Globalization and the Cultural Diversity

Final Report

Group 1

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1. Junzo KAWADA, Human Cultures Faces with globalization
   · was not discussed so vividly because:
   A. It was more explicit and made from a flow of events, accepted globally as true.
   B. The lecture being in Japanese, and presented too fast some of us couldn’t understand all the concepts explained.

2. Lisa YONEYAMA, Cultural Wars – a global perspective
   · raise a lot of interest, questions and issues
   · we did understand that:
   1. Culture wars are part of the modern world and maybe appear now more often as an effect of globalization / free travel / mass-media influence.
   2. Culture wars can be found inside the same nation or can take place between any other two different nations.
   3. Culture wars appear when something new / a foreign element starts challenging that very nation’s soul, tradition and core values.
   · we raised 2 questions:
   A. Culture war is a conflict between 2 parties. What will be a role of a 3rd party in the debate. Could the 3rd party act as a mediator.
   B. Are these conflict Cultural ones, or rather political as seemed they were politically influenced.

As the discussion turned to a historical debate, rather that staying on the track regarding the notion of ‘culture wars’ we went on debating and reach / reconfirmed the followings:

What is the culture war?
A conflict (of ideas / behaviors / concepts) that appears when something new starts challenging that particular nation’s soul, tradition, core values.

What is culture?
1. An accumulation of a person’s experience during his / her life time.
2. Something pretty personal, always changing and transforming. It is something alive, transforming influenced by propaganda, by media, by other people’s opinions.
3. It is both traditional life style and / versus modern life style

3. Megumi TAKASAKI, World Religion in the Globalizing World
We wondered if Religious symbol = Cultural symbol.

We raise again the issue of the Veil Incident in France.

   The veil incident is a ‘cultural war’ or a ‘religious war’. The incident was solved from the point of view of religious symbols which are not to be displayed in France. Still some Iranian women said that for them is more a cultural symbol, that a religious one. (They feel more mysterious, attractive, beautiful).
French people may be afraid when they can not see other people’s faces – the ones who wear veil.

What did we get from this lecture? To solve such an issue think tri-dimensional:
1. Show respect to other religions.
2. “When in Rome do as Romans do”
3. The key word is Dialogue.

We debated the ways we can carry this dialogue:
   1. learn foreign languages
   2. use the internet
   3. use body language
   4. date foreign people

Conclusion: We agreed that religion is a part of culture it is diverse and needs to be respected.
4. Silvia KOFLER, “Cultural Diversity in Europe: Multicultural societies and intercultural dialogue”

What did we get from this lecture?
The main characteristic of EUROPE today is MULTICULTURALISM.
Although EU promotes globalization = assimilation, lately protects the diversity of culture by coming with a new concept: Diversity in Unity.
EU takes action in making culture visible: 2008 it is going to be the “Year of Inter-Cultural Dialogue” in Europe.
She suggested education as a mean to promote culture and revive local traditions.
What we did not get: specific educational programs to promote multi-culturalism.

We agreed that early education is important to solve discrimination problem by promoting dialogue and culture.

How to educate children?
We raised a question: Why Japanese don’t get interested in studying foreign languages? The European children for example have to study at least one foreign language and the most of them can speak even three or more.
We realized that the geography of Europe is favorable to learning different languages, while Japan being an island is isolated.

Foreign Languages
Curiosity is the key element for learning a foreign language.
Other reasons to learn than curiosity:
- many people study Chinese due to economic reasons.

After seeing the NOH performance:
How the Youth learn and understand different cultures?

For most of Japanese participants of Group 1, today it was the first time to watch live Noh performance.

Solutions / ideas to make the young generation interested in culture:
Understanding our own culture before beginning to learn another is essential.
Establishing a little cultural town, close to the administrative or political center of a community, to make culture visible.
Proposing in Japan cultural cities like the ones in EU.
Spreading the culture by the mass media.
Re-establishing the role of education in family.
Holding a contest related with traditional costumes.
Using the power of the Community (where the elder should teach the youth about the own culture)
Making exchange program about the culture between schools
Doing some advertisements about the culture

5. Tom, BRISLIN: “Ethics and Empowerment in Global Mass Media”

Mass media is affected by one government politics.
We understood some of the good effects and negative effects, but not related to globalization.
We didn’t understand clearly how mass media is connected to globalization.
We weren’t sure about the definition of empowerment: “To give power to someone.”
Can Mass Media help restoring lost culture? Yes. We got example from the University of Hawaii. Blog culture was seen as a positive aspect of active citizenship. Nation should use the media to create their own version, imagine of nation.

