The Asian Examples and Perspectives

Shin'ichi Suzuki
email: saskia933111@outlook.jp
Waseda University, Tokyo. Japan

Parimala V. Rao
email: parimalavrao@gmail.com
Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. India

Abstract: In this special issue we address how modern education crosses the borders of states, cultures and ethnicities towards developing universalistic perspectives. The Present Special Issue consists of 6 articles, 5 of them are on modernization of education in Japan and the remaining one discusses the issues concerning school education in Malaysia. Each paper illustrates the readers some of the typical phases of educational transitions which have been commonly observed in Asia. They represent reflexively and historically the educational situations which have been surrounding us all.

Keywords: Asia; Japan; Malaysia; History of Education; Modern education.

The European imperialist and the Asian nationalist perspectives on education tend to construct monolithic and oppositional entities. The imperialist narratives contrast 'static, unchanging Asia' with 'dynamic, rational Europe', while the Asian nationalist narratives construct the 'inherent spiritual superiority' of Asia in contrast to 'materialist, expansionist Europe.' Asian notions of time and space, as meta-philosophical-aesthetical presupposition to ethnic religion and habits, were challenged by western modern ideas on time and space. In fact, cultural and religious diversity dominate the Asian livelihood, polity, and all other aspects of human existence. This diversity has been inherited, nurtured and developed by the inhabitants within the multi-geographical regions in Asia. In this sense, Asia is at once monolithic in space so far alternativeness to something European is imagined, and pluralistic in terms of culture, religion, language and polity. Livelihood envelops both individual and collective ways of living shared by people within a bound of given culture, that is, value-orientation can be not only collective but individualistic. Geo-cultural space in Asia is complex in its axiological entity.

The introduction of modern education during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries evoked contrasting reactions in different societies, countries and regions. Such reactions reflected, on the one hand, a-synchronicity in conventional child-rearing in its historical traditions, and on the other, resulted in diverse type of national system of schoolings. The educational modernization went on many occasions with the process of nation-state building in Asia. The modern national education in Asia became an exhibition of different types of building national education from doctrines to practices. The parallel between state formation and educational modernization made each country's or regional education distinctive owing to historical backgrounds. So while the spirit of European enlightenment reached several corners of Asian mind, the Asian idealization of modernity differed, however, from region to region in its implementation resulting either in losing active political equilibrium or in ethnic and national identity-crises.

Asian people had their own ways of living that were systematized in institutionalized norms, values and ethos. Asian people also had their ways of community problem-solving which covered political, legal, ethical and religious conflicts.

From the last decades of the nineteenth century, the New Education Movement reached Asia. John Dewey's visit to China and Japan was symbolic of the criticism of coercively institutionalized school education. Maria Montessori's principles and methods were also widely accepted. Ellen Key attracted many Asians. Is pragmatic child-centred education still alive now? Indian philosophers like Rabindranath Tagore vindicated the spiritual values of love and peace which represented Hindu and Upanishadic world-views. In this special issue we address how modern education crosses the borders of states, cultures and ethnicities towards developing universalistic perspectives. The Present Special Issue consists of 6 articles, 5 of them are on modernization of education in Japan and the remaining one discusses the issues concerning school education in Malaysia. Each paper illustrates the readers some of the typical phases of educational transitions which have been commonly observed in Asia. They represent reflexively and historically the educational situations which have been surrounding us all.

In the article titled *Space and Time in the Creative Curriculum and Education in two Islands in the Early Twentieth Century,* Yoko Yamasaki and Peter Cunningham have selected Britain and Japan, and juxtaposed two sets of discourses on «drama» in school education. They chose 2 illuminative authors or practitioners from both countries: Shoyo Tsubouchi and Kuniyoshi Obara from Japan and Harriet Finlay-Johnson and Henry Cadwell Cook from Britain. Tsubouchi was a university professor and the translator of the works by Shakespeare. He was an innovator of Japanese theatre. Another figure is an eminent educator, Kuniyoshi Obara who served long as a school teacher and established his Garden or City of Education (or Academic Town) upon his principle of Zenjin-Kyoiku (education for a complete man). Of two British pioneers in drama education Harriet Finlay-Johnson and Henry Cadwell Cook have been chosen. Harriet Finlay-Johnson, as a teacher and headmistress, introduced drama into children's activities in her own way of managing her small village school. Her practice was highly appreciated by the then Her Majesty's Inspector Holmes. The authors refer to Holmes' remarks upon Finlay-Johnson. Henry Cadwell Cook,

