

A pilgrim's progress at the interface of culture and social psychology

Michael Harris Bond

Hong Kong Polytechnic University

Abstract for Master Lecture on "Culture and Social Psychology"

to be given at the APA Convention, 2018

Saturday August 11, 3:00-3:50 pm, Moscone Center, room 206

Appreciation of culture's influence on behavior has been a part of intellectual discourse throughout human history, but cross-cultural psychology only came of age in the mid-20th century as legitimate field of academic inquiry. From my vantage point as a Canadian social psychologist residing in Japan and Hong Kong, I have contributed to this literature since the 1970's despite my lack of prior training in this specialty. Along with other practitioners of this nascent sub-discipline of psychology, I struggled along a steep learning curve that I associate with four developmental stages in my "pilgrim's progress", each associated with a questing mentor: 1. Aristotle – the discovery stage; 2. Mercator – the psychography stage; 3. Wilhelm Wundt - the unpacking stage; 4. Urie Bronfenbrenner – the bio-ecological systems stage. These stages bring my sub- discipline closer to the goal of understanding how an individual's enculturation experience has interacted with his or her genetic endowment to produce the social behavior characterizing that individual. The yield from each stage is teased out by researchers in the face of particular problematics associated with each stage, problematics that have been addressed with varying adequacy. I will address these yields and problematics that I have discovered in the course of my career journey, and offer an agenda for future work at the interface of culture and social psychology.