

A FUTURE-ORIENTED PERSPECTIVE AND HISTORY TEACHING ALTERNATIVE IN GLOBALIZATION ERA: THE CONTEXT OF INDONESIA

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ABSTRACT: *In the current globalization era, we witness quick changes in all sectors of life, and for the society which is conscious of these changes the mastery of science and technology has become a must. The areas of science and technology chosen are certainly the ones commonly perceived to provide real contribution to the struggle with the changes. With reference to the science of history, the big question which arises is: is the science of history still needed in this globalization era considering most of its objects belong to the past? One of the answers to the question is in order to contextualize the values of history education an alternative in the teaching of history should be generated in the hope that future generation will be aware of the social values for the basis of predicting the future. Hence, learning history means understanding the past for better understanding of the current so that the future can be grabbed much better.*

KEY WORDS: *current globalization, science and technology, science of history, future generation and understanding the past for better understanding of the current.*

INTRODUCTION

Today, Indonesian people are required to be sensitive over the quick changes in almost all aspects of life. Many believe that it is the only way for them to survive the changes. As a matter of fact, globalization calls for every member of the society to always quickly and correctly respond the changes they encounter. Besides, self-reliance and dignity as well as deep religious faith will lead society members to be more independent, resilient and competitive, both locally and globally (Kartasasmita, 1991:18-19).

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Globalization itself is basically triggered by three main factors, which are usually called *three engines of globalization*. They comprise technology mastery, capital ownership and managerial competence. The three are interconnected demands. The development of new technology will facilitate the transfer and expansion of capital from one country to another. At the same time, with the mastery of modern management and the strong support of large capital and sophisticated technology, the economists and businessmen are able to prepare their companies and select the right cooperation strategies to win the competition (Micklethwait & Wooldridge, 2000:29).

In the globalization era, an enormous shift of paradigm has occurred in how people view productivity in relation to a country's natural resources. In the past, a country's resources are viewed from the perspective of the natural resources a country possesses. At present, a country's resources hinge upon the ability of human resources to process the natural resources into value added products or services which make the best use of science, investment, ideas and innovation (Harrison & Huntington, 2000:5).

In such a situation, the mastery of science and technology plays a central role in helping a nation anticipate changes, so that it will not be left behind by other nations. And in fact many nations are now racing toward the highest achievement in science and technology. This is also in accordance with what K.J. Hatten & A. Rosentahl (2000:5) say that a certain degree of science and technology mastery can boost creativity of a nation.

In order to master science and technology, education plays an important role and governments should prioritize it. For the reason, education can hopefully nurture every aspect of human beings, ranging from physical and mental health, intelligence, social sensitivity, responsibility and spiritual life. Therefore, through education a government can shape its people into independent, critical and creative individuals. This is especially significant in the changing world in which educational and economic innovation prevails. In this case, education also serves a driving power to improve the quality of creativity and imagination as an expression of freedom and personal standards. More opportunities must be given to the young generation to explore and innovate (UNESCO, 1996:94).

Moreover K. Ohmae (1990:195) states that every responsible government has the obligation to prepare its people to confidently enter the era of globalization. One of the possible ways to take is providing education which enables the people to obtain as much knowledge as possible. A good control over information and technology will enable a nation to successfully compete in this constantly changing world.

With respect to the history, the questions now are, "*Is history still useful for the young generation to face this changing world?*", "*What kind of teaching method can we devise in order to 'present' the past in today's world?*", and "*What kind of teaching orientation do we need to anticipate the quick changes of the world?*". If we take a close look at the questions, we can see that the underlying problems are all related to the

understanding of values which in turn will make history a science serving to clarify today's perspective and future's vision (Lapian, 1976:3).

THE GENERAL FUNCTIONS OF HISTORY TEACHING

People commonly perceive history as identical to family tree or even to folklore. Such a perception leads people to study the history of kings and their descendents, the origins of kingdoms, or great people of the past, which occasionally mix it with some irrational elements. In such a perception, history does not reflect a comprehensive past experience of a community. A number of varied factors are indeed involved in the making of history (Abdoelgani, 1963:53).

