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Cover Photo

Elementary school children at a workshop on international children's human rights in Toyonaka City, October 24, 2002. Courtesy of the Mainichi Shimbun.

Back Cover Photo

A teacher-training seminar on the skills and curriculum needed by teachers to increase their students' chances of university entrance, Tokyo, October, 2001. Courtesy of the Mainichi Shimbun.

Editorial Notes

Personal Names

All personal names are given in the customary order in the native language of the person unless otherwise requested. Hence in Japanese names, the family name is given first, e.g. Mifune Toshiro, and in Western names the family name is given second, e.g. Charlton Heston.

Romanization

Due to software limitations circumflexes are used in place of macrons, and omitted in most personal and place names.

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This issue of *Social Science Japan* takes a timely and varied look at education in Japan. Japan's Fundamental Law of Education, established in 1947, is currently under review by the Central Council for Education, with the planned submission of a bill of amendments to the ordinary Diet session this year. Recent years, moreover, have witnessed mounting pressure placed by changing social, economic and international environments on an education system that has in many respects outlived its usefulness. The articles in this issue allude to these pressures and discuss the resultant changes (or lack thereof) from a number of perspectives, including gender, discipline, local government, the linkage between education and socio-economic status, and evolving social and academic perceptions of these areas.

One of the papers we feature in this edition is an historical paper on the 1958 UNESCO Textbook Conference, which presents a heartening picture of international accord quite in contrast with the more familiar refrain of nationalistic textbook squabbling. One hopes that the preoccupations of certain groups of policymakers and opinion leaders with instilling patriotic values and creating "tough" Japanese will not overshadow the proposed amendments to the education law, and that what educational reform may come will follow a more enlightened and vital path than that of its economic counterpart.

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How Profitable is Japanese Education?

An International Comparison of the Benefits of Education

Ishida Hiroshi and Yoshikawa Yumiko

Education is known to increase socio-economic benefits in industrial nations, including Japan. However, very little research has been conducted comparing the socio-economic benefits of education across countries, primarily because of the difficulty in assuring the comparability of data sets and measurements between nations.¹ The thesis of educational credentialism (*gakureki shakai-ron*) in Japan holds that education is the primary determinant in allocating socio-economic resources in Japanese society.² According to this thesis, completion of university education and entrance to high-quality institutions assure both high status jobs and high pecuniary returns and it is, moreover, argued that the socio-economic benefits associated with educational attainment are substantially larger in Japan than in other nations due to the fiercely competitive nature of the educational environment. However, whether or not socio-economic returns from education are in actual fact greater in Japan than elsewhere is something that remains open to question, begging empirical examination of the validity of the thesis of educational credentialism in Japan.

We set up a project to examine the relationships between social background, education and socio-economic attainment in industrial nations. Our project is one of the first systematic attempts to conduct a rigorous international comparison involving Japan of the process of socio-economic attainment. We used social surveys conducted in Japan, the United States, and Germany, recoded the original variables into comparable measurements, and compared the effects of social background and education on occupational status and income across the nations studied.³ The analyses are restricted to male and female respondents who were 20 to 69 years old at the time of the survey.⁴ A respondent's first and current occupation are measured by the Treiman's international occupational prestige scores, which represent the world-wide average of occupational status ranking.⁵ The scores range from 0 to 100, with, for example, a physician scoring 78 and a garbage collector 13. A respondent's individual income is standardized by applying the consumer price index across different years and by then converting it according to the yen-mark-dollar exchange rate. Income is finally expressed by taking the natural log, so that the effect of education represents a percentage change in income.

A respondent's education is measured by different levels of educational credentials. In Japan and the United States, five levels of academic credentials are distinguished: (A1) junior high school or compulsory education (the base reference category), (A2) high school, (A3) junior college or college of technology, (A4) four-year universities, and (A5) graduate school. In Germany,



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¹ One of the few exceptions is Yossi Shavit and Walter Muller (eds.), *From School to Work* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998).





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five levels of academic qualifications and three levels of vocational qualifications are distinguished: (A1) minimum education (the base reference category), (A2) additional secondary education, (A3) *Abitur*, (A4) polytechnics (*Fachhochschulen*), (A5) universities, and (V1) manual vocational qualifications, (V2) commercial vocational qualifications, and (V3) *Meister*. Social background includes father's and mother's education (measured in the same way as the respondent's education) and father's occupation (measured by international occupational prestige), with an additional variable indicating those from an agricultural background. In addition, we introduced gender in order to measure the male-female difference in socio-economic attainment and labor market experience and its square which take into account the curvilinear trajectory of occupational status and income during the life course.

Table 1 presents the effects of educational credentials on occupational status and income in three nations. These effects are calculated after controlling for social background and gender, as well as labor market experience and its square for current occupation and income. Therefore, the effects of education represent the net direct effect of attaining a certain level of education among those who share similar characteristics with regard to other variables. Beginning with the effect on the first occupational status in Japan, the figure for "high school" is 4.066, indicating the average difference in the prestige score for the first occupation between high school graduates and those who only completed junior high school (the base reference category). University graduates score 12 points higher, and those who attended graduate schools 24 points higher, than those who only completed junior high school. Similarly, university graduates and those who attended graduate school show a clear advantage in current occupation (15 points and 24 points, respectively) over those who only completed compulsory education in Japan. The figures for income represent percentage difference. In Japan, high school graduates have 28.6% more income than junior high school graduates. University graduates have 60% more income and those who attended graduate school have 72% more income than those who completed junior high school.

Rather than going into the details of Table 1, let us instead summarize the main findings. First, educational credentials positively affect socio-economic achievement in all three societies. Educational credentials are used to allocate socio-economic resources regardless of social background, gender, and labor market experience.

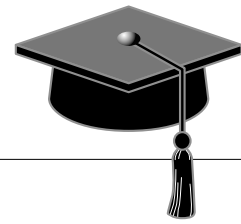


Table 1 The Effect of Educational Credentials on Socio-economic Status in Japan, the United States, and Germany

	First Occupation		Current Occupation		Log Income	
[Japan]						
High school	4.066	**	5.265	**	0.286	**
Junior college	8.312	**	10.028	**	0.486	**
University	12.315	**	15.064	**	0.601	**
Graduate school	23.534	**	23.620	**	0.718	**
[United States]						
High school	6.968	**	6.648	**	0.320	**
Junior college	15.133	**	11.682	**	0.550	**
University	18.499	**	17.530	**	0.765	**
Graduate school	28.596	**	24.854	**	1.047	**
[Germany]						
Additional secondary	4.060	**	4.677	**	0.129	**
<i>Abitur</i>	5.141	**	7.141	**	0.185	**
Polytechnic	14.239	**	19.059	**	0.574	**
University	21.601	**	23.701	**	0.704	**
Manual vocational	1.804	**	0.661	*	0.104	**
Commercial vocational	2.020	**	3.294	**	0.189	**
<i>Meister</i>	3.683	**	4.488	**	0.266	**

Note : ** indicates that the effect is significant at 1% level.

* indicates that the effect is significant at 5% level.

The effects of education are after controlling for social background and gender as well as labor market experience and its square for current occupation and income.

Table 2 The Effect of Social Background and Gender on Socio-economic Status in Japan, the United States, and Germany

	First Occupation		Current Occupation		Log Income	
[Japan]						
Gender (male)	0.618	*	4.396	**	1.135	**
Father's education (high school)	1.812	**	2.177	**	0.081	**
Father's education (higher education)	3.231	**	3.676	**	0.137	**
Mother's education (high school)	1.731	**	1.147	*	-0.013	
Mother's education (higher education)	1.905	*	1.262		0.035	
Father's occupation	0.153	**	0.203	**	0.007	**
Farm background	-0.913	**	-1.602	**	-0.122	**
[United States]						
Gender (male)	-2.815	**	-1.145	**	0.611	**
Father's education (high school)	1.478		1.327	**	0.090	**
Father's education (higher education)	5.654	**	3.167	**	0.206	**
Mother's education (high school)	-0.199		2.329	**	0.124	**
Mother's education (higher education)	1.775		4.970	**	0.181	**
Father's occupation	0.137	**	0.138	**	0.004	**
Farm background	1.020		-2.011	**	-0.111	**
[Germany]						
Gender (male)	2.501	**	1.997	**	0.532	**
Father's education (lower secondary)	1.321		1.406		0.021	
Father's education (upper secondary)	4.405	**	4.213	**	0.116	**
Father's education (<i>Abitur</i> and above)	7.462	**	5.983	**	0.186	**
Father's education (manual vocational)	0.315		-0.142		0.001	
Father's education (commercial vocational)	1.054		0.914		0.050	*
Father's education (<i>Meister</i>)	1.037		0.720		0.073	**
Mother's education (lower secondary)	1.659		1.525	*	0.018	
Mother's education (upper secondary)	4.683	***	4.064	**	0.083	*
Mother's education (<i>Abitur</i>)	4.663	**	5.643	**	0.139	**
Mother's vocational education	1.146	**	0.418		0.029	*
Father's occupation	0.187	**	0.218	**	0.005	**
Farm background	-3.040	**	-1.211	**	-0.064	**

Note : ** indicates that the effect is significant at the 1% level.

* indicates that the effect is significant at the 5% level.

The effects of social background and gender are calculated after controlling for labor market experience and its square for current occupation and income.

Notes

² For an overview of the thesis of educational credentialism in English, see William Kelly, "Directions in the Anthropology of Contemporary Japan," *Annual Review of Anthropology* 20 (1991): 395-431. For critical examination of various aspects of educational credentialism, see Hiroshi Ishida, *Social Mobility in Contemporary Japan* (London and Stanford: Macmillan Press and Stanford University Press, 1993).

³ Ishida analyzed the Japanese data sets (1985 and 1995 Social Stratification and Social Mobility Surveys) and the 1980-2000 American General Social Surveys (GSS). He is grateful to the 1995 SSM Research Committee for permission to use the Japanese data sets. The U.S. data set was obtained from the ICPSR through the Information Center for Social Science Research on Japan, Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo. Ishida and Yoshikawa analyzed the 1980-1998 German General Social Surveys (ALLBUS) which were obtained from ZUMA.

