The Geography of Chinese Knowledge: The Decentralisation of Culture and Power

By

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The connection between knowledge and political factors, such as power, influence, capability, war, and peace, is generally acknowledged but seldom addressed head on. ‘Knowledge’ has served largely as implicit ‘variable’ in the social interactions or in relations among nations and accorded little if any specific strategic importance. At the same time, however, everyone appreciates the obvious, namely that: if knowledge is power, then the application of knowledge is necessary for the realization of this power.

The power of knowledge is, fundamentally, the power of leverage and influence derived from the provision, access, diffusion and expansion of knowledge — as well as its utilization. This composite leverage is contingent on the interaction between the content of knowledge and the value of knowledge — and both are significantly enhanced by knowledge-networking practices made possible through innovative uses of cyber venues.

(The UNESCO Forum on Higher Education, Research and Knowledge By Nazli Choucri Professor of Political Science, 2007)
Tacit Knowledge

Explicit Knowledge

Subjective
Objective

Knowledge of experience
Knowledge of rationality

Body
mind

Simultaneous knowledge
Sequential knowledge

Here and now
there and then

Analog knowledge
Digital knowledge

Practice
Theory

Source: Nonaka & Takeuchi. 1995
Knowledge includes mastery of ceremonial activities, understanding ways of living, transmitting the techniques of production and manufacturing, the categorization of terms used to name things and so on. (An Intellectual History of China by Ge Zhaoguang, 2014)
Cities Studied

Chinese Community in Semarang. 2013
Chinese Community in Manado. 2014
Chinese Community in Medan. 2015
Chinese Community in Pontianak. 2017
Semarang, Manado, Pontianak: co-existence and cultural harmony achieved

Surabaya is still in limbo

Medan: horizontal conflict could happen
Conclusion

Power sharing is very difficult to do in all regions studied. I define power as the ability of controlling valuable resources dominantly and having a strong social network.

Cultural influences are very strong.

In the five regions studied, business activities are dominated by Chinese community.

The positive image of Chinese business people is smart, hard working and well-connected.
Recommendation

Chinese communities in Indonesia should have a sincere willingness to set business cooperation with the native or the local people.

Spread orientation knowledge at its very minimal level.