

Human Security Education and Research Session II Discussion

Dr. Wayne Nelles:

“Well thank you very much! To repeat something I said in the last section, as the discussant, I don’t like to take a long time talking because I think it’s important that we have more dialogue with the audience. I just want to reiterate for those not at the previous session the importance and value on holding a panel discussion that attempts to integrate and make the linkages between human security, education, and research. There are many theoretical dimensions and practical policy dimensions and implementation challenges and we could really do a whole conference on those alone.

With respect to the first presentation I think it’s a very promising development to see Japan beginning to take some leadership within the country and also within the region. They established a consortium on Human Security as did Canada in 2001 with the support of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. But the consortium has recently faltered in part because government funding has been cut. And there are some politics behind it which I won’t go into but it’s interesting to see this development in Japan so I’m wondering to what extent this is made possible through the innovation and tenacity of the academics and the good will and cooperation of academics especially? How much cooperation do you have with your foreign ministry as well as your international cooperation agency? Essentially what challenges, constraints and potential do you have in relation to your government? In terms of the larger view it’s interesting to see the extension into the region and the involvement of other Asian scholars. I’m wondering if you also include scholars in Asia from other countries. I’m kind of curious how you envision this consortium and how it will link up with other initiatives. There are others who attempted such a non-traditional security networks in Singapore. I’m wondering what similarities you share and what you have that is unique? In regards to the case study I think it was interesting and useful to have these kinds of initiatives to study particular cases and there are linkages between various sub-themes in the human security discourse. I’m wondering how you define human security, what kind of definitions are you using and what is guiding the consortium’s development and the research models? If you have a partnership, how does that implicate your research approach, what are the issues that arise, if any, about independence of research and the funding – if attached does it mean that your findings are constricted? Are the findings allowed to be published? I would like to hear about this. With respect to the last paper, I understand that this is a public presentation of a dissertation proposal – more or less – and you’re beginning to embark on some new and innovative research with respect to policy making. I come from a background in education – I studied in a graduate program called the social foundation for education policy. My question is, since you spent more time with the bowels of government and policy making, I would like to hear your perspective on things that weren’t discussed directly in your paper. If you have any insight, I would love to hear about them. For example, what about the role of inter-ministry cooperation? What work does the Ministry of Education do with respect to the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security, given that this is the policy-making apparatus? How do these kinds of debates define what the future of education will be in Thailand? What issues arise? That’s a more general question. The second component regarding other discussions from the conference about human security, for example, with relation to the challenges that

Thailand faces in the south, if the state is making education policy to solve the problem? Does it incorporate the challenges of conflict zones and the diversity of Thailand in education policy? In terms of policy apparatus, how is your government dealing with these kinds of questions or issues? I'll leave it to the audience to speak. Professor Surichai will have some additional remarks.

Professor Surichai Wungaeo: [Comments inaudible]

Dr. Yoichi Mine:

“Thank you Dr. Surichai. I'd like to take some questions from the floor.”

Unidentified speaker:

“Thank you. I like the idea of networking especially in these three phases where you start by bringing a group together from different countries. They create a framework and do their own things before coming back to Thailand. The fact that you mentioned NGOs and not just academics is very encouraging but I'd like to pursue the question beyond that. One reason that we look to NGOs is that they're right there where the action or where the problem lies – they're the first to find it. Where in Minimata, from what I understood, a whole group came many years ago when it was bubbling up. I remember the frustrations they were facing because the authorities wouldn't listen to them and the business community. The NGOs working on the ground with community groups are very important. I wondered if you think of it more as a partnership – if we've done this as an academic who studies in new mining for example. Academics have the framework, they know the literature, but NGOs on the ground know the issues because they're fighting with the communities against mines or dealing with the indigenous peoples who are torn. We've paired them, helped them find each other to prevent a case that is human in the sense that the NGOs are the ones that know the issue. But academics understand the issues too and put it into an analytical framework because they know that if it is not, the government and/or authorities won't listen. It has to be in some fashion that it is empirical research with some validity. The notion of partnership, of life on the ground, is something you could explore. The second outcome that is possible, if those are NGOs form a farmers association. It doesn't even need to be an NGO but if this becomes part of their agenda then it could become part of their action independently. That's the main thing I want to say. How do you see that kind of follow-up? Another point is that you have ten or eleven countries with one or two people who are going to specialize because they have the advantage of being in a very interesting network. Is there an alternative mechanism where others can be brought in? Are there conferences that people could bring back or action research so that the idea spreads faster than it does now. These are all emergency issues and they need to come up quickly. I think we need to have creative and efficient institutions, funding mechanisms and people who can reach out and help those that have problems to make them known faster in an arena that is quite open to listening. Thank you.”

