."
- To prevent acculturation.

This is an excellent paper, but the concrete methods of achieving these goals do not seem to be taken up.

In the final page, he states:

"...language and communication represent the core of a culture, and if we accept that culture we have to give it the right to use the relevant language." (p. 15)

These words were impressive to me.

Dr. Bernardi states as follows in his paper:

"...if pathological ethnocentrism is allowed to prevail, it will bear tremendous sufferance, disasters and war as well as genocide. When ethnocentrism takes a pathological form it becomes extremely difficult, if at all possible, to stop it. It is a cultural cancer." (p. 16)

"The only real remedy is preventive." (ibid.)

He continues:

"An education aimed at preventing ethnocentrism from decaying should first be based on the realization of the positive aspects of ethnocentrism." (ibid.)

"In my opinion the right time for fostering such an attitude toward respect and comprehension of human culture diversity is the same time when one is educated to develop his/her own cultural identity." (p. 17)

He maintains that Ethnocentrism is a one-sided evaluation based on the values of one's own group:

"...Onesidedness is the opposite of comparative judgment: there is always another side to every problem..." (p. 2)

"...There is modesty in doing things..." (p. 17)

He quotes (Olzak and Nagel 1986:1):

"It is said that 'modernization tends to decrease ethnic heterogeneity.'...But in spite of all evidence, I am not entirely convinced of the unqualified value of that statement..." (p. 18)

"Positive ethnocentrism should lead us to a balanced evaluation of our own culture and it is the best antidote to pathological ethnocentrism if properly developed by sane education." (p. 18)

This paper also seems to lack a concrete method or approach.

Dr. Shtromas' paper does offer one unique and concrete proposal:

"...It would be good to study in Austrian schools the lives and works of such Hungarian national heroes as Lajos Kossuth and Sandor Petöfi, and in Spanish schools those of such Cuban, Filipino and Dutch national heroes as, respectively, José Marti, José Rizal, and the stadholder William of Orange. The lives and works of such national heroes should be studied not only in the schools of "opponent" nations but also in the schools of the neutral ones." (p. 23)

① The globally-minded educationalists could compile an international list of national heroes to be recommended for study in the schools throughout the world. This would certainly make a substantial contribution to mutual empathy among the nations of the world, to their better understanding of each other's problems and thus to the promotion of globalism." (ibid.)

We need to make efforts to develop various methods in a similar direction from now on. There will be a need to develop methods and procedures of conflict resolution as well. To put it in brief, these three papers might be called preliminary preparations for conflict resolution.

Human relations are generally those of confrontation. However, if this is left as is, it will be difficult for man to accomplish anything; thus, man has no choice but to seek for solidarity. In the process of seeking for solidarity, wars erupt and negotiations become necessary.

Overlooked
 Conflict resolution ought to be carried out through negotiation to resolve war or armed struggle. There is the area known as operations research as a science of war, and there is negotiational science as the science of negotiation. Both are interdisciplinary approaches. Starting from the perspective of how a particular problem can be solved, related sciences are used in a comprehensive, integrated manner to make a truly interdisciplinary

approach.

Furthermore, as mentioned in Dr. Kozma's paper, advances in peace studies (or war studies) which seek for means to resolve conflicts in negotiation and not in war or armed conflict, are being sought. This is also an interdisciplinary approach.

As a philosophy to support such studies, the thought of Kitaro Nishida (1870-1945), the creative Japanese thinker, is useful. One of his major principles is the "Self-identity of absolute contradiction." This might be explained as follows.

"All things in conflict with one another cannot be separated, but are one."

We think of the confrontation of left and right. There is a right because there is a left, and there is a left because there is a right. These are actually one. Because there is an above, there is a below, and vice versa. The top and the bottom are actually one thing. Life and death are also one.

When we stand on such thinking, it becomes possible for ethnocentrism to progress toward world unity.

I would like to emphasize in closing that these three papers are indeed outstanding pieces of work which stimulate the readers to take up research in this direction.

Thank you.