while teaching at the Perse School in Cambridge, during 1911-15 and 1919-33, thought that the existing school system hampered true education. He argued that «proficiency and learning come not from reading and listening but from action, from doing and from experience». To Cook the natural means of study in youth was to play. Although the juxtaposition of four pioneers on drama in education has not been so illuminative enough for the readers as to grasp the depth of wisdom of introducing drama into education, the author's argumentations bring the readers to the conclusive statements with bright tones for active learning in the form of drama.

In the paper titled *The Origin of Teaching as a Profession in Japan: A Transnational Analysis of the Relationship between Professionalism and Nationalism in the 19th Century,* Aki Sakuma, explains how the Japanese teaching job was made professional by way of referring to Dr Arinori Mori who was nominated the First Minister of Education in the Meiji Government. The author describes how Mori studied and what he acquired. According to the author, Mori had found in the United States of America a close relation between Christian God, the United States and teaching profession. Mori understood how American teachers became such professionals who would contribute to the United States. The ideological type of triangle consisting of Christian God, state and children, was a key model for nurturing and training women teachers in the American context. Mori brought back this triangle and replaced Christian God by the Meiji State, state by the subjects and remoulded another triangle which consisted of Meiji Imperial State, subjects and children. Teaching job suggested to bring-up children as royal subjects and to devote themselves to sustain the Meiji Imperial State. The arguments are suggestive but also provocative in the sense that the author left untouched if the Meiji Imperial State was religious. The conclusions are suggestive and illuminating which deepen the understanding of the present day Japanese educational administration and policy-choices.

Yuri Ishii discusses how far music education contributed to building the nation-states in Asia in the paper *School Music Education as a Tool of Modernization and Nation-State Building in Asia,* by examining several discourses on nationalism and nation-states, the author has chosen the Anderson's categories and applies his official nationalism to frame up of references regarding modernization and state-formation. The author examines four countries - Japan, Thailand, Taiwan, and Singapore and addresses four important questions.

1. Absence of popular-linguistic nationalism resulted in contrasting consequences depending on the availability of a common language shared by power holders and the general public;
2. Whether modernization accompanied the change in power holders and influenced the government's decision on how to effect official nationalism;
3. Just as in Europe, how critical the populace's identification with the government influenced their acceptance of official nationalism;
4. How relevant the historical timing of the formation of official nationalism was a result of the government's decision.

Dealing with each political unite from the standpoint of common language and official nationalism, the author discusses music that has been set within the national curriculum and through comparison deduced two cases; music in compulsory category and music in optional category. In the former case popular-linguistic nationalism works in two dimensions, that is, unified performance of state roles in national and international identification, while in the latter case popular-linguistic nationalism works in the international dimension of role-performance of the state but it does not work in the national dimensions. The school music can reflect such linguistic plurality and the governmental choice of and commitment to standardization of music symbols that had been shared by the sub-ethnic groups of nation whose abstract imagined communities could be heterogeneous to the 'Imagined Community'. Such conflicts represent plural national identifications.

Mika Yonezu discusses why and how Montessori-method has been imported and accepted in Japan through the eras of Taisho (1912-1926), Showa (1926-1989) and Heisei (1989-1981) in *The History of the Reception of Montessori Education in Japan*. In the introductory session the author explains what Maria Montessori proposed and practiced in Italy on care and up-bringing of early years of children. The author also describes the international concerns on Montessori's ideas and practices, gives the American case in which Montessori was accepted rather enthusiastically. The author also illustrates how Montessori was introduced and accepted by Japanese public. After explaining historically the processes of Japanese acceptance of Montessori Methods, the author surveys the practices of Montessori's methods in contemporary Japan. The author clarifies the fact that the Japanese acceptance was initiated indirectly via the then American higher concerns with Montessori. The first report on Montessori was published on the daily journal entitled Yorozu-Choho (the author calls the journal Manchoho, but historically the first of three Chinese square letters-title of the Journal- should be read «yorozu» which means «everything concerned»). The author touches briefly the historical background of «Montessori Movement». Although explanations given are rather limited, they may suggest the readers some causes which led more people to the movement. In this article the author discloses author's understanding of the government documents issued of late and says that there can be found the term «environment» of small children in them. The author argues for the similarity of two terms of «environment»; one from the works by Montessori and another from the government documents on early year child-rearing. Illustrating some of the kindergartens and nursery schools in Japan where the Montessori-methods are used, the author would assert that today the Montessori methods are widely accepted not only by the government but also by people.