⁴ The age range was set to the Japanese surveys (20-69) which had the smallest range. German data include only West Germany, since the data on East Germany were not available before 1991.

⁵ Donald Treiman, *Occupational Prestige in Comparative Perspective* (New York: Academic Press, 1977).

Second, the magnitude of the effects of educational credentials on occupational status is very similar across the three nations. We cannot directly compare the results of Germany with those of the other two nations because the educational system in Germany is substantially different from the Japanese and U.S. systems. However, if we assume that German polytechnics are almost equivalent to Japanese and U.S. universities and German universities are almost equivalent to graduate schools in Japan and the United States, as German polytechnics require three to four years of attendance and German universities require at least five to six years of attendance before completion, the magnitude of the effects are roughly similar.

Third, the effects of educational credentials on income appear to be larger in the United States than in Japan and Germany. In particular, income returns to graduates of American universities and graduate schools are substantial. This result is in part due to higher income inequality in the United States, but the difference in the returns to education cannot be entirely explained by differences in income distribution.

Fourth, the degree of prevalence of higher education in each nation does not appear to be directly related to the magnitude of socio-economic returns to higher education across nations. The rates of attendance in higher education are highest in the United States, followed by Japan and then Germany. Although a larger portion of the population attends higher education in the United States, there is no evidence that the benefits of higher education are attenuated in the United States, at least when compared with Japan and Germany.

Fifth, in Germany, in addition to academic qualifications, various vocational qualifications increase socio-economic status. Those who obtained these vocational qualifications normally completed basic secondary or additional secondary education, such that the total socio-economic benefits of those who pursued vocational track education should be estimated by adding the effects of vocational qualifications and the effects of academic qualifications. For example, for a person who completed a *Meister* vocational qualification after additional secondary education, the total returns to education will be 9.165 (4.488 + 4.677) for the current occupation. Nonetheless, socio-economic advantages for those who pursued the vocational track are lower than for those who attended institutions of higher education. This result suggests that while German vocational education has been known to offer an alternative track to socio-economic advancement, its benefits have probably been overestimated.



Finally, the effects of education reported in Table 1 are not substantially affected by the control of social background and gender (the effects of education without controlling for social background and gender are not reported). In other words, educational attainment generally increases socio-economic status for people from all social backgrounds and of both genders. However, social background and gender do have an effect on socio-economic attainment. As shown in Table 2, respondents whose fathers had higher education and occupational status eventually obtained a better occupation and income than those whose fathers had lower education and occupational status. Furthermore, female respondents were disadvantaged in occupational attainment in Japan and Germany. The female disadvantage remained even among those who have the same education and social background (results are not reported). In the United States, female respondents had better occupational attainment than male respondents. However, female respondents had lower average income than male respondents in all three societies. The process of socio-economic attainment, therefore, continues to be affected by social background and gender in all three societies.

These results offered systematic comparison of the benefits of education in three societies. There was no evidence that Japanese education is more profitable than American or German education. If anything, American education appears to be most profitable, especially in relation to income returns to higher education. The process of socio-economic attainment is generally similar across three nations. Education does play a major role in allocating socio-economic resources in Japan, but the benefits of Japanese education are not significantly larger than those in other nations, contrary to the prediction of the thesis of educational credentialism in Japan.

□

The Reality of the Japanese School-to-Work Transition System at the Turn of the Century: Necessary Disillusionment

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The Japanese School-to-Work Transition System: the permeated image

The Japanese system of transition from school to work has attracted the attention of many academics and policymakers abroad. Particular attention has been paid to the characteristics of the process through which high school graduates find jobs. The main features of this process are: intensive job-placement services run by high school teachers; the "*Jisseki Kankei*," namely, the long-term semiformal recruiting relationship between schools and companies; and the "meritocratic" job-matching process within each high school based on students' academic achievement.

A typical description of the Japanese transition system can be found in a column entitled "The Case of Japan" in a recent OECD Report (2000: 106):

There are many indicators that Japan achieves excellent transition outcomes for its young people...There is a strong institutional linkage between schools and employers...Maintaining these contracts [or *Jisseki Kankei*] is crucial to a school's success in placing its students in jobs, and to an employer's success in recruiting suitable graduates on an ongoing basis.

Another stereotypical description can be found in Ryan (1999: 443).

Japanese school-leavers flow in large numbers directly from school to permanent employment. The institutional core is the *Jisseki-Kankei* ("contract") system of school-employer linkages at senior high school level, under which employers hire school-leavers from linked schools largely in accordance with the achievement rankings and recommendations that are provided by teachers.

This kind of characterisation stems from the introduction by Japanese scholars of practices unique to Japan and their rationality to academic media and at international conventions. The nature of their argument has remained essentially unchanged over the past decade.

One of the most famous spokespersons for the Japanese transition system is Kariya Takehiko. He, with James E. Rosenbaum, has advocated the characteristics and the efficiency of the Japanese transition from high school to work, using data-sets from the 1980s (Rosenbaum and Kariya, 1989, 1991). In a more recent paper, he uses a new data-set collected in 1995, reaching the conclusion that "the present analyses reinforce the findings of Rosenbaum and Kariya's research (1989) insofar as...higher grades are required to find jobs through institutional linkages rather than without them" (Kariya, 1998: 322).



Another recent example of a Japanese advocate of the system is Mitani Naoki. He describes how "contract employers represent a small proportion (about 10%) of those providing jobs. But about half of the graduates are employed by these contracts employers. They are dominant in this respect...Contract firms dominate the labour market of the graduates of the school and the school relies heavily on them to place their graduates" (1999: 308).

These characterisations raise two questions: firstly, does this understanding of the Japanese transition system hold true at the present time? Second, does the Japanese transition system merit its reputation for efficiency and rationality?

Drastic Changes in Late 1990s

In the second edition of their book *How the Japanese Learn to Work*, published in 1998, Ronald Dore and Mari Sako suggest that one reason why "Japan does not have a 'youth unemployment problem'" (1998: xiii) is the high core-skill attainment of Japanese children. In reality, however, definite symptoms of a rapidly worsening "youth unemployment problem" had begun to be observed in Japan by 1998.

The unemployment rate among youth aged 15-19 was 6.6% in 1990. Ten years later, the rate reached 12.1%, exceeding that of some European countries. Not a few arguments attributed the main cause of this increase in youth unemployment to a changing attitude towards employment, namely, their lack of perseverance in clinging to available jobs. Young people were blamed for "parasiting" on their parents and not working in earnest (Yamada, 1999).

In actual fact, however, what contributed more than anything to this brand-new "youth unemployment problem" in Japan was a drastic decline in demand for young labour, especially in the demand for new high school graduates, caused by prolonged economic stagnation as well as the need to secure employment for the now middle-aged baby-boomers (Genda, 2001). The total number of posts offered to new high school graduates, according to statistics from the Public Employment Service Office, was 1,342,000 in 1990, 518,000 in 1998, and 243,000 in 2002. As a result of this rapid shrinkage of the labour market, the percentage of those who found regular jobs among new high school graduates fell by half from 35% in 1990 to 17% in 2002. Although a fairly large proportion of those who could not find jobs went on to tertiary education, the only choices left for those at an economic and/or academic disadvantage were either to join the ranks of the unemployed or to become "freeters" (*furi-ta-*), that is, part-time



unskilled workers receiving low wages. According to an estimation by the Japan Institute of Labour (2001), the total number of "freeters" was 1 million in 1992, 1.7 million in 1997, and 1.9 million in 2000.

In these circumstances, the *Jisseki Kankei* between high schools and companies has deteriorated to a remarkable degree. Analyzing the data from a questionnaire survey conducted in 2000 which used the same format as a survey conducted in 1983, Ishida Hiroshi (2000) reports that the number of *Jisseki Kankei* companies per school has fallen from 78 in 1983 to 41 in 2000 and, moreover, that the proportion of students who found jobs at *Jisseki Kankei* companies had decreased from 50% in 1983 to 34% in 2000. Mitani's above assertion, therefore, is clearly inaccurate or at least outdated. Considering the reduction of the overall size of the labour market for new high school graduates, the percentage of those who benefited from the *Jisseki Kankei* among the total age bracket declined from about 20% in the 1980s to only 6% in 2000.

Moreover, a case study I conducted of several high schools (Honda, 1999) suggests that the 1983 data, on which most of the studies about the Japanese transition system still rely, overestimates the volume of *Jisseki Kankei*. The actual number of *Jisseki Kankei* companies per school would seem to have been much fewer than that declared by high school teachers in the 1983 data.

Inevitable Aporia

While the *Jisseki Kankei*, as a definitive feature of the Japanese transition system, may have been relatively dominant and efficient in the past, this was a contingent result of labour demand peculiar to the period of high economic growth, which laid more emphasis on the quantity of the new labour force than on its precise quality or vocational skills. Such a system cannot survive drastic changes in the economic environment and labour demand, which now attaches more importance to the quality of manpower, thrusting low-skill jobs upon contingent workers.

The essential problem of the Japanese transition system, however, lies in the fact that its apparent efficiency has diverted attention and energy from the task of tackling the evident difficulties facing Japanese youth as they seek to settle in the world of work. Since the birth of modern society, the vocational destination of individuals has become separated from those of their parents. Although the education system functions to sort members of novice generations into society's vocational structures based on the rule of meritocracy, the intrinsic gap between the two systems—the education system and the job system—inevitably impairs



the sorting function of the education system. Therefore, for each young individual, the leap from education to employment must be by definition a relatively risky and anxious phase of life. Especially in the present "runaway world" (Giddens, 1999), characterised by more uncertainty and unpredictability than ever before, it has become all the more important for individuals to learn to "negotiate" their own destination by themselves through the difficult process of trial and error (Dwyer and Wyn, 2001). The Japanese transition system, however, has concealed these serious realities under its superficial efficacy.

Now is the time to ask: is it right that schools decide jobs for each student? Does this not both constitute a disregard for basic human rights and contribute to a diminution of young people's potential through overprotection? Does not the reason why other countries have praised the Japanese transition system but not imitated it lie in their tacit aversion to such practice? Japanese society must confront these harsh questions and grapple with the inevitable and widespread aporia of the transition phase from school to work for youth in a world of high modernity.