If history taught at school is the one viewed that way, the curricular contents and its material development will evolve around dates and years of historical events, king biographies, stories of great people and battles. The logical consequence of that kind of perception is that history will not bring about understanding of the underlying values to students. History teaching will be of trivial benefits. Besides as the teaching contents, it will not enhance learning creativity among students. History is not more than a boring lecture. And worst of all, students fail to see the values and uses of learning history.

Ideally, though history is mostly concerned with the past, whose actual objects are the totality of past experience of a society; learning history must not be perceived merely in terms of the past for the sake of the past. Learning history should certainly be aimed at exploring and identifying past experience of the predecessors for the sake of the current and the future and thus at making the future generation wise in facing their lives (Abdoelgani, 1963:68).

There are three main functions of studying history, namely: (1) *Recreational Function*. Historical events which are conveyed in a narrative, descriptive and informative forms can be interesting to the youth, especially if reported in a fascinating language. In this sense, history has artistic and literary values which serve recreation function; (2) *Scientific Function*. When the past facts and events are written on interpretive judgment of facts using a multidimensional approach and involve critical investigation, then history meets the requirements of a science. For a reconstruction of history which meets the scientific standards, satisfactory understanding of method is required; and (3) *Didactic Function*. History may bear a didactic value when it contains past facts and events which give rise to certain effects on the youth, such as the rise of patriotism or nationalism. Through history as well old values can be passed on to the young generation (Su'ud, 1990:27-30).

In this respect, we need to notice Albert Hyma's conviction that history is principally a branch of science which discusses the development of human beings' society, covering political system, social structure, economy, ideas, arts and their entire experience (Hyma, 1981:24). History in this sense refers to all past experience, both physically and spiritually. In order to comprehend this multifaceted life, a holistic approach needs to be applied. Therefore, the complexity of life can easily

be analyzed into its componential parts and its parts scrutinized to perceive their intricate relationships (Kartodirdjo, 1990b:32).

For the reason, instructional materials comprise among other things the changes occurring in the complex society of the past. Given that history deals with a complicated past events and needs a very careful and painstaking analysis, teacher and pupil will get involved in an interesting learning process.

As far as learning is concerned, it is very imperative for us to mention the Benjamin S. Bloom's Taxonomy, a schematic classification of hierarchical competence or skills. The two important domains in the field of history teaching are cognitive and affective. Of the two, cognitive domain is considered to play more important role, as it leads to the actual development of intellectual capacity. Besides, cognitive domain is the best rational indicator of general intellectual competence. Six components of cognitive domain are *knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis* and *evaluation* (Bloom, 1956:3).

Knowledge is the ability to know, with observable elements, like the ability to memorize and to recall. *Comprehension* is equal to understanding with the components of ability to translate, interpret and conclude. *Application* is the ability to use concept, principles and procedures to solve a problem. *Analysis* includes the ability to break down a concept into its parts and spot the relations among the parts. *Synthesis* is the ability to put the parts into a (new) entity. And *evaluation* refers the ability to compare values, ideas, methods and so on to reach a judgment (Bloom, 1956:3).

An ideal teaching of history at school facilitates learners to know how to study history well. In practice, the teaching of history may commence from introducing facts and data, giving definitions clearly and then developing concepts related to the societal aspects of the past. As a result, the teaching of history equals the activity carried out to boost intellectual capacity which is characterized by the ability to recognize facts specifically, to construct concepts and finally to determine conclusions and generalization (Garvey & Krug, 1977:15).

In Indonesia, the teaching of history begins at the elementary education which seeks the rise of pride of their society's achievement. Through the teaching, the experience of their ancestors – which is full of educative values – can be understood and owned. At the junior high, history teaching is projected more to enable students to know understand the development of their society. As for the level of senior high, the teaching is designed to nurture the critical attitude towards any past events in order to aptly react to the current social phenomena (Depdikbud RI, 1993:151-152).

The instructional objectives are formulated upon the ideal assumptions about the process of understanding history. In other words, the objectives should reflect students' temporal and spatial awareness about any past events which in turn will lead to national pride and identity (Kartodirdjo, 1990a:17).