Kazuihito Obara's paper *The West meets the East* discusses if the similarity or homology between Zenjin-kyoiku (education for a complete man) and Well Rounded Education. The author also analyses the outcomes of the trials of well-rounded education and their benefits. In the third section, the author deals with Japanese education throwing light on its system, its problems and a possible remedial solution. The author suggests here the importance of multifarious intelligence and harmonious synthesis of the individual and the social. The author argues for a Japanese trial of establishing well-round education the forerunner of Zenjin-Kyoiku, and states that are several points of resemblance between Zenjin-Kyoiku and the well-rounded

education. The author offers a remark «West meets East» in the parenthesis given to the paragraph which describes how often and many visitors from Europe, America and other parts visited Tamagawa Gakuen. The author invites readers' attentions to the late Professor Bollnow's remarks ; «…Es ist die Reihe der grossen Erziehergestalten , wie sie auch in Deutchland in Herman Lietz, Paul Geheeb, … als Begrunder von Landschulheimen die Erziehung aus erstarrten Formen beifreit haben». The author explains that Kuniyoshi Obara learnt the neo-Kantian philosophy. The author's comment on Neo-Kantian philosophy that was accepted by Kuniyoshi Obara can be identified by the author's graphical presentation of Zenjin-Kyoiku, whose three stages of idealized personality can be paraphrased, interpreted and synthesized by the Neo-Kantian's ontological, epistemological and methodological trilogy.

In *Socio-historical Mobilities and Classroom Discourse in Malaysia,* Lorraine Symaco and Tee Meng Yew take the classrooms in Malaysian schools as a typical space imbued with western notion of time. In such space what kind of «mobilities» could be possible? The authors hypothesize *The Class* to be «nexus-like space», that is, a space consisting of (a) personal connections based on individuals and (b) the foci to which all connections converse. Nexus, in Jespersen's terminology, is a linguistic, syntactic and phonetic space. As to analysis of utterances made by children and teachers in the school classrooms, the authors use «dialogism», one of the Bakhtin's trilogies (heteroglossia, and polyphony). The authors think that voices of children are original and unique and correspond to their thinking which is rich for children's own perspectives and consciousness. Accepting an outcome from a survey carried out by scholars, the authors assume that children's discourses can be largely monologic in nature. Relying on Henri Lefebvre's space theory, the authors presuppose that the classroom is embraced within the everyday life and hence time and space in the classroom may deviate from rather a rigid form of space centred time. The author's methodological preference resulted in weighing «moments» in the classroom. Into and from «moments» meaningful messages could come from and send out to next «moments». The authors examine why dialogues between teachers and children can be monologic and find the fact that the colonial reign over Malaysia still affects people's consciousness and its representation. The cases the authors report can be illustrative enough to show what the authors concern with talks between a teacher and pupils. The dialogues exemplified in the paper would inform many pedagogical scholars of possibilities to investigate and develop «teaching-dynamics» that might at once relativize and enrich radical pedagogy. Discussions are full of information of linguistic issues in developing modern geo-polities whether or not in line with the grammar of modernity. In conclusion, the authors cite a passage from Keller (2011): Achieving dialogical learning in schools also allows one to «meet the other and actually listen, hearing the words and encountering the other in a way that puts one's own idea into question……education for dialogue which prevents 'domination by which one's own tribe or even one's own self become the sole bearer of humanity and truth». The authors believe in the dialogue type of education and they share the opinions delivered by Arnett (1993); namely, it (dialogue type of education) allows for authentic self-creation where authority is based not on subordination but on cooperation and only when learners are granted a voice can they truly make a difference and become active players on the global stage.

When the Grammar of Modernity worked well to its fullest extent, it quite often crossed geo-polities. What kinds of effects did the Grammar have in Japan? In the beginning (of the Meiji Era), almost all of the schools were built in the villages and cities by ways of imitating the western school in the pictures or ways of expanding the conventional *Tera-Ko Ya* into a school room. In the initial stages Shinto shrines, Buddhist temples, theatres, and some rooms of big houses were borrowed to set up schools. An American missionary who travelled to the northern local corners of Japan found every village being provided with a school (Suzuki & Yamaki, 2015).

