THE PLACE OF PHILIPPINE HISTORY IN THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNERS

by:

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Heroes of the revolution, presidents of the country, and name of cities and important dates in the calendar are amongst the things learners memorize in the old educational curriculum of the Philippines. Pupils among themselves even boast their knowledge of the important facts of Philippine history. In the classroom, a challenge of who knows first and who knows which exists among the pupils. And when pupils go to high school, an upgrade of the same phenomenon emerged. Not only that students know the history of the Philippines but also learn and memorize the history of our neighbors in the region. Such is the place of Philippine history in education in the old days.

Presently, a lack of knowledge in the history of the Philippines is evident among the 21st century learners. Most do not even know basic facts such as who were the early settlers of the Philippine Islands, the order of colonization, who fought for the independence, how society develops and what is being celebrated during the holidays. What the learners commonly knew are the current advances in technology. Learners know what media platform to use when socializing, playing, and watching videos. Thus, when a teacher asks question related to history, students seems to be ignorant about it.

History is story. These are stories of human evolution and civilization. From the first human being to the first human society. History is a story of change. Through it, we can have knowledge and understanding of our culture, citizenship, society, and our present problems. What we are is a product of history. Thus, our identity is embedded in the story of our history.
In my readings of Rizal, I once reconstructed his idea of the importance of looking back to where one comes from into “ang marunong lumingon sa pinanggalingan ay makapaglalakbay ng lubusan sa paroroongan”. This was rather an optimistic version rather than that of Rizal. In the presentation of Pañares (n. d.), a commissioner of the National Commission for Culture and the Arts (NCCA), she affirms that we need to teach our children our history, culture, and heritage because these strengthen national identity and pride. Also, children will have a strong sense of belongingness and identity as a Filipino.

Today, knowledge and understanding of Philippine history must have a place in the heart of 21st century learners. As vanguards of Philippine generation, our learners must preserved that which makes them in order that whatever change may come, the identity as Filipino is still recognized.

References:

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