A wrong understanding of history will result in inability of the young generation to give appropriate response to the changes, so that they will not be able to cope with the problems they face. If this was the case the teaching of history does not benefit the young. History instruction is not more than just a burden to school

children. In consequence, we need to seek a teaching strategy capable of creating creative and critical generation. This is especially true when considering the fact that we are now faced with problems requiring a number of responses at once (Soedjatmoko, 1991:87).

THE MAIN GOALS OF HISTORY TEACHING

To maintain the cultural character and values of a nation, the understanding of history is needed at whatever level of civilization. The more advanced a nation is, the more necessary it is to comprehend and realize its normative history, as an important component of educational objectives. The teaching of history is indeed the application of history as a science for a pragmatic purpose. For the reason, its realization needs to be selected and adjusted with reference to the values and meanings of the existing educational goals. In other words, the outcomes of the history instruction should be in line with the overall objectives of the national education (Sasyardi, 1990:54).

Specifically, the objectives of the national education can be found in the Act Number 20/2003 on National Education System (*Undang-Undang No. 20 Tahun 2003 tentang Sistem Pendidikan Nasional*). In one of its chapter, it says:

National Education serves the function of developing the competence and shaping the character and civilization of a dignified nation, in the framework of educating the nation's life, and directed towards the development of the learners' potential in order to make them pious believers of the Sole God, have respectable behavior, be healthy, well informed, responsive, creative, independent, and become responsible and democratic citizens (Chapter 3 Indonesian Act Number 20/2003 or *UU No. 20 Tahun 2003*).

To achieve the objectives, every element inside any educational organizations is called forth to show good quality competence. School as one of the elements has also the obligation to carry out its duty in a quality manner. This holds true for the history teachers in doing their instructional function. They must perform their jobs professionally, especially in the teaching process. This professional undertaking is characterized by satisfactory mastery of the teaching materials, teaching strategies and motivating power. By so doing, history teachers can materialize the ideal history teaching process toward the ideal outcomes (Supardan, 2005).

To answer global challenges through educational efforts, UNESCO (United Nations for Economic, Social and Cultural Organization) has set foundations as the stepping stones for every nation in the world. In its document entitled *Learning: Treasure Within*, UNESCO established the four pillars of education, namely: (1) *Learning to know*, which goes to the extent of understanding the how to and communicating it to others; (2) *Learning to do*, which also includes boosting creativity, productivity, resilience, controlling professional ability and being ready for any changes; (3) *Learning to be*, which covers developing self-potential like independence, rational capacity, imaginative power, aesthetic awareness, discipline and responsibility; and (4) *Learning to live together*, which encompasses understanding

the reasons of living in harmony in plural community, appreciating differences in spiritual life and showing respect to other ethnic or political group members (UNESCO, 1996:85-89).

In response to this multilateral policy, Indonesian government has taken any necessary measures, like passing the Act Number 14 Year 2005 on Teachers and Lecturers (*Undang-Undang No.14 Tahun 2005 tentang Guru dan Dosen*). This act is devised to enhance the teachers and lecturers quality. This is done on the fact that teachers are required to possess certain traits which enable them to help learners attain the four pillars.

According to Widayati's analysis, in her paper "Elementary Education Reform", the crucial characteristics of teachers in this era are: (1) perceiving profession of teacher as a genuine life call [genuineness]; (2) always trying to give positive reward in order that learners are able to give self-reward; (3) trying not only to be sympathetic but also empathic; and (4) realizing that as teachers, they need to have the ability to be a learner (Widayati, 2002:29). In short, teachers should fully realize that teacher is a profession, not merely a job.

History teachers are also required to realize that they are responsible to facilitate their pupil to attain the outlined instructional potentials of history, namely: (1) history teaching and intellectual education; and (2) history teaching and education of nation's moral. Referring to the first potential, the teaching of history does not only present facts and collective experience of the society in the past, but also provides intellectual exercises to generate creative thinking over the causes and effects of the past events.