The Japanese schools had various «spaces» inside. The data shows such diversity; of all 20,692 primary schools in the year 1895, 8,257 borrowed the Buddhist temples, 6,794 borrowed commoners' houses. Reading the education statistics of the year 1875 (3 years after the First Ordinance on School Systems and Education of 1872), the average number of pupils a school was 60 and its 12,551 schools which amounted to 58% of the total number of schools were single teacher schools. Generally speaking, about 90% of all schools were the school whose teachers were 1~3 in number and whose pupil-number was between 40 and 50 (Committee of Centenary History of School Systems in Japan, 2009, drafting, Ministry of Education, Science and Sport). It may mean that classroom at school was «of commoners dwelling or of religious building» in its special shape. Inside such spaces more teachers were not qualified in the modern sense (refer to Sakuma's article in this Issue). In 1881 the orders of primary and secondary school buildings and provisions were issued. Next year the order of provision for normal school was circulated. As the result of these administrative devices, the common schemes of school buildings were brought into functioning. Financial stringency, however, often hindered central or local authorities from exercising the orders in practice. At this stage, people came to witness the barrack-like buildings that were prepared by the local authorities for children. A classroom became square in its shape.

Arinori Mori before and after being nominated as the Minister of Education, visited often the local schools and overviewed physical training that was given to pupils by teachers. As the modern schools became gradually spread, more primary schools started to display their physical training open to people who lived around the schools. Military and physical training performed by school pupils (Undo-kai) attracted them. It meant that more primary schools kept their playing fields. Thus the space occupied by a school changed not only in width but in roles for child education / training children for the future armed forces. Interestingly, this process went with the development of Gakugei-kai, which was an assembly organized by school and participated by of school children: songs, dance, exhibition, and theatre. Local primary schools became such places as Festa which displayed children's activities in the forms of theatrical performance and physical training. Taking into considerations the fact that Tenno worship was educationally institutionalized in the school classrooms with the photos of Tenno and Kogo (his Empress) and citation of Kyouku-Chokugo (Education-Priscripts given to people by the name of Tenno) by pupils every morning, the local primary schools were the extraordinary space where the Festa could be a symbolic alternative isotope to the Japanese state education which was driven to and immersed with the ideology of the Meiji Japan (Suzuki, 2013; Suzuki & Yamaki, 2015). In 1923, a great earthquake hit Tokyo. Most of wooden

houses were destroyed and burnt down. Two years later a big earthquake attacked Hyogo-ken. These natural calamities required people to think of school building with new perspectives. However, Japanese school building as a whole followed the same pattern: a south side corridor and classrooms on the north side. (In Manchuria where Japan ruled for ten years the schools built by Japanese had the reversed structure inside school: classrooms on the south side, probably because of necessity to gain more sun light, cf. Suzuki, 2015). Rapidly the barrack-like school building spread and remained. Jeremy Bentham coined a new terms panopticon which meant a transparent scheme inside the prison (Suzuki, 1962). In most Japanese schools, once, headteacher's and school maters' rooms were situated on the side of the play field. All pupils on the play field were always in the sight of teachers. Panopticon worked there. In this Issue Yamasaki and Cunningham discussed about Shoyo who intended to bring drama into schools. It could be interesting topics for educational historians to examine strictly what concepts Shoyo had had about sacralisation of school rooms and what kind of imagination of theatre in such schools as mentioned above.

Nowadays, comparative studies of conventional Japanese school building are made with those of innovative building plans. One of the present editors found once the difference between Japanese «open-schools» and British and American «open schools». In America in the centre of open space there was a resource centre while there was a common room in Britain. In Japanese open schools what was important was the floor itself. An open floor was left to be un-covered by any provisions. Coming back to the development of Japanese house building from ancient time to Yedo period, we may find an interesting history of space in room construction. In a short phrase, space moved from «three dimensional cubic or rectangular parallel piped structure» to «non-symmetrical irregular structure». In the Japanese houses there are invisible but actual levels of floors that serve in keeping latent belief-hierarchy like paternal authority and genius loci. Open school in Japan represents that sort of traditional structure of space in the Japanese house building (Suzuki, 2002, 2006).