Unidentified speaker:

“I don't know if my question is relevant or not but we have a Canadian human security perspective like the Siam human security perspective, why don't we combine all

the perspectives of human securities and make a universal declaration of human security? Is it possible? We have the human rights declaration...”

Professor Yoichi Mine:

“Let me respond if that’s okay. Thank you very much for your valuable comments and questions. I have to answer some questions myself first. First, I’d like to offer you questions. I am speaking in the camp of the developmental research of human theory because I’m a development economist. On the first day of the [inaudible] I will make a presentation [inaudible]. She is from the political mainstream of Japanese human security thinking. As [inaudible] explained in the consortium, [inaudible]. We have different faculties, engineering, medical science, so on, but we still identify ourselves to the same university. What we’re trying to do is to combine these different faculties as you’ve suggested. We speak about our own interpretation of human security from political and economic perspectives, but eventually we should probably be able to have a more integrated perception. About the consortium, actually our consortium does not receive any outside money. We have no money. This year two universities had a zero budget because the host university provided space. Many people fund themselves to come to conferences and other consortiums on human security. [Inaudible]. Our ministry of foreign affairs is very much interested in an initiative. They quite support it. If we ask them for some money maybe they can give us some. But we don’t ask them. This is basically an academic network. We have a decision making process in the annual meeting and also [inaudible] work and that’s all.

Japan is a part of Asia so it’s quite natural to ask about an Asian consortium. And yes the transnational nature of human security [inaudible]. We have a Japan consortium which is simply due to location. We have three branches around Japan representing the Japanese consortium. We expect that the Japanese consortium will become a branch of an Asian consortium which may, in turn, become a branch of a global consortium. That’s my dream. But we are very open and very much willing to join this kind of wider networking in the human security study and research.

Let me say a little bit about NGOs. [Inaudible] is actually a part of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. This program is now open to NGOs as well. Basically the [inaudible] is a Japanese institution and a little hegemonic. I’d like to have some different kind of seminars, the content from which should be taken from the NGO sector. Maybe in the future I think it would be better to have different kinds of [inaudible] with the NGO sector and maybe some other NGOs from the outside. This is my preference.”

Takashi Mita:

“In response to Dr. Nelles’ comments I’d also like to add that [inaudible] has been very active in the transfer of [inaudible] in this kind of training. They have accumulation in that area. But in the field of Human Security, especially the theoretical and conceptual parts, I believe that they are also relying on our academic field. I believe we have a very good relationship with corporations so that the independence of the research is not at risk. In response to your comments, yes, most of the participants are previous people and many of them are government officials. Many people say that Japan is developed but we have many problems as well. We have pollution problems and community disorders as well. It’s important to let them know that Japan has these things as well. Some of the

communities are now trying to regain what they had or what they lost and I think that's a meaningful thing. This is a case in Japan in Kobe and also in [inaudible] that the pollution is [inaudible] in any place where development happens. This is also the case in Japan. It is quite applicable to any society. Thank you."

Prason Kalayanathum:

"Thank you for your comments. I will develop my dissertation and [inaudible] to policy makers for agenda setting with regards to human security policy. Thank you."

Dr. Yoichi Mine:

"Thank you very much. At the end of the seminar, Osaka University is going to publish a textbook in English. This is very rare from Japan to publish a textbook in English on human security. I'm very much looking forward to having a text."

[Session ends]