Interpreting historical events of course plays a strategic role in providing intellectual exercise to the learners. Critical thinking over historical events may embrace training to formulate, to conclude and to analyze social symptoms appearing during a critical period in the history of a nation. Hence this potential emphasizes intellectual teaching and reasoning (Suryo, 1990:5). As for the second potential, the teaching of history should be aimed at humanistic education. Understanding historical facts and events must lead to the effort to foster and develop the character of a nation (nation building). Through understanding and implanting historical values, it is hoped that there will evolve the spirit to love their country and even the will to self-sacrifice for the sake of a nation's interests.

The important thing to consider when teaching historical values is that, since history learning can be a means of humanistic education, teaching process needs an appropriate strategy so that the intended messages can be delivered in a natural and easy manner. This is especially true, since the main and ultimate objective of history teaching is not the mastery of historical facts and events by the pupil, but the shaping of attitude by means of its inherent values. The outcomes should not be measured only with the ability of the pupil to correctly mention dates, facts and events in the history, but also with the understanding of values which influence their behavior as good and responsible citizens (Sasyardi, 1990:12).

Therefore the ultimate goal of history teaching activities is generating good citizens. Good citizens can be defined as citizens who are dutiful and responsible as

called for by laws and social norms as citizens of a country, like conforming the regulations, paying taxes, defending their country and so on. Emphasis is given to the acceptance of certain values living in a society. Observing local norms and appreciating local values and beliefs can be the goal of history learning. Through understanding the social changes in the past, students are expected to be able to predict changes in the future. With the ability at hand, future changes can hopefully be prevented or attempted as wished.

A number of teaching strategies can be tried in the hope that student learning process will run well. An example of teaching strategy that can be attempted is constructive strategy. This strategy is derived from critical theory and postmodernist paradigm which offer modified instruction emphasizing on the ability of the students to solve real current problems of the society. In the view of critical theory, the teaching of history seek the achievement of *knowledge interest*, taking the form of control over social issues like information, facts, concepts and social theories (Banks, 1990:187).

Further step may then be taken to understand the underlying meaning of knowledge interest, namely *the process of knowing* and *the agent of knowing*. The latest two interests can be achieved by means of history teaching process which involves actual participation of learners to do the action and reflection, in a constructive process, of contemporary social issues. Through this constructive learning strategy, self-reflection will occur critically, so it is hoped that the process of comprehensive understanding of social issues will take place. Thus power is no more dominated by dominant groups like teachers, lecturers and curriculum developers, but hopefully spread out even to the pupil as the knower (Supriatna, 2005).

It is hoped too that the teaching process in the class will bring about behavioral effects on the pupils, both *instructional* and *nurturant* ones. These effects are related to the students' mastery of the teaching materials and their sensitivity over social issues. Students' social sensitivity here theoretically refers to Scott's concepts concerning *empathy, pro-social or morality* (in Budimansyah, 2007; and Winataputra, 2007). Empathy can be seen from the perspectives of affective, cognitive and communicative. Affective element is related to a person's capacity to feel what other is feeling or experiencing. Cognitive element refers to a person's capacity to recognize other's affective state and his/her viewpoint in order to understand the reasons of the viewpoint. Finally, the communicative element of empathy refers to a person's ability to pass on or communicate his feeling to others.

In our current social life, a great number of contemporary social issues need to be addressed by all components of the nation. This of course demands strong sense of social empathy on the part of the people, including the students. For the purpose, the teaching of history must enable students to put oneself in someone else's shoes or, in other words, to reciprocate positions of others (Zainul, 2008). If the capacity of empathy, either in the affective, cognitive or communicative sense, becomes an integral part of the pupil's personality, we can expect the emergence of a new generation having social and moral sensitivity. In due time, the two types of capacity

can guide them to the power of making sensible moral judgment, moral decision making and moral action in their daily life (Wiriaatmadja, 2002).

The teaching of history is consequently obliged to inculcate moral values to the students. Referring to Scott's opinion, moral education must eventually result in moral capacity of the students, which, according to him, comprises four important domains, namely *moral sensitivity*, *moral judgment*, *moral decision making* and *moral action* (in Budimansyah, 2007; and Winataputra, 2007). To assure the achievement of the result, the teaching of history may make use of actual social issues as the core material of instruction. Social issues are generally viewed from the perspectives of social identity, social solidarity, nationalism, patriotism, democracy and the ideal type of a society which results from the process of history learning.

