

Asian Social Institute



Graduate School of Economics, Sociology,
Pastoral Sociology, Social Work,
Sociology Major in Pastoral Studies
Education (Specialization in Community Development)
Education (Specialization in Transformational Educational Leadership)
Social Services and Development
Ph.D. in Applied Cosmic Anthropology

**THE ACA EXPERIENCE:
FROM EPITAPH TO EPHPHETA, "IEPHPHETA"**

**A Dissertation Paper
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ABSTRACT

It was 1996 when I experienced a drastic change in my life, my paschal mystery in the Christian parlance, dark night of the soul by St. John of the Cross, conversion metanoia by St. Paul, individuation by Jung etc.. It was indeed a hopeless scenario as if I was drawn out from the ocean and plunged into the abyss of oblivion. This was my situation until I encountered the Applied Cosmic Anthropology (ACA) Program of the Asian Social Institute. The Asian Social Institute Applied Cosmic Anthropology Program provided me a transformative and unifying experience of the spiritual and the academic. In other words, what is spiritual can be academic, and what is academic can be spiritual. In the words of Ken Wilber, each personal space contributes to the spiritual integrity of the whole:

"I have one major rule: everybody is right. More specifically, everybody including me- has some important pieces of truth, and all those pieces need to be honored, cherished, and included in a more gracious, spacious and compassionate embrace." (Wilber, 1997)

It is this framework that guides my Asian Social Institute dissertation. This framework consists of a threefold phase I call 1) Epitaph 2) Ephpheta and 3) "Iephpheta."

Each phase has its narrative, implication, and dimension.

I was blinded by my seminary life (epitaph) which for me has been an illusion but through the help of learning and the teaching environment provided by the Asian Social Institute courses, faculty and students in ACA I was able to make the



breakthrough in life. Thus, Ephpheta experience. (Mk.7:31-37). After analyzing my experience in the seminary life that is epitaph experience and with the help of my ACA studies centered on creation I was able to construct another experience that is : Ephpheta.

However, the unfolding of my consciousness did not stop there but rather continued to evolve through my academic discourse, proposal defense thus, giving birth to "IEPHPHETA" which is my illumination, integration of epitaph as my formation not illusion. Through this academic discourse I realized that it is possible to establish wholeness or union of the academic and the spiritual. My "iephpheta" testified to this. Ephpheta which is to open inner selves- inner eyes, inner ear, inner tongue. It is the call or challenge of Jesus to me - my inspiration in writing this dissertation.

Although my story is focused on just one case, it may motivate others to give expression to their experience.

I believe that the findings of this study will be a contribution to the field of education and formation.

The phenomenological approach in this study hopefully would bring to the fore the experiences, perceptions and perspectives of those who have undergone ACA. These ACA personal and academic experiences bear their own spiritual power and possibilities. In particular, this study hopes to give an insight into the challenge of seminary formation.; and to answer the Biblical Call: "Many are the harvest but only few are the laborers."



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