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Pitfalls of ‘Culture’ Reconsidered
Kageaki Kajiwara

In this occasion, when we scrutinize topics such as conservation of cultural traditions, re-recognizing local cultures, and inter-cultural understanding, I would like to re-situate notions of culture and tradition, in order to evade some pitfalls surrounding the above notions.

With the above aim in mind, I try to draw attentions to the following points,

First, tradition is not necessarily either continuous or unchanged. As E. Hobsbawm well illustrated, tradition has been invented and re-invented.

Second, culture is not fixed and unifiltrative. Culture is a dynamic ‘entity’ in which changes and mutual infiltrations can occur.

Third, while cultures often times are considered mutually exclusive, but culture embodies some devices for mutual recognition and for inter-cultural encounters. Every culture has a notion and practices of hospitality which may overcome hostility against strangers. Culture might become fault lines, i.e. conflicting against others, but it also shows an intrinsic curiosity and imagination beyond a confinement of one culture.

By situating notions of culture and tradition in this way, we may ‘en-bridge’ the boundaries of cultures, and get insights for today’s discussion.

The Meaning of Batik Indonesia as ‘World Heritage’
Masakatsu Tozu

Batik in Indonesia can be classified into next 7 large groups by motif, design, color and cloth. (1) Batik for the court created by tradition of the Java-Hindu Kingdoms; (2) Batik for diverse communities in the southern region of Java; (3) Diversion of Batik at the northern coast which is the fusion of foreign cultures such as Western, Chinese, and Japanese culture; (4) Simple and traditional Batik of village for self sufficiency in Kerek region; (5) Batik with Sumatran original motifs; (6) Batik influenced by Islamic cultures; (7) Batik of Sunda region in Java and Traja in
Sulawesi which are still passed on today its old original designs. These Batik designs reflect all the cultural and historical diversity of Indonesia. And supported by remarkably diverse designs and high technique of Batik which have been developed in long history of its tradition, the new world of Batik Indonesia is being created. The expansion and development of Batik Indonesia is the surge of “rediscovery” and “recreation”, towards the importance of their traditional cultures and their own artistic beauty. This is nothing but a result of recognition of important “Warisan Budaya (cultural heritage)” which represents Indonesia by its people. It is a very rare case in the world that a traditional culture (Batik) of a certain ethnic group (Javanese) in a multi-ethnic nation has been raised to play a role to unite a nation (Indonesia). The first President Sukarno is the most important person as a great contributor of Batik Indonesia. Idea of Batik Indonesia by Sukarno was “an expression of hope towards unity in newly born, the Republic of Indonesia”. These Batik Indonesias were widely worn by Malaysian and other South-east Asian people from end of 19th century. It is also well known that there were many Batik devotees in Japan and Western world which is proved by the existence of the imitation Batik produced in Europe. Batik also had a great influence on Japanese *kimono* already from the Edo period and “*kimono*” and “*obi* (a broad sash)” made from Batik are still deeply loved by the Japanese women today. In this sense, it is difficult to discover other similar example of ethnic clothing culture of Batik. Batik possesses the best quality as “World Heritage”.

**Japanese Study Program at Graduate School of Political Science, Kokushikan University**

**Tokubumi Shibata**

Japanese Studies have been conducted in many countries, also in Japan. But many of those researches were conducted from the western point of view. Sometimes it makes different feelings between the researchers and the examinees. It is the time to try to search for our own way of studies which is based on our different values in academic fields. We will make a new program about Japanese Studies and I am very glad to introduce our unique program at Graduate School of Political Science at Kokushikan University. We think that our Japanese Study program will show the unique challenges about Japanese Studies in academic fields. It is the great pleasure of mine that this program will be a fruitful, especially for the researchers who engage in Japanese Studies in foreign country.