Individual and social morality, which closely relate to the actual social reality in the era (time) and place (spatial) where the people live, may be intermingled to form comprehensive instructional materials. These can even be attached to the universal issues and values. This follows that the discussion of moral sensitivity may traverse geographical and time borders, such as the discussion on the readiness to keep a distance with prejudice about people from different countries and/or of different ages. Moral action relates more to the actual behavior of an individual or a group in daily life which reflects mutual understanding. These are the intended instructional and nurturant outcomes of the teaching of history (Razaq Ahmad & Suwirta, 2007).

THE FUTURE ORIENTED HISTORY TEACHING

One big question to be addressed here is which perspective or orientation of historical value understanding that needs to be developed in the education of a nation? As we all know, in line with the arrival of globalization era, Indonesian people are encouraged to undergo social transformation as a result of information rush from every part of the world. These transformations take place in all aspects of life. These phenomena should of course be anticipated with the improvement of human resources, in terms of both intellectual capacity and character of a nation. This is done in order to avoid the gap between the quality of human resources and the challenges they are facing.

This task is indeed very demanding for those involved in the world of education, including the education of history. In this respect, the history education should work out a new perspective in the process of interpreting history which of course affects the teaching outcomes. A change also needs to be attempted in the perspective orientation of the teaching of historical values, from the currently adopted *past-oriented* to the *future-oriented* (Kartodirdjo, 1990b:215).

Inaccurate interpretation of historical facts can undermine the function of history as a means to clarify today and to predict the future. In such a situation, history loses the ability to clearly reflect the self, but in the opposite biases the picture of the self. The glorious past is depicted in such a way just to divert people from the current bitter life, not to identify values, wisdom and facts beneficial in

coping with problems. With that kind of treatment, history has the potential of losing its dynamics. The glorious past loses its functional value as an inspiring power. Instead it discourages and leads the young generation to be passive and apathetic. Experience tells us that generation of that kind prefers to retreat to romanticism and get themselves into oblivion (Kartodirdjo, 1990b; and Wiriaatmadja, 2002).

In an attempt to infuse spirit to the young generation, national identity and awareness as the foundation of national development should continuously be strengthened to assure its achievement. In other words, once the young generation is spirited national development can attain its objectives. This is the significance of history instruction: infusing spirit and inspiring breakthroughs (Soedjatmoko, 1976:14).

A new alternative to the orientation is very important to take in view of the fact that education is principally designed to prepare a better future for the new generation. The education of history as a part of national education must be in line with that vision. The conviction that the past is the best guide to the future is relevant with the perspective of history teaching which sees life process as a continuous line flowing from the past to the future. Perspective of this kind also strengthens the assumption that the future is very close to the present and the present is very close to the past (Abdoelgani, 1980:2).

On the very ground can the formulation of the image of the future be established and placed in understanding the value of history. In attempt to place the image of the future Polak's concept of *yesterday's tomorrow* can in this respect be explored. In his concept, an image of the future can be explored from historical events (in Suryo, 1990:8). In other words, the teaching materials of history can be carefully selected in order to assure the future oriented ones. With the future oriented materials at hand, we can correlate the historical events relevant with the current actual issues.

Efforts to use the future oriented perspective have done by the ancient nations like the Greece, Jewish and also by intellectuals, philosophers and writers of the past. In the domestic literature, the poet Josodipuro with his *Jangka Jayabaya* is very well-known. His study explains that logical and critical observation and contemplation may bring about great effects on the actual reality of the future (in Kartodirdjo, 1990b).

From the historical point of view, globalization has made borders of time and space blur and contemporary perspective strong. It is very understandable then that the feeling and the perspective of the past has no ample room for consideration, in contradiction with the future perspective which receives much attention. It is quite natural when Sartono Kartodirdjo asserts that today there exist a trend to put aside historical vista or optic which produces *present-mindedness* and cause futurologist orientation in human realm metahistoric and speculative (Kartodirdjo, 1997:122).

