Emergent Cultural Theory and Sustainable Society

Lolita Nikolova, PhD
EdD candidate
Global Academy of Sustainable Culture at International Institute of Anthropology,
Salt Lake City, Utah, USA
lnikol@iianthropology.org

Setting

Emergent has been applying to different approaches to society. It seems it is a method and methodology of evolutionists to apply theories from the natural sciences to society (Taborga, 2014-2015, Emergent Change, 2009-2014). It is also a term to attempt new methods to feel gaps in research (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2008). There is also an emergent strategy in education (Bess, & Dee, 2012), etc.

Emergent cultural theory would be a critical analysis of the all uses of emergent as a term and concept from the perspectives of sustainable society, as well as a construction of frameworks for sustainable society which is believed to be a secure society. The main disbalance today in the social research is the disbalance of the used societal funds for products which do not have adequate values for society. There is a misconception that if somebody is hired at an academic institution, all individual products of the hired employees have social values and they are a result of a social interest (often artificially constructed through power). In fact, a very small percent of the individual academic production has social values at the scale to become an emergent culture. This is true even for products named emergent. The consequence in many cases is, unfortunately, social devolution and non-sustainable culture.

At a level of definition, an emergent product means a product which brings a new eminent level of cultural development with a complex positive social impact on society as a sustainable product. The emergent product will presumably result in a new solid branch on the tree of values, knowledge and social patterns.

Emergent and tradition

Emergent is an origination, which attempts to initiate a tradition. The value systems of transformation of the emergent into tradition can be genius and artificial. The genius value system does not have the artificial impact of powerful people and structures which begin to model the way in which the emergent product will communicate with society. The academic system can be a stage for testing of emergent products, but it can also become a stage of empowering pseudoemergent products through the system of subjective relationship and the systems of acceptance and rejection based on subjective criteria.

A typical candidate for an emergent product is a new academic hire. However, to have an emergent product, the system which produces it needs to consist of emergent components. The emergent components cannot be subjective, while the whole system of academic hiring is based on subjective criteria. The conclusion follows, that the emergent products needs new technologies to be produced, including new academic system of origination of emergent products.
The emergent products in science and education also need new open structures of the institutions where these products have been offered. In way in which many non-for-profit institutions have been designed, the institutions do not promote the emergent products, but attempt artificially to label some products as emergent and to reject or prevent the real emergent products to have the opportunity to communicate and exchange their values.

Shortly, the emergent products are typically sensitive and they can function and build values in emergent systems in which tradition has to be transformed according to the requirements of the sustainable society. The reproduction of the sustainable society depends considerably on the way the emergent products have been connected within the social system in order to achieve valuable progress.

**Emergent and value**

Emergent itself means value if it is a result of sustainable emergent standards. The value has impact on the emergent products since in contrast to the nature, in society value can be built artificially through political, economic, and many other social structures. Then, the sustainable society requires reevaluation of the context of the emergent products, strategic planning and strategic adjustments in order the emergent products to be able to be implemented in society and to contribute for the evolution of society. Absence of proper context for emergent products devolves society in the same way in which artificially labeled emergent products can in fact build a new layer toward devolution of society.

**Emergent and culture**

Presumably the emergent products need to assist culture as a main factor of evolution of society. Culture is by definition a combination of tradition and discovery/innovation/origination. The emergent brings the values of sustainable innovation. It may also reproduce the tradition but as a constant change. A typical instance is the western democracy. Western democracy has been reproduced as a sustainable emergent culture thanks to the dynamics of interactions of the different structures, which creates opportunity despite the controversy of some components of the social system, the result always to be a progressive achievement and increasing the security of the human civilization. In particular, emergent standard would be reculturing education (see e.g. Eaker, DuFour, & Burnette, 2002).

**Emergent and sustainable**

Emergent attempts sustainability. However, emergent strategy is to transform the traditional structures which damage the social sustainability. Emergent is a planned change, but a planned strategic change which attempts sustainability (cp. Taborga, 2014-2015). The evolutionist mechanical application of the emergent on society is neither an emergent culture nor explains the real cultural process, since the cultural process always is modeled by society. In particular, emergent is not an accidental discovery. To become emergent, the accidental discovery needs to be accepted by society. Human culture (in contrast to nature) always can reject even the biggest discovery with the biggest contribution to sustainable society, since culture is a result of construction of values which framework is the human mind and human power. The evolutionists who have been trying to equal nature and society as systems, believing that emergent is an objective (out of human power) process, in fact construct a non-sustainable and challenging approach to human society.

**Considerations**
New concepts on human culture in early 21\textsuperscript{st} century have been building the foundation of the emergent cultural theory in order to promote sustainable culture and secure society at a global scale. However, the emergent cultural theory has a difficult task to evaluate critically the way in which many traditional structures and styles of thoughts have been attempting to label themselves emergent in order to stay powerfully on the social stage. The emergent cultural theory can make essential change in society only if it has been promoting by emergent scientists who can make difference between genius and artificial and whose dedication is really to sustainable secure society. The sustainable secure society in turn means effective culture, promoting of emergent products and preventing any opportunities the emergent products to be substituted by products with pseudo-values.

References