□

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Who Decides the Investment?

Towards Independent Choice in Human Investment

Nishimura Yukimitsu

Investment in education

In Japan until recently, those persons benefiting from investment in education have been largely unaware of who it is that has been making the investments. This state of affairs perhaps reflects the way that the Japanese perceive education itself. When the public education system was established throughout Japan after World War II, it was not long before the ratio of those attending school up to high school reached almost 100 percent. While it is often said these days that "a diploma isn't much use" (*gakureki ha yaku ni tatanai*), there is still fierce competition to obtain university degrees, and the corporate practice of discriminative employment before candidates' graduation based on their diploma continues to this day. Of course, empirical research on human capital investment has determined that the academic record affects employment prospects both in terms of industry, job description and company size, and in terms of promotion and income increase after employment (Yano, 2001; Nishimura, 2002), giving the lie to the above opinion.

Except in one respect, the results of human capital research in the West show no differences with the status quo in Japan. What distinguishes the Japanese case is that, as described above, in the midst of people's paradoxical perceptions, the view prizing educational investment continues to come out on top seemingly without concomitant recognition of this fact.

Academic treatment of educational investment has a hand in the formation of such perceptions. For example, in analysis of the education system, sociology gives due weight to its relationship to the social system. Japanese education, however, as a result of the post-war experience, has almost seemed to make a point of ignoring this relationship. The experience referred to here is the subordination of education to the economy which is touted to have given rise to various flaws in the education system (these flaws being, in other words, the adverse effects of diplomaism (*gakureki-shugi*)).

The competition for university entrance exams, waged in order to augment the academic record with a university degree, has come to begin at an increasingly younger age, now as early as at entrance to kindergarten or elementary school, placing ever greater stress not only on children but also on their families. "Excessive" competition also plays a part in the increase of such problems as truancy, bullying, and breakdowns in class discipline.

Japanese education has no answer to the extremely simple question of whether an education system can exist in isolation from any kind of social system. This is because in Japan, in the context of an education system that has aimed to provide equal opportunity, expansion of educational opportunity in society has always been viewed as desirable from the perspective of social welfare.



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Notes

¹ Of course, an effective investment agent does not always function solely on behalf of employees. It is likely that many have functioned on behalf of companies. What is important to realise is that companies of long standing (and thus companies where long-term employment is possible) have been able to avoid risk much more effectively than individuals.

What is the reality of the situation?

To summarise post-war discourse, the public education system and corporate society have developed an effective partnership with a view to the betterment of individual ability. In concrete terms, this consists of the process whereby an individual acquires general skills within the education system, is employed immediately after graduating from school or university, receives protracted training in a company acquiring company-specific skills, and is compensated according to a seniority-based promotion system.

In other words, educational investment in Japan is characterised by a comprehensive and widespread school education system that has ensured the efficient acquisition of skills by students, in addition to which the corporate system plays the role of employee investment agent. This state of affairs, where the skill supply side establishes the demand side's investment plan, has created a system that can cope with the uncertainties of long-term investment. As regards the role of companies within this set-up, moreover, a significant empirical fact is the practise whereby the investment risk of short-term fluctuation is dealt with by docking wages from workers without any real awareness of this on their part, and then gradually re-accruing these wages to them over the years in accordance with their length of employment. Thus it is not only the education system, but also companies, that have functioned extremely effectively as human capital investment agents for employees.¹

The reason why this kind of system is considered favourable is that investment operates at the organisational rather than the individual level. It is well known that organisational investment such as that made by banks, when compared to individual investment, is "low risk, low return." In Japan, employees of superior ability among a company's personnel investors have had a latent function as organisational welfare supplementing the below-average investor.

Of course, such a system also has adverse effects. The fact that the income level of Japanese corporate managers is low by international standards is common knowledge. This fact is perhaps best attributed, however, to the "average type" human capital investment system described above.

New curriculum guidelines

Since April 2002, the content of school lessons in Japan has been significantly reduced. The reduction itself of the curriculum that schools are able to offer is problematic for the social system. Despite the fact that qualitative change is underway in the curriculum (supply) offered over an education period unchanged in length of years, it is hard to envisage that the educational investment of learners (demand) will remain unchanged, particularly when the global market is taken into consideration.



The alleged decline in academic standards that has given rise to so much controversy in Japan has forced us to come to terms with the reality that with a reduced curriculum, despite unchanged amounts of investment, and a potential concomitant decline in skill acquisition, we cannot expect to reap returns equal to previous levels. Such a framework demands that mid-ranking academic achievers also tolerate compensation incommensurate with their ability, where previously this was demanded largely only of top achievers. From the perspective of ability distribution, this amounts to investment on the basis of "independent choice," which has previously been available only to the extremely scarce top achievers, being greatly expanded to include the middle-ranking masses.

Loosening ties between schools and companies, companies and individuals

Further problems exist in relations with companies. As is indicated above, Japan's employment system has been characterised by co-operation with schools and by long-term relationships between companies and individuals. The long-term employment system served as the basis for schools and companies to function as effective human capital investment agents. However, during prolonged recession with a high relative proportion of the working population consisting of the post-war baby boomers, the recruitment partnership between schools and companies, which has functioned organically during the post-war period, broke down and large numbers of unemployed reserves were discharged into the labour market. Similarly, the introduction of short-term personnel evaluation (performance-based; *seika shugi*) is restoring the function of corporate human investment agent to individual workers. Further, opportunities for independent choice are increasing across the board. How will the Japanese respond to the pressure created by the "high risk, high return" quality of independent choice? The question of investment as it relates to independent choice is one that is overlooked in the "capacity for a vital life" (*ikiru chikara*) espoused by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, and will constitute an educational issue of profound importance for Japan in coming years. □

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Education and Success: Changes in Structure and Thinking

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Education in Japan has traditionally been considered almost exclusively in terms of its relation to two specific aspects of “success.” The first aspect concerns the economic success of Japanese society as a whole. The Japanese education system has long been emphasised as a significant factor in the country’s rapid rise from economic devastation following defeat in World War II (WWII) to its position as an international economic power, credited with endowing the Japanese people with excellent foundational academic ability and high labour productivity. The second aspect relates to the role education plays in personal socio-economic success, in other words, in social advancement (*risshin shusse*). The prevailing social consensus *vis-à-vis* education has held that the academic record can expedite one’s upward mobility in society irrespective of social status at birth and, indeed, has viewed the academic record as the definitive means of raising one’s chances of such. For these very reasons, educational credentialism (*gakureki shakai-ron*) characterised by diplomaism (*gakureki-shugi*) has thrived throughout Japanese society since WWII. Unequal social circumstances prior to the acquirement of educational credentials, then, have been largely ignored, and attention has been paid only to circumstances of inequality thereafter. Further, such perceptions of these two aspects of education and success are bound together by the following logic: societal thinking based on the latter aspect has given rise to competition for educational attainment at the popular level, which in turn has formed the foundation for economic success as regards the former aspect.

In actual fact, however, as sociological research on education and social mobility has made clear, consistent and inexorable differences in opportunity in terms of educational achievement continue to exist between the classes. International comparative studies have revealed that the effect of educational background on socio-economic status is not particularly significant in Japan, and that, rather, social class by birth has a more definitive effect (Ishida, 1993). The question that must be asked, then, is how, when Japanese society supports structural inequality as regards educational opportunity, and when a relative difference exists in one’s prospects for educational and socio-economic attainment according to one’s social class, competition for educational achievement has permeated society at the popular level without these contradictions being recognised (Kariya, 1991; Takeuchi, 1995).

In recent years, some scholars have pointed to the importance of structural change as it relates to education and social mobility in post-war Japan (Kariya, 2001; Ishida, 1998, 2001). The existence of inter-class differences in educational achievement and the influence of social class on socio-economic attainment described by researchers have both been discussed *at the relative level*, that is, relative to the social mobility of other classes. In contrast, it is now argued that it is the expansion of educational opportunities and changes in employment and industrial structure *at the absolute level*, and the different patterns of mobility



specific to each generation that these changes have brought about, which are responsible for the formation of the social consensus on education and success in Japanese society described above. Due to the fact that the scale of academic achievement has increased at the absolute level, despite allowing for continued discrepancy at the relative, children, especially in lower class households, have been able to achieve more than their parents. Further, in the West, the decline of the farming population and expansion of the blue-collar class were followed by the development of secondary schooling hand-in-hand with the growth of the white-collar class. In Japan, however, the rapid pace of industrialisation and diffusion of education has meant that the decline of agriculture and the expansion of education and the blue- and white-collar classes have all taken place during roughly the same period. It is this structural change at the absolute level that is now thought to have influenced the formation of a way of thinking that discounted the relative factor of social class by birth and came to value the academic record both as the most important means of social mobility and as the crucial device for ensuring one's success in this regard. Success increasingly came to be defined as the achievement of greater social upward mobility than one's parents, and it was the academic record that made this possible (Kariya, 2001).

While pointing thus to the importance of post-war Japan's historical experience, since the start of the 1990s sociologists of education have begun to look at shifts in people's thinking about education in a society where structural change at the absolute level has now come to an end. These shifts are occurring among both parents and children.

