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**SPACE FOR COLLABORATION FROM NON-WESTERN
PERSPECTIVES: COMMUNICATION IN AN ORGANIZATION**

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UUM

Universiti Utara Malaysia

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA
2016**



Awang Had Salleh
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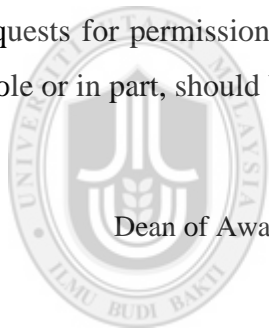
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Abstrak

Perbezaan ontologi dan epistemologi antara 'Occident' dan 'Orient' merupakan titik permulaan bagi menghurai penerangan mengenai 'Orient', masyarakatnya, budaya, dan minda. Khususnya, perbezaan tersebut membentuk asas falsafah yang berbeza bagi konsep ruangan dan masa antara Timur dan Barat. Merujuk kepada kajian Eurocentrism dalam bidang organisasi yang telah dijalankan, kebanyakan konsep ruangan telah dikomodifikasi dan dirasionalkan secara mutlak (absolut) bagi tujuan pentadbiran and kawalan; konsep ini bertentangan konsep ruangan dari Timur yang berasaskan kerelatifan. Akibat dari intelek imperialisme, kajian atas Timur yang menggunakan paradigma dan hasil pengetahuan dari Barat adalah tidak wajar. Kekurangan resonansi bagi paradigma bukan-Barat (*Non-Western*) dalam kajian komunikasi merupakan satu jurang ketara yang perlu dikaji. Oleh itu, kajian ini bermatlamat mengkaji kemampuan organisasi ruangan untuk kolaborasi daripada perspektif bukan-Barat. Kerja lapangan etnografi telah dijalankan di sebuah syarikat dalam bidang Teknologi Maklumat dan Komunikasi selama enam bulan. Data telah dikumpulkan melalui kaedah pemerhatian turut serta, temu bual separa berstruktur dan tidak berstruktur dengan 42 penganalisis berbangsa Cina bersama dengan sumber dokumentari dan artifak material. Hasil kajian mendapati bahawa terdapat lima jenis nilai yang bukan berasal Barat dalam andaian komunikatif berkaitan dengan nilai utama keharmonian yang menekankan perhubungan antara satu sama lain, saling kebergantungan dan kebersamaan. Penemuan turut membentuk pandangan kitaran bagi organisasi ruangan serta menunjukkan kemampuan organisasi ruangan dapat menjana nilai kemasyarakatan dan sosial untuk menjadikan ruangan sebagai 'destinasi' bagi kebersamaan dan kesepaduan. Dapatan kajian ini juga menyumbang kepada kajian atas ruangan untuk mengkaji ruangan dari pandangan kitaran bukan-Barat dan bukannya representasi linear yang telah lama digunakan.

Kata kunci: Organisasi ruangan, *Non-Western*, Harmoni, Komunikasi, *Henri Lefebvre*

Abstract

The ontological and epistemological distinction made between the ‘Orient’ and the ‘Occident’ has been largely accepted as the starting point for elaborate accounts concerning the Orient, its people, culture, and mind. Particularly, such distinction has led to a fundamentally different philosophy of space and time in East and West. In most of the Eurocentric organization studies, space has been commodified and rationalized as absolute for the pursuit of governance and control which stands a sharp contrast to the East relativism perspective of space. As a result of intellectual imperialism, placing East in the West paradigm through borrowed material and the eyes of others is impractical. The lack of resonance of non-Western paradigm in communication study is an apparent gap to be filled. Therefore, this research aimed to examine affordance of organization space for collaboration from non-Western perspectives. A six-month ethnographic fieldwork was conducted in an ICT company. Data were collected through participant observation, semi-structured and unstructured interview with 42 Chinese research analysts, documentary sources and material artefacts. Findings identified five underlying key values in non-Western communicative behaviour pertinent to Chinese cardinal value of harmony which emphasized on interrelationship, interdependence and mutuality. Results also demonstrated a cyclical view of space and the notion of spatial affordance afforded sense of community and sociality which making space a ‘destination’ for togetherness and cohesiveness. Lastly, the research contributed insights to study spatial production from a non-Western cyclical view rather than the long (mis)representation of linear way.

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Keywords: Organization space, Non-Western, Harmony, Communication, Henri Lefebvre

Acknowledgement

First and foremost, my deep appreciation is extended to my supervisor, Prof. Madya Dr. Norhafezah Binti Yusof for being a dream supervisor and supporting me in the best possible ways. I would like to thank her for her trust and motivation during the whole period of my study, and especially for her patience and guidance during the writing process. I am greatly indebted to her. I would also like to thank my co-supervisor, Prof. Dr. Che Su Bt Mustaffa for guiding me and offering valuable advice and comments throughout the years. Not to mention each and every one from Awang Had Salleh Graduate School, especially to Mr Mohd Azri Bin Md Nadzir, thank you for their kindness, support and countless assistance given to me.

A special thanks to Hooi San, a good friend of mine, for the sleepless nights, late suppers, laughter and tears we have had over the past ten years. It would have been a lonely journey without her. Also, I offer my regards and blessings to all other friends who supported me in any respect during my study.

Lastly, my heartfelt gratitude goes to my family. I warmly thank and appreciate them, especially my mama and sister for their unconditional love and care and for they have provided assistance in all aspects of my life.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Overview

Space and time are always at the central in human activities. Yet, its epistemology and ontology views raised uncertainty in whether space and time exist independently one another; does the future exist and wait us to meet; what is space; what is time; where is the past, are among the common ambiguities in them. There are fundamental different approaches to view space and time in the observed world (epistemology) and the existed world (ontology). Studying the two entities from the epistemological and ontological aspects and Occidental-Oriental worldview would contribute in constructing different roles of space and time in organization practice.

Although space has been studied in a rich body of literature from organization and environmental psychology discipline for more than 30 years, changes in today's workforce caused by the advancement of technology, coupled with the evolution of organizational structure and societal ideas, call for a reconsideration of the importance and role of space in work setting (Hua, 2010; Sailer, 2010; Peltonen, 2011; Wapshott & Mallett, 2011). More contemporary research is needed to not only reflect the current trajectories for space, as well as investigate the present workplace communication pattern and behaviour.

'Bring space back', mentioned by Clegg and Kornberger (2004) and Fayard and Weeks (2007), clearly suggested a need and interest in reconsidering spatiality for

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