Modernity progressed with a large scale of migration of people from local villages to towns, from towns to cities and from cities to highly urbanized zones. In this sense urbanization has brought a highly artificial space which can envelop or embrace numberless sub-spaces, each of which is the emerging unit of livelihood. In this urbanized hierarchical administrative unit there can be various units of local administration, so also some type of educational institutions from pre-primary to tertiary institutions. Given the definition of educational hierarchy as a composite of school and pupils/students, there can be in the highly urbanized zones an overwhelming gigantic educational hierarchy, consisting of school articulations, which may lie in the biggest urban space. It is because urban zones may embrace cities and towns where there are also various educational hierarchies. Even in the local administrative areas such as villages there are diverse educational hierarchies, even if their structures are small. Classifying educational hierarchies by the scale of geographical zones of local educational administration, we gain (a) micro educational hierarchies at villages, (b) meso educational hierarchies in cities and towns, and (c) macro educational hierarchies at urbanized areas. Thus, despite of different characteristics of regional administrative spaces, there can be a gigantic national educational hierarchy which

is consisting of macro, meso and micro educational hierarchies. The whole structural feature of this gigantic educational hierarchy, which is national, is like nest-box. The imaginary space of the gigantic educational hierarchy could be either of trigonal pyramid or spindle-shape. In this sense there can always be some urban regions in a country where some mesoscale educational hierarchies and large number of microscale educational hierarchies can coexist. In an educational hierarchy there are many institutions of different size-smallest to largest; for example a village school which accommodates all age pupils from 5 to 16 on one side and another side a large comprehensive school which accommodates pre-primary children and pupils of compulsory schooling age, and exceeds more than 1,000 pupils enrolled. Taking into consideration the diverse educational surroundings and qualities of provisions, achievement of school education may vary from school to school on all levels of respective educational institutions (e.g. primary level and secondary level) in a micro educational hierarchy. They translate into a series or bundle of educational spaces which are horizontal, vertical and virtual in construction, at every geographical field in a geo-polity or a modern nation-state. The Grammar of Modernity would tighten this sort of educational hierarchies from micro, meso to macro levels. If a mechanical linear time could be woven into these educational hierarchies, all kinds of learning could easily be controlled by that time, if not by state-time. Readers may find some answers to this assumption.

The essays in this special issue eloquently show that the modern education which originated in the west spread to the east during the nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries cannot fit into polemical binaries. They exhibit eloquently that the process of transmission of knowledge was complex and nuanced. In most cases the Japanese and Malayasian educators voluntarily took the lead in bringing in the western knowledge and placing them on firm footing. There were differences at the stage of implementation, but these differences were due to the adaptation of western ideas to specific local cultural milieu and not due to the incompatibility of western ideas. Symaco and her colleague proposed a theoretical tool of «nexus-like space». As mentioned above, that is a «phonetic and linguistic space». In this sense, the ideas of drama or theatre in Yamasaki and Cunningham' article could echo to phonetic and linguistic space. In discussing British and Japanese drama in school, they briefly referred to the ideas of drama by Heathcote. Heathcote belonged (she passed away in 2011) to the contemporary and it may not be a proper approach in a historiographic sense to quote and compare Heathcote's remarks with those which both authors cited from Finlay-Johnson and Cook. However, Heathcote's ideas of the «We» (neither «I» nor «me») (Heathcote, 1994; Wagner, 1999) in organizing and performing a drama can suggest an important imagination of human-being touching education. Nexus-like space presupposes not only dialogues but polylogues where «We or We feel» should work. Heathcote's «mantle of expert» clearly suggests what Symaco's nexus-like space may ideally embrace in learning. This kind of presupposition of co-existence of human being in education may necessitate to re-edit the Grammar of Modernity or to refute. Eric Hobsbawm says that living with my ancestors makes me historic (Hobsbawm, 2003). In his sense, historical investigations and historical understanding should go with a new idea of human existence beyond monadic, ego-centred, and concentric images of humans. Being this new view of human beings capable of

solving such dichotomy as Europe versus non-Europe (Kitagawa & Sakiko, 2009), the remarks left by Hobsbawm could be overcome: 'self-contained, self–reproducing and ideally self–stabilizing system' is ahistorical.

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