Among parents, it is argued that as a consequence of the popularisation of higher education throughout Japanese society, in recent years the orientation towards higher education that has characterised the post-war period has been declining and, with this decline, class divisions have become evident as it is particularly among the lower classes that "education fever" (*kyôiku-netsu*) is on the wane (Nakamura, 2000). Among children, moreover, scholars maintain that as a consequence of the growing ease of university entrance caused by the rapidly declining birth rate since the 1990s, in circumstances where there is increasing departure from a results-oriented value system and a reduction of study hours, here, too, those in the lower classes in particular have lost the commitment and the incentive to learn (Hida, *et al.*, 2000). What becomes clear from these observations is that Japanese society's shared belief in a close link between education and a person's success is disappearing. More importantly, in addition to this growing understanding that education does not necessarily lead to success, there is an increasing gulf between white-collar workers with higher levels of education who are nevertheless maintaining their commitment to education and the less-educated blue-collar class that has lost the incentive to compete and has, so to speak, dropped from the race. ⇨

As for what kind of influence these changes in social perception and growing class divisions might exert on the relative differences in the structural dimensions of educational attainment and socio-economic advancement, researchers are yet to reach a consensus. International comparison of the structural characteristics of the mobility patterns of Japanese society shows Japan's patterns to be unique at the absolute level and similar to Western countries at the relative level (Ishida, 1998). It will take careful empirical analysis to determine the impact of changes in perception and growing class divisions on the structural characteristics of Japanese social mobility patterns. More important, perhaps, is the question of to what extent education will henceforth come to be discussed also among policymakers and the media in Japan from the perspective of its relationship to social class, a perspective which seems to be taken for granted in such discussions in the West. It would appear that social perceptions of education and success caused by structural change in post-war Japan have not simply fuelled the competition for educational achievement but have also effected a disappearance of the issue of social class from the education debate. Should the question of class continue to remain absent from the agenda, it will fall to Japanese educational research not only to clarify the social situation, but also to expose the mechanisms that continue to obscure it. □

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Gender Issues in Classrooms: the Present Situation and Future Tasks

Murao Yumiko

"Are not schools instrumental in the creation of a gender gap in educational and occupational achievement?" "Do not schools have a sexist aspect that treats men and women differently on basis of gender, as well as an egalitarian aspect by which students are evaluated and selected on the basis of performance and abilities alone?" "Is there not a hidden curriculum in classrooms that differentiates gender?"

Such were the questions asked by Japanese researchers who began conducting research on gender in schools from the end of the 1980s. Their aim was to ascertain the micro-level processes by which gender divisions are reinforced in classrooms. The research uncovered the following practices.

Firstly, teachers and students often used gender categorization as a matter of course in classrooms. Teachers would change the term of address according to a student's gender, specify a boys-first order, divide classrooms into groups by gender, and frequently make comparisons between boys and girls.

Secondly, teachers would have more interactions with boys. At times, teachers would talk on a subject that would seem to have assumed their audience to consist only of boys, often ignoring the existence of girls and referring to women as objects of ridicule.

Thirdly, it became clear that such practices were applied principally as a means of class control rather than to inculcate socialization of the gender role. Gender category is used in this way because, as students already have prior knowledge of gender categories, teachers can easily instruct and guide students according to this framework. Moreover, when boys take advantage of the framework in order to attract the teacher's attention, or when a teacher tries to interest the boys in the lesson, the outcome is that the teacher ends up directing most of his/her attention towards boys rather than girls.

Fourthly, mockery and assault by some boys had a repressive effect on the behavior of girls during class, resulting in girls assuming a low profile during class, giving rise in turn to different behavioral patterns between the sexes.

In these ways, differentiation of gender in classrooms develops through the interactions between teachers and students and between students. Of course, there are teachers who are committed to running classes with an egalitarian approach and who do so by mixing boys and girls in the register, consciously naming boys and girls alternately, and by making a point of having mixed seating or groups. Even in such cases, however, researchers have observed that teachers interact more with boys than girls in order to maintain control of classes, and that some boys continue nonetheless to mock or assault girls.



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In parallel with the accumulation of research on gender differentiation in classrooms, a movement to introduce the perspective of gender to education policy has also been gathering momentum in Japan. Citizens' activities to promote "Gender Free Education" (education free from gender barriers) have been flourishing from the mid-1990s. These activities have included the development of study materials and manuals for instruction, the preparation of a gender-bias checklist for use in schools, and criticism of gender categorization in educational practice as typified by the use of gender-segregated registers. In addition, the "Nationwide Network for Gender Free Schools" was established in 1997 to promote interactions between teachers, local citizens and municipal employees.

Several of the above-mentioned activities have been implemented by means of linkage with local government women's policy or gender equality policy. The Fourth World Conference on Women in 1995 provided the government with an opportunity to engage actively and officially in these activities, as the reexamination of education from the perspective of gender and the creation of a gender-sensitive educational system were declared in the conference's outline of action. The Japanese government formulated the Plan for Gender Equality 2000 in 1996, and raised issues regarding specific measures for the enrichment of education and learning that would enable the promotion of gender equality and diverse choices. In the year following the proclamation and enforcement of the Basic Law for a Gender-Equal Society (1999), the Basic Plan for Gender Equality, which took the outcome of "Women 2000" (a Special Session of the U.N. General Assembly) into consideration, was endorsed by the Cabinet. This plan includes a sentence that reads "Further enrichment of education and learning that nurtures awareness of independence and promotes the principles of gender equality in schools and social education will be attempted. Also, enlightenment of awareness is to be striven for in order that those who are involved in education might understand the philosophy of gender equality." At present, establishment of ordinances and plans for gender equality promotion are being arranged at the local government level, and the realization of education introducing the perspective of gender is being planned.

As the movement to reform the gender categorization process in schools along these lines progresses, it is to be expected that it will produce a backlash. There are those who have attacked local government ordinances on Gender Equality Promotion, asserting that "Gender education is not gender equal education, but is aimed at denying the distinction of gender by eliminating the differences between the sexes" or that "the purpose of gender free education is to create humans who are neither men nor women." Bearing in mind the practices uncovered by the research on gender issues in the classrooms described above, however, it is clear that such criticisms are unwarranted.



Efforts to review the alleged necessity of using the gender category in classrooms and to discourage the inappropriate use thereof have only just begun. To aid the search for solutions to gender problems in schools, it will be vital to accumulate more knowledge of the micro-level gender differentiation processes in classrooms. Additionally, another important task for future research is to conduct empirical investigations into the effects of gender free education. Whether or not current gender free education programs have contributed to the empowerment of girls and to the eradication of stereotyped gender images in schools remains to be seen. These tasks are necessary not only for policy assessments but also for creating social consensus on a gender-sensitive educational system. □

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The Reproduction and Naturalization of Sex-Based Separate Spheres in Japanese High Schools: The Role of Female "Managers" of High School Baseball Teams

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Notes

¹ In January 2001, the *Sôrifu* became the *Naikakufu* (Cabinet Office) [Ed.].

² I do not argue here that high school baseball is unique in this aspect, but the popularity of high school baseball and its presence in mass media means that it is in a better position than other sports clubs to influence society.

Although Japanese society clearly discriminates against women in many ways, Japanese schools are often believed to be surprisingly gender-equitable, both by scholars and laypeople alike. For example, Ito Kimio offers data from a *Sôrifu* (Prime Minister's Office)¹ survey showing that most people feel that schools are much more equal than families, workplaces, law, or even contemporary social customs regarding gender (2001: 127), and Okano Kaori and Tsuchiya Motonori point out that there are, in fact, few institutional barriers for females regarding their education (1999: 74-78). Okano and Tsuchiya further explain, however, that schools can be institutionally equitable without causing major changes in society because of family pressures and economic realities. In other words, for example, schools do not force female students to take non-science courses, but their families pressure them thus because of beliefs about gender-appropriate behavior, as well as due to the economic reality that higher education for females does not pay off as well as that for males. In this paper, I discuss a segment of Japanese high schools that plays an important role in reproducing and naturalizing a masculinist gender ideology which places men in public places of performance and women in private, behind-the-scenes support roles: high school baseball. High school baseball, I argue, is an institution that works to reproduce and naturalize sex-based "separate spheres," where boys/men are like warriors who go out to do battle and girls/women are like domestic servants who stay behind and do the "shadow work" to support their men.² Thus, I contend, Japanese schools are not as structurally gender-equitable as they are often perceived.

Japanese high school baseball: a masculine institution

First, virtually all of the players in Japanese high school baseball are boys, even though technically, since schools set their own rules regarding who can join their teams, female players are allowed on some teams. The rules determining a player's eligibility for participation in tournaments, however, are determined by an external organization, the Japan High School Baseball Federation, which has decided that players must be male students of the schools they play for. The Federation claims that the danger of injury to female players is too high, and that they cannot bear the risk. (Meanwhile, females are allowed to play as regular team members with boys on elementary school, junior high school, college, semi-pro teams, and in 1991 Japanese professional baseball eliminated "medically not male" as grounds for disqualification. Although there have not yet been any female pro baseball players in Japan, Japanese women have been playing on otherwise all-male college teams since 1995.) Therefore, although females can join some high school teams, they cannot play in games. Even so, however, I know of five Japanese high school female baseball players on



otherwise all-boy teams in 2002 (out of 151,437 players nationwide³), in Kanagawa, Saga, Gifu, Okayama, and Chiba Prefectures. As a kind of "consolation prize" for not being allowed to play in the tournaments, female players were allowed to throw the ceremonial opening pitches for Saga and Gifu Prefectural Summer Tournaments this year. Okayama Prefecture had one female player, who was allowed on the bench at the local tournament as a scorekeeper (but she could not suit up), and there was one female player in Chiba this year. When asked why they join baseball teams knowing that they will not be able to play in games, female players often reply that they had hoped the rule would change in the three years they were on the teams.⁴ Since female players are so rare, they tend to make the news, but after scanning national and local newspapers these five are the only female players I found, so it is likely that these are the only female players in Japan this year, or at least the only ones who are seniors.⁵

Second, high school baseball is coached and umpired almost entirely by men. Chiba Prefecture (and most likely Japan) got its first female coach in 2000, Obara Mariko, a former softball player for Nihon Taiiku University who, as a player, led her college softball team to number one in Japan, and then number two in the world (in the early 1970s). Her team won their first game in the local tournament this summer (her first tournament victory since becoming coach two years ago),⁶ but lost in the second round to a strong team that made it into the best eight of the prefecture. Obara is the only female high school baseball coach in the prefecture, and, as far as I know, in all of Japan (there are 4,219 teams registered with the High School Baseball Federation this year). In 1999 Japanese high school baseball had its first female umpire, who oversaw games in the Kanagawa Prefectural Summer Tournament. There have been no female umpires in Japanese high school baseball (that I know of) since then.

Managers as surrogate mothers

The place in high school baseball where high school females have a significant presence is in the role of "club managers." 73% of Japanese high school baseball teams have female students as their managers (5% of clubs do not have female managers because they are all boys' schools; only 21% of coed schools have male managers).⁷ The term "manager" is somewhat misleading, though, as they are more like glorified "gofers" than managers, who take care of all of the behind-the-scenes support work so that the teams can concentrate on practicing and playing games (the parallels that can be drawn with housewives and mothers should be obvious). Some of the chores managers have include cleaning the



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³ Japan High School Baseball Federation. On the internet at <http://www.jhbf.or.jp/index2.htm>

⁴ *Asahi Shimbun* (Chiba), July 4, 2002.