In order to yield better effectiveness, the teaching materials of history must portray more detailed events and provide the details with wider future perspective and orientation. It means that a comprehensive perspective is integrated with the understanding of cultural ideas of the historical process which encompasses the

present angles of image, expectation, projection and trends, and prediction of future civilization of a nation (Abdoelgani, 1980:11).

As a matter of fact, we have limitless materials to support the purpose, either for the history of Indonesia and of the world. The emphasis on the future orientation and perspective is expected to contribute to the construction of future of the nation which prepare it for a globalized life. For the reason, history teaching is still needed as an endeavor to set a robust ground to encounter the future (Wiriaatmadja, 2002; and Razaq Ahmad & Suwirta, 2007).

One important thing to reiterate here is that the present history teaching promises the formation of attitude and behavior of ideal citizens as expected by the community. To achieve the goal, the focus of its teaching program should be on provision of learning experience useful to help pupil to understand time perspective. This will lead pupil realize that: (1) physical environment determines when and how people live; (2) people have to try to wisely adjust, use, and control energy and natural resources around them; (3) change is an inevitable part of the society; (4) it is a must to involve themselves in the power generating changes to the society and civilization; (5) the change leads to interdependence among people and among nations in the world so that people need to appreciate and respect different values, have responsibility for others and cooperate with other people or nations in all aspects of life; and (6) people need to appreciate and respect the equality of race, religion and culture (Hyma, 1981; Penyarikan, 1986; Wiriaatmadja, 2002; Supriatna, 2005; and Razaq Ahmad & Suwirta, 2007).

CONCLUSION

The globalization era, which is characterized by the rapid flow of information crossing the borders of countries, has brought about considerable and fundamental changes in all aspects of society. This condition must be anticipated by equipping the new generation with satisfactory intellectual capacity, as well as strong character and personality (Ohmae, 1990). These are compulsory in order not to be left behind in this very competitive world. The teaching of history may play significant role especially in shaping the strong character and personality of a nation.

In pedagogical level, we should work out a new alternative in the teaching method which is expected to contribute to the achievement of the ultimate goal aforementioned. A future-oriented perspective deserves consideration. What is meant future-oriented perspective here is that the teaching of history must be put in a multidimensional perspective: of time and space.

In the dimension of time, history teaching must not only discuss the past but also its relation with the present and its possible implication for the future. In the dimension of space, the teaching of history must not only concentrate on the events or facts of one specific region or country separately, but also in relation to those of other region or country. By so doing, the pupil will evolve analytical, critical and creative thinking capacity which will enable them to see the world comprehensively. This way history teaching will be much more fruitful. For the reason, improvement

and revision in some aspects of the curriculum, textbooks, teaching method, as well as the teacher need to be attempted.

However, the search for the alternative in the teaching of historical value has to meet the following basic conditions:

First, the availability of historian teacher (teacher and lecturer of history). Up to now the teachers of history have been using conventional method. Their instructional activities are focused on the transformation of knowledge about historical events and facts. This practice does not only cause boredom but also bears trivial value. To reach a maximum result, better teacher preparation is a must.

Second, the development of new curriculum and textbooks. In anticipation of the globalization era, the current curriculum and textbooks must be revisited and adjusted. The curriculum and textbooks of history have so far been based on conventional outlook of history. In such a case, history teaching does not have much to offer to successfully cope with the changes which emerge especially from the advent of globalization era. The revisited curriculum should of course be the one which can generate creativity on the part of the pupil.

Third, the devising of comprehensive teaching method. Under today's circumstances the teaching of history requires the use of method which promotes reasoning and analytical competence over the historical events and facts. With the competence at hand, pupil will have the ability to view historical events and facts in relation to the contemporary issues for a better prediction of the future of both his own nation and of others'.

On the above ground, the improvement of history teaching becomes compelling and needs integrative effort by the writers, researchers, teachers and curriculum designers. This is especially true because the stream of social changes is now flowing very fast. An appropriate endeavor for the right solution must be done. Otherwise, the "destiny" of the teaching of history in this era of globalization will be miserable.

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