We debated how Media influences the countries, and agreed that sometimes the over-exposition to own culture, it could lead to ultra-nationalism. There was an example of how local media promotes their traditional dish, in Sichuan, China, by means of holding a local food festival. In Vietnam there are television programs, animation, and music, promoting cultural characteristics, for local and international understanding. In Mexico, efforts are made to keep the interest of people in local cultures, as short TV commercial in national television, where it is shown some traditional art and crafts of Mexico, and can be seen for millions of people, and there are special national days in schools that promote patriotism and family union.

Then BBC and CNN were mentioned and compared with Chinese broadcasters. The casual, relaxing and professional way of broadcasting is totally different from that of China’s formal, rigid and strict way of telling news.

The lecture was quite interesting being presented in both English and Japanese. It introduced the basic knowledge of the internet.

7. Misako OHNUKI, "ACCU’s Challenges on Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Asia and the Pacific".
We learnt that there are already actions taken to protect Intangible Cultures, using Internet and Mass Media (making small movies) to create a huge data base for presenting some specific Asian Her lecture introduce as this new resource and we are sure many of us will check this site.

8. Shin YAGIHASHI, Preservation of Japanese Craft Techniques as intangible Cultural Assets
It was difficult to understand if we hadn’t seen the crafts before and followed as only in Japanese with no visual support. Also having 4 lecture on the same day, the day of making final presentation, was quite tiring It was not very comprehensible because not everyone had the opportunity to interact, or touch the craft, in a normal life style.

It was talked about the reasons why the kimono is very expensive. As embroidering is the main technique, it takes up to one year (usually 3 months), hand made, to be created..
FINAL Discussion:

Globalization / culture definitions are very complex and personal.

We debated the way we could promote culture. If the students of elementary school around the world feel inferior related to own cultures? [when immersed into foreign culture's]”

Does multiculturalism exist only in EU? What about USA or Mexic?

The family and closest relatives must also assume responsibility of educating their children to respect and preserve their own cultures, while opening to new experiences and learning about other cultures.

Curiosity must be use as a stimulation in learning more about culture.

A little conclusion: not only the educational system is the answer in rising interest in culture, also the parents/family are to educate in this direction, so both entities (family and education system) have to work in that. Society could also be implicated in the educational process.

There are some cultures that transmit the culture orally. So do they have to know writing and reading to REGISTER their traditions.

Our advisor mentioned a newspaper article about the type of keeping someone culture while including in the company system. If they want to pray 2 times a day, they can do it, but also they have an appointed tutor who teaches them about the company way of doing things.

Family unity and JUSCO: a study showed that more crimes happen around JUSCO – opened 24 hours. So this kind of place make family members have a place to run, forgetting about going home.

It was mentioned the Darwin's evolution theory. And they applied on culture transformation / evolution, but shifted to adaptation not by transformation in something new, but rather learning to use the very means of the globalization (consumerism / media / politics/ technology travel) to make the internet a space to become visible – thus avoiding extinction.

Definition of Globalization

1. Globalization was initially Americanization.
2. Globalization is Westernization.
3. The free exchange of thoughts and ideas and the greater mobility of people.
4. The process of increasing international division of labor and the accompanying integration of national economies through trades in goods and services, cross-border, investments and financial flows. (Trades between nations, companies, etc.)
5. Intensification of worldwide social relations.

Conclusion:

A. We understood that Globalization is diverse, complex, and overlapping.
B. Culture was losing meaning / forms / ways of expression due to globalization trend, but now more and more people are aware of this negative aspect and trying to restore the balance in culture favor / to redefine the importance of local and / or intangible cultures.