⁵ I should mention that there are all-female high school baseball teams, although the difficulty of maintaining enough members means the number of teams changes every year. The average number of females high school baseball teams (since 1997, the year of the first national tournament) in Japan is around 20, compared to over 4,000 male teams.

⁶ *Asahi Shimbun* (Chiba), July 13, 2002, and *Asahi Shimbun* (Kanagawa), July 6, 2002.

⁷ Japan High School Baseball Federation, 1998 survey.

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⁸ The boys' real mothers also help out with meals during training camp; for instance, the managers might just cook breakfasts and dinners, and the real mothers cook lunches.

⁹ *Isshō-kenmei* is usually used as an adverb, and means (to do something) "with all one's might," or "with one's whole heart." It is one of several "key words" which come up over and over again in descriptions of high school baseball.

¹⁰ For more on gender ideology and gender strategy, see Hochschild and Machung, 1989.

baseball team's "club room," carrying water to the ball field, cooking meals for the boys during *gasshuku* (training camp),⁸ throwing out trash, washing uniforms, pulling weeds, tossing balls to the coach for fungo hitting (fielding practice), and keeping score. Finally, as female managers are always present during practices and games, it is easy to see that another role they have is a kind of "cheerleader" role—they provide the admiring gaze of same-age females for the boys to practice under.

I should mention that baseball is not unique in this aspect—according to my preliminary research, most high school boys' team sports (baseball, soccer, basketball, rugby, etc.) have managers, most of whom are female students. Coed clubs, like tennis, swimming, or track and field, tend not to have managers, but rather rely on junior members to do the support work. Females' team sports clubs, like volleyball or basketball, do not have boy managers, but tend to either have female managers or rely on junior members. Furthermore, when the baseball team's manager is a boy, it is usually a team member who for some reason or another (injury, size) has little or no chance of becoming a starter (in fact, I was told by one baseball coach that boys do not make good managers because they want to play themselves; they are too distracted by the games, or feelings of envy to effectively fulfill their duties as manager).

Doing gender: psychological and social rewards for perpetuating the system

Of course, females are not forced to take the position of manager—it is totally voluntary. So why do they do it? When I interviewed former high school baseball team managers, their initial responses included, "my older brother played high school baseball, and I was influenced by him," "my father played high school baseball, and knew the coach, so he asked me," and "I was attracted to high school baseball because the players are so *isshō-kenmei*."⁹ In fact, many indicated a desire to somehow be involved with high school baseball, because they were attracted to the ideology of effort, team spirit, adolescence, and "dreams" sold by the media coverage of the national high school baseball tournaments. My interviewees also employed various psychological strategies to justify (to others and themselves) their participation as supporters. These strategies include comparing the amount of work they have to the hardships of the boy players (no matter how hard the females' schedules, it was always easier than the boys'), and pointing out that the boys themselves do a lot of the sundry chores (like washing dishes, hanging out futons, etc.).¹⁰

To better understand the real motivation for females who choose to become high school baseball managers, however, West and Zimmerman's idea of "doing



gender" (1987: 125-151) is particularly useful. Rather than simply looking at conscious decisions and rationalizations, we must consider unconscious feelings and identities. By using the concept of "doing gender" it is possible to explain how, through properly performing in these "support" roles, female managers can gain satisfaction knowing that they are appropriately "doing femininity," and therefore affirming their own gender identities (as well as being judged "competent" as females). In fact, when I suggested this as a possible motivation to one of my interviewees she replied that it was probably true, although she had not thought of it that way before. By "doing gender" appropriately, these females help to "sustain, reproduce, and render legitimate the institutional arrangements that are based on sex category" (*ibid.*: 146). In this way, subjective psychological gender identity plays an important role in reproducing social structures.

Females' participation as managers is made easier by the fact that while the role may be supportive, it is not invisible, or unappreciated. Managers are not seen as superfluous decorations, incidental to the team's performance (the way cheerleaders may be), but instead are seen, and treated, as important functioning parts of the teams. My research thus supports Takie Lebra's contention that one of the reasons many Japanese women can find fulfillment in performing supporting roles is that the role of nurturer and vitalizer of the family is widely recognized as vital to the welfare of the nation's children and the economy (Lebra, 1984). In the case of high school baseball, teams and coaches regularly and publicly acknowledge the work of the female managers, often saying that the managers are just as important as the players, and implying that without the managers' help, the team could not go on. Furthermore, the mass media, especially newspapers, often sings the praises of female managers, and likes to point out how hard they work to support their teams.¹¹ Thus, at both micro (individual) and macro (socio-cultural) levels, female managers are rewarded psychologically and socially for their contributions to their teams, ensuring that some females will continue to covet the position of manager in the future. The role is acknowledged and appreciated, the glory is shared, and the structure perpetuated.

Finally, as I mentioned above, baseball is not unique among high school sports in having female students as managers, but because of its popularity and presence in the mass media it is in a much better position to normalize this as an institutional feature. Furthermore, although the position of manager is voluntary, the fact that this all takes place on school grounds, with the official



Notes

¹¹ See, for example, articles in the *Asahi Shimbun*: July 3, 2002 (Tokyo), July 13, 2002 (Ishikawa), July 13, 2002 (Okayama), July 16, 2002 (Hokkaido), August 7, 2002 (Chiba), August 14, 2002 (Okayama), August 19, 2002 (Shiga), August 20, 2002 (Fukui).

support of schools, under the pretext of being "educational," means that high schools themselves are directly complicit in the reproduction of this ideology. Thus, schools cannot credibly claim to be innocent victims of the conservative High School Baseball Federation's policies (or family pressures), as they are active participants in perpetuating the ideology that drives the policies. □

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ISS Contemporary Japan Group at the Institute of Social Science, University of Tokyo

The ISS Contemporary Japan Group serves as a forum for researchers on Japan to receive critical feedback on their work. Researchers visiting Tokyo are invited to contact one of the persons listed below if they would like to make a presentation. Meetings are open to everyone. Please contact Professor Ishida Hiroshi (ishida@iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp) or Sugino Haru Masako (suginohara@iss.u-tokyo.ac.jp) for more information.



East Asian Monetary Integration: Destined to Fail?

Yeongseop Rhee

*Associate Professor, Department of Economics, Sookmyung University
June 18, 2002*

This presentation examined the economic and politico-economic conditions necessary for East Asian monetary integration, focusing in particular on Japan's role. Professor Rhee explained why East Asia has thus far made little progress towards forming a regional monetary bloc, and proposed a scheme for overcoming the barriers to the integration process.

Evaluation of economic conditions in terms of optimum currency area criteria (microeconomic efficiency and macroeconomic stability) and comparisons of seignorage suggest that East Asian countries would seem to be as well suited as the EU countries for monetary integration on economic grounds. On the other hand, political barriers remain unresolved: Professor Rhee argued that besides political rivalry between Japan and China and the enduring influence of the US in the region, Japan's ambiguous attitude towards East Asian monetary integration and its reluctance to shoulder responsibility by taking the initiative further thwart the process.

Based on the high degree of economic linkage in Asia, the shared experience of the financial crisis and the developmental stage of many countries in the region, Professor Rhee proposed an Asia-only intermediate monetary regime, challenging the new orthodoxy in regional monetary arrangements.

Continuity and Discontinuity in Non-liberal Corporate Governance: Japan and Germany Compared

Gregory Jackson

*Fellow, Research Institute of Economy, Trade and Industry, Tokyo
October 9, 2002*



Many observers consider Germany and Japan as the two leading non-liberal or "stakeholder" models of corporate governance. Both countries were often admired for their competitive strengths based on long-term commitments between shareholders, banks, suppliers, and employees. These strengths mirrored the perceived deficits of Anglo-American corporate governance, such as short-termism, opportunism, and breaches of trust with employees.

Yet over the course of the 1990s, these models confronted new challenges related to internationalization, slowed economic growth and the resurgent performance of U.S. corporations. Gregory Jackson's paper compared dramatic changes in German and Japanese corporate governance since the mid-1990s. In contrast to arguments centering on either "convergence" on a liberal model or "path-dependent" institutional stability, his paper presented a more differentiated view of institutional change from the perspective of "actor-centered" institutionalism. Germany and Japan have each faced substantial erosion of their former institutions. Yet, such pressures continue to be mediated by these different institutional endowments and have led to quite distinct problems and triggered different patterns of coalition-building among corporate stakeholders. Gregory Jackson explained why, in his view, Germany has thus far been more successful than Japan in assimilating a new "hybrid" model of corporate governance that reconciles greater orientation to "shareholder-value" with the continued participation of labor as a key corporate stakeholder.



Envisioning the Site of the "Non-nation": The Okinawan Anti-reversion Debate and its Legacies

Julia Yonetani

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October 31, 2002*

In Okinawa, the year 1969 witnessed both some of the largest and most intense demonstrations in the pre-reversion era, and the radicalization of the Okinawan Reversion Council's own agenda. At the same time, as US-Japan negotiations over the Okinawan Reversion Agreement took shape, the fundamental issue as to what reversion itself should entail reached a head, and the reversion movement as a whole faced political and ideological fragmentation.

In his controversial bestseller of the same year, *The Ugly Japanese: The Outrage of Okinawa*, Ota Masahide came to conceive of the struggle for reversion as "not only a battle against U.S. occupation," but a historical and contemporary struggle "against the Japanese government, and against Japanese themselves." Soon after, Okinawan journalist Arakawa Akira and others went even further by outlining an "anti-reversion theory" which envisaged Okinawa as the inherently politicized site of the "anti-" or "non-nation."

Just as the return of administrative rights over Okinawa signified the moment at which Okinawa became incorporated into a postcolonial mode of relations, the Okinawan reversion debate highlighted dilemmas inherent to conceiving of a politicized subject within these conditions. Julia Yonetani's presentation reflected on the issues raised in the anti-reversion debate in a historical context as well as in relation to more contemporary attempts to conceive of a politicized global civil sphere "beyond nationality."

