



## Editorial

### **Advancing Collaboration of the East and West: Special Issues for the JSTP, WPATPS, and WACP Joint Meeting in Kamakura, April 2007**

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**Mt. Fuji**, floating over the sea of Kamakura, was incredibly beautiful. Kamakura is an ancient city, where transition from aristocracy to Bushi (warrior) feudal system took place. Kamakura was also a city where various sects of Zen (sitting and meditation) Buddhism developed, mingled with the indigenous Japanese traditions. Shonan International Village is at a distance of ordinary activities of our life, and therefore gave us a perfect venue to learn the best of the research activities in the cultural psychiatry.

In this issue of the World Cultural Psychiatry Research Review, you find a few examples of most outstanding presentations at the meeting. In the first paper, Masahisa Nishizono discusses “Globalization and meaning of Psychiatry.” Nishizono has long been interested in the meaning of this age, where globalization has transformed the fundamentals of people’s life, for good and bad, and the role which psychiatry can play in this transformation. Nishizono shares his knowledge, experience and inspiration in this paper.

The second paper is “Hwabyung in Korea: Culture and Dynamic Analysis” by Sung Kil Min. Min uses his extensive knowledge about western cultural traditions to analyze the essence of the Korean culture. Hwabyung is a disorder characteristically related with Korean culture, and the symptom features are so conspicuous that this disorder may merit an entity in a psychiatric diagnostic system.

The third paper is “Distorted medicalization of senile dementia: the Japanese case” by Mitsuho Ikeda and Michael K. Roemer. In the process of modernization, phenomena of natural life tend to lose their meaning and to be labeled with scientific terms. There is a good role that cultural psychiatry should play to prevent such distortion, and this paper represents an excellent endeavor in this regard.

The fourth paper is “Family and Group Suicide in Japan” by Shuichi Katsuragawa. Family and group suicide is a serious issue in Japan. As Katsuragawa implies, this phenomenon may be related

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with the value of collectivism and lack of clear and distinct boundaries among individuals in Japanese culture.

The fifth paper is “Naikan therapy in Japan: introspection as a way of healing. Introduction to Naikan therapy” by Teruaki Maeshiro. Naikan therapy is fascinating in that it is based on Buddhism tradition, that psychotherapeutic elements are extracted and refined from religious trainings and that it leads to deconstruction and reconstruction of the memories in the past. While it has a long historical background, its targets are shared with many modern psychotherapeutic approaches.

The sixth paper is “Role of attitude in multicultural counseling competency” by Masahiro Minami. The basis of this paper lies in the advanced cross-cultural mental health activities in Vancouver area. The importance of “attitude” in counseling had been discussed by Freud and appropriately elaborated in this paper. This paper should contribute a lot to the development of competency building training for multicultural counseling.

The seventh paper is “Multicultural social work in Japan: the need for development” by Kumiko Ishikawa. Ishikawa has worked to develop social work model to clients with various cultural backgrounds. Utilizing her study experience at Hawaii university, she tries to extend support network, especially for children, female and family. Hopefully this paper will make a mile stone for a much needed development in this area.

The eighth paper is “Current situations and guideline of occupational mental health in Japan: from the administrative guideline 2000 to 2006” by Lumie Kurabayashi. In Japan, recently, many cases “karo-jisatu (suicide from overwork)” are made to appeal for labor injury or damage claim. This has caused the government to provide guideline in 2000 and 2006. As Kurabayashi says, while these guidelines have not shown their effects yet, the situation may be good for us to pursue the improvement of Japanese working style, which is so strongly culturally influenced.

The last paper is “Cross-cultural factors on workers’ mental health: From the experience of the EAP service” by Yuko Murakami. The Employee Assistance Program service needs, by definition, to deal with possible conflicts of interests between the employer and the employees. When there are cross cultural factors in the job, the service can be even more complicated and therefore more important. This paper should help the Japanese corporations to be more cross-culturally minded. It is regrettable that we can present only a limited number of papers from the meeting, since there were numerous stimulating presentations. But I hope that WCPRR readers will have a good opportunity to understand how cultural psychiatry research has been developing in Japan and East Asia.

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