Women's Economic Standing, Marriage, and Cross-national Contexts of Gender

Ono Hiromi

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December 4, 2002*



Proponents of the theory of specialization and exchange hypothesize that, in any national context, a higher economic standing for women depresses the probability of marriage. Some researchers suggest, however, that this inverse relationship between women's economic standing and the probability of marriage exists only in industrialized countries with a high degree of role differentiation by gender. In order to evaluate these contrasting cross-national predictions, Ono Hiromi tested, with longitudinal data and standardized methods, whether the inverse relationship exists in three similarly wealthy industrialized countries that vary in their degree of role differentiation by gender: Japan (a context more differentiated by gender than the U.S.), the U.S., and Sweden (a context less differentiated by gender than the U.S.). Contrary to the prediction developed from the theory of specialization and exchange, her results indicated that while women's higher income levels discourage first marriage formation in Japan, they encourage marriage both in the U.S. and Sweden.

Laws and Learning: Community and School Response to the End of Dôwa Laws

Christopher Bondy

March 2002 was a historic month for the Buraku Liberation League (BLL; *Buraku Kaihō Dōmei*). March 3 witnessed the 80th anniversary of the creation of the *Suiheisha*,¹ and March 31 marked the end of over 30 years of *Dôwa*-related² laws. These events were marked with great fanfare in some Buraku communities,³ while virtually ignored in others. Some communities made a conscious decision to continue policies, specifically education policies, begun under these laws, while others began dismantling them almost immediately. The way each community dealt with these changes can be traced to the degree of importance placed on Buraku issues within that community.⁴

Dôwa Policies

In 1969, in an attempt to improve conditions for Burakumin, the Special Measures Law (SML; *Dôwa taisaku jigyō tokubetsu sochi hō*), the first of a series of laws for Buraku area improvements, went into effect. In brief, these laws called for: 1) improving district infrastructure; 2) increasing social welfare and health policies; 3) modernizing farming and fishing facilities; 4) aiding small and mid-sized firms in the area; 5) improving work environment and job security; 6) improving education and encouraging advancement; 7) encouraging activities to promote human rights and; 8) anything else needed to implement these points. Upham notes: "as is the case with much Japanese legislation, especially that with programmatic goals, the SML gives broad authority for governmental action while mandating virtually nothing" (1987: 86).

The SML law ended on March 31, 1982. In its place, the Special Measures Law for Community Investment (*Chiiki kaizen taisaku tokubetsu sochi hō*) was promulgated on April 1, 1982, and was extended until March 2002. There were fundamental differences between this law and the SML. The primary goal of this law was to settle remaining projects begun under the SML, rather than to promote new laws and programs based on Burakumin equality. The new law, with the removal of the term "*Dôwa*," was a symbolic reminder of the removal of the issue from public dialogue.

Because of considerably lower education rates among Burakumin students, as compared to non-Burakumin, these laws included provisions for education, collectively known as *Dôwa* Education. The goals of *Dôwa* Education were twofold: 1) to make all students aware of the discrimination (both historical and contemporary) faced by the Burakumin in an attempt to eliminate this discrimination, and 2) to use education in an attempt to



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Notes

¹ The *Suiheisha* (the "Levelers Association") was the largest pre-war social movement group for Burakumin. Forced to disband during the Second World War, the goals and approaches taken by the *Suiheisha* were picked up by the National Committee for Buraku Liberation, "an organization that in 1955 changed its name to 'Buraku Liberation League (*Buraku Kaihō Dōmei*)'" (Neary, 1997: 60).

² "*Dōwa*" can be translated here as "assimilation policies."

³ See Endnote for a brief Burakumin history.

⁴ In any study of Burakumin, terminology is a concern. I am using the terms as they were used in the communities of study themselves.

⁵ All names throughout the paper are pseudonyms.

improve the future social position of Burakumin children (Nakano, Ikeda, Nakao, and Mori, 2000; Hirasawa and Nabeshima, 1995). However, because *Dōwa* Education was not a nationally uniform education policy, local boards of education and schools have had considerable latitude in their approaches to the issue (Nakano, et. al, 2000; Hawkins, 1995).

The Study

By means of participant observations and interviews in two different communities, my research centered on the town of Takagawa, while Kuromatsu city provided a contrasting example.⁵ Both communities have sizeable Burakumin populations, although the proportions are different. Okano and Tsuchiya note that: "A Buraku community's situation depends partly on its degree of Buraku mobilization (such as those led by the Buraku Liberation League)" (1999: 128). It is for this reason that I chose these two communities - Takagawa has a strong BLL presence, while Kuromatsu has a weak one. In both settings, the board of education places teachers to work within the communities at community centers, aiding both school children and the community as a whole. Furthermore, under the *Dōwa* Education laws, a teacher at each junior high school was assigned the duty of acting as a liaison between school and community.

In Takagawa, the connection between the BLL and town government was both symbolic and actual. The board of education was not located at the town hall, as is customary, but rather it shared a facility with the BLL branch office in the community center. In addition, the building of the community center (*chōmin kaikan*) in the Buraku area of town acted as a symbol of the commitment of the local government to encourage interaction between Buraku and non-Buraku residents. Prior to the construction of this community center, all facilities, banks, hospitals, and shops were in non-Buraku areas. The hosting of activities such as the town cultural festival and other community events at the community center has clearly shown the local government's dedication to fostering a close interaction between Buraku and non-Buraku residents. There are other symbolic reminders of the centrality of Buraku issues here as well. Greeting the visitor to the pre-school, elementary, and junior high schools are engraved stone monuments with the final words of the *Suiheisha* declaration: "Let there be warmth in the world, and brightness in humanity."

The curriculum in Takagawa also demonstrates the centrality of Buraku issues. The school has special classes focused on Buraku and movement history. Throughout the year students have the opportunity to listen to

guest speakers from the community. These speakers discuss issues such as marriage discrimination (from both Burakumin and non-Burakumin experiences), schooling experiences (from older members of the community), and interactions with others outside the community who are less aware of Buraku issues (from high school students).

Perhaps the most telling example of the centrality of Buraku issues within the school comes every March 3, the anniversary of the creation of the *Suiheisha*, when all the students take part in a school-wide forum called "Open Space." The purpose of Open Space is for students and teachers, as equals, to discuss Buraku issues and discrimination. Community members are also invited to participate. The central theme this year was how the community would respond to the impending end of the *Dôwa* laws. The ending of the law would affect all students by lowering the number of teachers in schools, thus increasing the student/teacher ratio. In response, the community decided to continue all aid by replacing national funding exclusively with local funds.

Such overt gestures were absent in Kuromatsu. Neither the larger size of Kuromatsu, nor the relative isolation of the Buraku district there, lend themselves to easy interactions with those outside the Buraku district. The board of education appoints two teachers to staff an educational branch office within the Buraku district. These teachers act as liaisons between school, community, and city hall. Despite this, discussions of Buraku issues are missing within local dialogue.

In addition to dissertation fieldwork, I lived in Kuromatsu from 1993 to 1995 while working in Hinode Junior High School. At that time, under the existing *Dôwa* laws, the Board of Education branch held extra classes after school. Hinode teachers, paid by *Dôwa* funds, taught these classes which were designed to develop the comprehension and study skills of Burakumin students. When I returned to Kuromatsu to begin this study in early April, shortly after the termination of the aforementioned law, the dismantling of these policies had already begun. No longer were there extra teachers in the school, nor were there after-school classes to aid the students. In addition, the words Buraku or Burakumin, so freely used in Takagawa, were never uttered here. Even the governmental policy word "*Dôwa*" was spoken in hushed whispers. In Kuromatsu, the term Burakumin was considered discriminatory, while those in Takagawa, on the other hand, took exception to the term *Dôwa*, feeling it masked issues they wished to expand.



Preliminary Findings

An initial examination of my findings points to three themes. First, there were important differences in how each community approached Buraku issues as a whole and *Dôwa* education specifically. This was not simply a matter of community size. Takagawa made a clear and concerted decision to place Buraku issues at the center of the community. This was not simply something they had to do; rather, it was a conscious decision made over time in conjunction with the BLL and community leadership.

Second, the BLL presence in Takagawa had an impact on establishing a strong Buraku identity among children. By stressing education, both formal and informal, as a necessary component in overcoming discrimination, the BLL and school policies contributed to creating assertive, aware students. However, to credit only the BLL would obscure more than it illuminates. The goals of a strong movement, such as the BLL, can be negated if the local government does not also take an active role in promoting those goals.

Finally, the choices made in Kuromatsu, both under the laws and after, indicate that Buraku issues there did not have the same level of importance as they did in Takagawa. Under the *Dôwa* laws, aid was given to districts in Kuromatsu, but local policies did not encourage interaction with those outside the districts. Within the schools, although *Dôwa* education was part of the curriculum, it did not permeate the curriculum as it did in Takagawa. The ending of the law simply provided a reason for the community and school to end what had never been central from the beginning.

Ramifications

The world of the junior high school student is a closed, protected one, yet the student must eventually leave that world. Leaving the protected environment forces the student to interact with new people - people who have had different experiences and different perspectives. What effect will the approaches taken by each school and community have on the student? Will students in Kuromatsu, where Buraku issues were non-issues, be better prepared for a broader social setting that more resembles their experience? The centrality of Buraku issues and the size of the community make the case of Takagawa particularly interesting. How will the Takagawa students (both Burakumin and non-Burakumin) react to this larger social world, a world that does not embrace Buraku issues at anywhere near the level of their experience? Will the teachings of Takagawa (both school and community) prepare them to face change? In interviewing students, many expressed an awareness of the unique approach taken by Takagawa. Teachers told

students of the uniqueness of Takagawa, and students also learned this on their own through interactions with students from other schools, either through *juku* (cram school) or other extra-curricular activities.

In order to explore the longer-term ramifications of these approaches, I plan to return to Japan in the summer of 2003 (and subsequent summers) to conduct follow-up research. Following the students longitudinally allows for a deeper understanding of the effects of the approaches taken by each community. □

Endnote

Historically, discrimination against Burakumin (literally, "people of the hamlet") was based on religious, social and political rationale. While not codified until the late Tokugawa period, social and religious customs created a system of continued discrimination, through considering the Burakumin "impure." This discrimination also served a political purpose. By maintaining a social group below farmers, artists and merchants, the military government was able to maintain a society that was rigidly controlled and heavily taxed. As Neary notes: "the *Bakufu* government took the lead in implementing measures which divided the [Burakumin] from the rest of the Japanese population in a way that both enabled the poor peasant to take consolation from the fact that there were groups in society of lower status than himself (*sic*) and provided the authorities with a group that could be relied on to put down peasant uprisings" (1989: 20). Such practice is not exclusive to Japan. It was not uncommon in the United States for companies to use African Americans, Irish or other immigrant groups to break strikes. Further, prevailing ideology stressed ethnicity over class in order to maintain this division in society.

In 1871 the Meiji Government issued the Emancipation Edict, which nominally ended the discrimination and legal controls on employment for the Burakumin. In parts of western Japan, the Edict was met with protests and even killings of Burakumin (Watanabe, 1998: 48). The Emancipation Edict obviously did not eliminate discrimination. Government proclamations eliminating discrimination against a group of people seldom, if ever, result in immediate change in attitude at community or individual levels. Despite this, policies implemented in conjunction with proclamations can help to overcome structural discrimination. None were promoted to aid the Burakumin in the period following emancipation (Neary, *ibid.*: 33-36). For more information on Burakumin history, see Uesugi, 2000, and on the origin of aid and Buraku social movements, see Neary, 1989.

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The 1958 Tokyo Textbook Conference

Laura Wong

The UNESCO¹ Conference on the Treatment of the West in Textbooks and Teaching Materials in South and East Asia was held in Tokyo in the autumn of 1958. The Japanese National Commission for UNESCO hosted the conference as a part of UNESCO's Major Project on Mutual Appreciation of Eastern and Western Cultural Values (The East-West Project). A study of this conference reflects upon Japanese participation in UNESCO's East-West Project, textbook revision, and the position of Japan as a site for addressing new Asian nationalisms and attitudes towards colonialism.

The Indian-Japanese proposal for an East-West Project was introduced at the UNESCO Asian Regional Conference in Tokyo in the spring of 1956. It was approved by Director General Luther Evans at the General Conference in New Delhi that fall. The East-West Project emphasized the importance of making Eastern values better understood throughout the world. The project's International Advisory Committee never fixed upon one definition of cultural values and agreed that the term should always be left open to debate. Similarly, committee members agreed that the East-West terminology was imprecise, but useful to a degree insofar as most representatives concurred that the peoples of their respective countries were willing to place themselves in one of the two categories.

The Japanese National Commission took a leading role in the East-West Project for two main reasons. First, Japanese public support for UNESCO was strong because the organization gave Japan its first postwar link to the international community by granting the nation UNESCO Observer Status in 1946. Japan gained full membership in 1951. Second, UNESCO's Executive Board chose former Minister of Education Maeda Tamon for the elite International Advisory Committee of the East-West Project. Maeda Tamon's personal commitment to UNESCO's mission established a leading role for Japan in the East-West Project.

Maeda Tamon was the Chair of the Japanese National Commission when the East-West Project was first introduced at the 1956 UNESCO Asian Regional Conference held in Tokyo. The opening speeches of this conference reflect Japanese anxieties about the potential of new Asian nationalisms. Maeda observed the tremendous changes which had taken place, "during the past two centuries...in cultural aspects of Asia as well as in other fields of national life under the sole impact of Western industrialism. While the benefit derived from contact with the West was undoubtedly considerable, it may be properly noted that such contact had at the same time entailed rather an anomalous effect upon the situations in Asia."² Maeda then addressed the delicate subject of new Asian nationalisms. "The new nationalism in Asia must not be an exclusive one. We should [be], and are, proud of our respective cultures, but these must be complimentary to other cultures of the world and never be contradictory."³ Prime



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Notes

¹ The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization



The 1958 Tokyo Textbook Conference *continued*

Notes

² *Records of the Regional Conference of Representatives of National Commissions for UNESCO in Asia*, 1956. Japanese National Commission for UNESCO, Tokyo, 1957, Appendix 5.A.1., p. 99.

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ *Ibid.*, Appendix 5.A.2, p.100.

⁵ *Ibid.*, "Second Meeting of the Working Group for Cultural Activities, Mass Communication and Exchange of Persons," p.48.

⁶ The most clearly political debates centered on the Taiwan-based Kuomintang government's representation of China at UNESCO.

⁷ UNESCO/ED/163. Report of a Meeting of Experts. Tokyo, 22 October-4 November 1958, "The Treatment of the West in Textbooks and Teaching Materials of South and East Asia." p.6.

Minister Hatoyama Ichiro spoke after Maeda, repeating that, "After the Second World War, in Asia, we have seen the powerful emergence of a *new nationalism*. We believe, however, that it must *not be an exclusive one*."⁴

It is significant that an Asian Regional Conference for UNESCO was hosted in Tokyo in 1956, just ten years after the end of the Second World War. Japanese imperialism was indirectly referred to once. A Korean motion for the voluntary return of "national art treasures acquired in the past by other countries through means other than legitimate purchase" was brought forward, very likely as a reference to Japanese colonial acquisitions, and the motion was agreed upon unanimously.⁵ Commission members were not politicians, but rather educators and intellectuals. In this forum, the combination of mainstream intellectuals acting with government approval towards a goal of improved intellectual cooperation kept geopolitical concerns in check, although obviously not buried, as they tried to negotiate a formula which would lead to the agreed goal of peace for future generations.⁶

The East-West Project focused largely on improving Western understanding of the East. The Tokyo textbook conference was unique in that it brought textbook experts together to discuss Asian perspectives of the West. Representatives attended from the following countries: Afghanistan, Ceylon, Chile, China (Taiwan), the Federal Republic of Germany, the Federation of Malaya, France, Ghana, India, Indonesia, Iran, Iraq, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Pakistan, Philippines, Thailand, the Union of Burma, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, Viet-Nam, and the Brunei, North Borneo, Sarawak and Singapore Group.

The conference members agreed that the major practical issues impeding the production of good textbooks in South and East Asia were scarcity of economic resources and lack of reference materials for textbook preparation. In many cases, those wishing to prepare texts dealing with other countries could not read the languages of the required reference materials. The conference observed that, "Facilities for research work that will insure the impartial and unbiased presentation of the West in some Asian countries are inadequate."⁷ Thus they called upon member states and UNESCO to create special textbook research centers which would maintain collections of textbooks from as many countries as possible. The centers would also provide sites for bilateral and multilateral textbook consultations.

The textbook experts presented individual reports on textbooks in their countries. Reports were based on surveys of history, geography and social studies texts for elementary and secondary schools. They generated the following observations concerning the presentation of the West in Asian textbooks. The responses are cautious and correspond with the awareness of

emerging Asian nationalisms expressed by the Japanese speakers at the 1956 Regional Conference. One line of criticism addressed strong associations of the West with colonialism in some textbooks which present an "unfortunate overemphasis on certain Western powers and a lack in the coverage of those which were not colonial powers."⁸ This was one of the "weaknesses which appear in some Asian textbooks with respect to dealing with the recent events in the history of their countries...There is at times a biased and disproportionate treatment of Western cultures... In this case there are superficial and episodic references to the colonial powers, but the non-colonial countries are almost totally neglected. This results in a picture of the West which is far from coherent and which adds little to the pupil's understanding. Another example is to be seen in an unbalanced attitude to certain modern Western powers. This consists of over-emphasizing the influence of one or another on the development of Asia."⁹

Another line of criticism suggested that textbooks contained psychological obstacles to an objective representation of the West due to past conflicts and injuries. "The underlying purpose of the Project is to remove the many obstacles to mutual understanding. Some of these obstacles are psychological, due either to feelings of outraged national pride or wounded self-esteem, others are political due to client or exploiter-exploited relationships in the social or economic spheres. If the implementation of this concept is to be effective, every effort must be made to reduce the psychological tensions which exist in varying degrees between the countries of the East and the West and to facilitate the absorption of progressive ideas and practices through a far-reaching programme of exchanges at various levels."¹⁰ The discussants recognized the damages suffered, but were adamant that they must be left behind in order for Asians to sustain peace. Surprisingly little objection was raised to the description of past foreign interventions as psychological obstacles.

There was an almost sanguine approach to colonial experiences. "The reports presented by participants sometimes reveal a strong adverse reaction to a former colonial power, which expresses itself in a refusal to assess the facts properly or to interpret them justly. Writers are loath to acknowledge the influence of the West and its technological progress on the development of their own country, or tend to over-emphasize the exploiting aspect of Western domination. This attitude, though not always conscious, is far from objective. In the present situation, when the East has come into her own, this indulgence in an unhistorical prejudice needs to be scrupulously avoided. The emotional approach must make way for a scientific one."¹¹ Only the delegate from the USSR asked to have his disagreement with this section of the final report noted in the minutes. "A reservation relating to this section was expressed by Professor A. Narotchnitsky, as follows: Considering the final report as a success



Notes

⁸ *Ibid.*, p.8.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.8.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p.6.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.9.

The 1958 Tokyo Textbook Conference *continued*

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¹² *Ibid.*, p.10.

of the meeting I vote for acceptance of it with the following reservation: (1) I am of the opinion that in the section of the report dealing with general principles the idea of truthful explanation of imperialism and colonialism is not quite clearly expressed, and (2) that in the same section, the idea of truthful explanation of great modern social revolutions is not significantly stressed."¹²

The official UNESCO report on the meeting represented the consensus of the participants, noting the Soviet reservation. It seems that the Japanese stance on the dangers of exclusive nationalisms resonated with the other national representatives. The cautious attitude toward negative representations of the West as colonial aggressors was widespread. The report urged that school textbooks should tread lightly upon historical grievances. There was clear international agreement that youth should be provided with forward-looking, peace-oriented social and economic descriptions of other peoples.

The Japanese location of the conference was paradoxically perfect. On the one hand, Japan represented an Asian state heavily influenced by Western industrialism and ideology. It had recently experienced six years of direct Western occupation. Yet, that occupation resulted from Japan's own colonial expansion throughout Asia, which was spurred on by nationalist drives. When the Japanese representatives urged that Western colonialism not be overemphasized in texts, the question of how Japanese colonialism would be treated could not have been far from the minds of participants in this regional forum. Japan was in a firm position to serve as a warning example of the consequences of nationalism. At the same time, its regional neighbors might have regarded Japan with a wary eye when it advised the oppressed to look forward and keep emotive colonial issues out of their textbooks. However, this conference marked a valiant if ephemeral consensus to promote the goal of international understanding over the claims of national pride. □

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Juvenile Delinquency in Japan: a Self-preventing Prophecy

Gesine Foljanty-Jost and Manuel Metzler

During the mid-1990s, Japanese society became deeply concerned with a perceived decline in conformity among the country's youth. Reports in the mass media on rising drug abuse, knife attacks in schools and suicides resulting from bullying indicated a dramatic increase in violence. Our research project refers to this sense of crisis, and focuses on the question of how Japanese schools, which are well known for their emphasis on conformity and efficiency, have responded to the crisis. The research interest lies in the reconstruction of the social control net schools utilize in order to secure conformist behavior among students.¹

Research Design

The project is divided into three analytical blocks. Since the understanding of problem perception depends very much on both an understanding of the definitions of delinquency in a given society and reliable data, we started with a reexamination of what delinquency means in the Japanese context in terms of juridical formulas, and extra-legal and informal norms. Secondly, we reexamined the so-called juvenile crisis by reviewing official data concerning juvenile crime and delinquent behavior at schools. The third part of the project consists of analysis of activities undertaken in Japanese junior high schools in order to secure conformity. In this part we chose three junior high school districts in Niigata Prefecture, where we did field research in 1998, 1999, and 2000. We visited lessons at each school, took interviews with local education administrators, mostly from the city's school board, and with headmasters, guidance teachers and homeroom teachers. To balance the adult perspective, we interviewed nine parents' spokespersons and 42 third-graders by means of structured interviews of 30 to 60 minutes. All interviews were held in Japanese, recorded, and transcribed for analysis.

For the analysis, we employed the concept of *social control* (Peters, *et al.*, 1995) as one of the major approaches for analyzing delinquent behavior. We categorized control attempts in terms of structural control, general control, and specific control.

Major Findings

Our analysis of the definition of delinquency demonstrates that at the most formal level Japanese legal definitions largely correspond with those in Germany. In semi-juridical regulations and stipulations, definitions show a tendency to be stricter in Japan, while informal definitions of juvenile delinquency as shown in school regulations are clearly more restrictive than in the German case. This suggests that corrective intervention may start earlier in



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Notes

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Japan than elsewhere.

Analysis of national statistics for juvenile delinquency alerted us to a discrepancy between the public perception of a crisis among Japanese youth and relatively low numbers of delinquent students. Cases of violence by junior high school students number among the lowest of all the OECD countries. Instances of delinquency were not significantly more frequent during the 1990s as compared to the 1980s. Moreover, like everywhere else in the world, it is the trivial forms of delinquency that are the most common in Japanese schools.

These general findings are supported by our case studies at the school micro level. We found a relatively low degree of delinquency, and an unrelated high problem awareness combined with a high density of structural, general and specific control.

In fact, the most important aspect of structural control, being the organization of school life that constitutes the organizational framework of behavior, is that Japanese junior high school runs all day long, five days a week. The curriculum includes many social activities, from daily extra hours reserved for problem discussion to festivals featuring socially desirable behavior and even anti-bullying campaigns running for three or more years. Even since the introduction of the five-day-week, structural preconditions at junior high schools can be characterized as extremely time and energy consuming. Spending most of the day at school to a certain extent limits opportunities for "slipping away" into undesired environments and activities. Social interaction and behavior is clearly defined by school regulations, teacher guidance materials, and rules self-imposed by the students. These form the normative foundation of school life and are unrelated to students' academic performance or their record of delinquency. The majority of students, moreover, basically do accept the rules as necessary, describing delinquent behavior (*furyô*) as something very far from everyday life.

General control, which refers explicitly to the prevention of delinquent behavior, addresses all students, regardless of how they behave. Our case studies show that all three schools define very similar expectations regarding student behavior in their education plans. Students are expected to lead a happy and socially rich life. They should have high moral standards, being ready to fight against bullying and to create a warm-hearted school environment. They should help the elderly and support classmates who are in trouble. They should refrain from harmful activities like smoking or visiting game centers, and lead a healthy life.

Formulas like these are not only written down in education plans, but are written on posters put up on every wall, and are employed to define the goals for school-wide campaigns against violence or "unsound" (*fukenzen*) behavior. These behavioral rules infiltrate daily school life so intensely that one might almost call them omnipresent. Even the students themselves formulate basic guidelines like these in their speeches, or in the official meetings of student committees. Everything, then, that does not fit within this pro-social pattern is automatically categorized as delinquency. Strict definition of delinquent behavior, in turn, has consequences for the actual handling of student delinquency. Our interviews show that the students at least superficially accept the proposed--or imposed--norms. On the other hand, we found that this kind of norm transition clearly risks encouraging students to apply the rules *only* at a superficial level of response. General control permits the possibility that students behave as a good child (*ii ko*) on the outside, while developing their own--perhaps delinquent--standards and norms on the inside.

Direct and indirect intervention to correct problematic behavior and prevent reoccurrence we term *specific control*. In every school, we observed or heard of practically every form of delinquent behavior from forbidden red ribbons or shoelaces, to broken windows and absence during classes, up to hitting classmates, smoking or shoplifting. School reactions range from soft control to "hard" punishments. According to the students, minor and frequent violations of school regulations such as sleeping during lessons do not cause any reaction at all in many cases. Some teachers, however, reprimand (*chûi suru*) such students openly. Others may talk to the student after the lesson, asking him or her to correct his/her behavior.

The next step in regaining control is the so-called "individual guidance" or "advice" session (*kobetsu sôdan*). This may be convened when a student has insulted or hit a teacher, has been bullying his or her classmates continuously, or is caught smoking or stealing. "Advice" comes close to interrogation. A group of adults urges one (or more) students to admit that they have personally failed in developing their character sufficiently. Usually, an advice session does not end before the student has agreed to make an apology. As soon as the student apologizes, he or she is formally forgiven and reintegrated. Again, there exists the danger that students will only comply to the norm superficially and hide their true feelings.



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The final step in the hierarchy of reactions is the formal punishment of the delinquent student. Such punishments include written reprimands, the compilation of an essay of apology, or temporary exclusion from school. The headmasters we interviewed stressed that they usually refrain from punishing students. They explained this reluctance in terms of their mistrust in the pedagogical effect of punishment. Another common explanation is their concern about the school's reputation.

The most severe formal punishment would involve handing the case over to the police. This is usually done if teachers or students are viciously assaulted. Figures for this kind of delinquency are extremely low, however.

As mentioned above, our field study indicates that this system of social control has its problems. For instance, students accept norms but feel that some are not really necessary. They often do not support regulations concerning their outfit but are ready to comply with the norms in order not to disappoint their teachers. Moreover, in every school we heard complaints that some teachers hit their students in order to force an apology, and students do come under severe psychological pressure during the "advice" sessions. However, our findings do not support those who argue that these problems relate to over-regulation or a repressive atmosphere in schools. School regulations are not enforced violently or blindly. There are "free" zones where students can slightly violate some norms, and teachers do not have to react. Regulations in Japanese junior high schools are detailed and dense, but they are not the tools of an overly suppressive, distorting or inhumane control system.

Conclusion

Japanese junior high schools refrain from a *laissez-faire* attitude towards student behavior. Instead, they provide clear rules on how students are expected to behave, all day long and five days a week. Social interaction in clubs, student committees, and class activities is organized to prevent anonymity and promote social integration. The bulk of school control measures are designed as pre-emptive, well in advance of the occurrence of any delinquent behavior. Control measures are based on a clear-cut set of rules which is constantly and forcefully presented to students, but never blindly imposed on them. What might seem to be over-regulation works out as a hierarchical set of norms offering teachers a high degree of flexibility in reacting. Control measures appeal to the good in each child and refrain from deterrents. If problems occur, the reaction emphasizes reintegration over punitive action. What remains open to question is whether this works in cases where students do not accept the goals of Japan's

meritocratic society. The reintegrative approach largely addresses minor cases of delinquency. In serious cases, students might become immune to the hidden power of exams, grades and personal records, which are part of structural control. The junior high school system of reintegration is limited to students who are, to a certain extent, already integrated.

We come, therefore, to the conclusion that the issue of problem behavior serves to create problem awareness, or even a sense of crisis, at a level unrelated to the actual scale of delinquency. Be it in the statistics of the Ministry of Education, or in the campaign posters in Niigata's junior high schools, the problem is constructed and perpetuated to justify permanent control over all students, whether delinquent or not. In all the schools we examined, control activities are similarly intense and surprisingly unrelated to the actual degree of occurrence of problem behavior. The issue of delinquency may thereby serve--whether unconsciously or by design--as a means of integration. This function might be considered, then, not a self-fulfilling, but a self-preventing, prophecy. □

For Further Reading

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Lifelong Learning in Rural Japan: Societal Objectives and a Curriculum of Knowledge, Skills and Practice

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This article is a preliminary assessment of a lifelong learning program undertaken to address a specific societal objective currently in its fourth year in Hirosaki City, Aomori Prefecture.¹

Lifelong Learning

Lifelong learning, a notion referred to with a variety of terms and perspectives (see Hyland, 1999; Tuijnman and Bostrom, 2002), is usually considered in Japan under the terms social education and lifelong learning. Gordon (1998; citing Ministry of Education sources) defines social education (*shakai kyôiku*) as organized educational activities for adults and young people other than those provided in the traditional school curriculum. Lifelong education (*shôgai gakushû*), on the other hand, is seen as learning that takes place at all stages of life and includes both school-based formal learning and non-formal learning. Lifelong learning activities are carried out at schools, companies, community centers, libraries, museums, and other types of facilities and lifelong learning itself includes knowledge gained through participation in sports and hobby activities, cultural activities, recreational activities, and volunteer activities. A current (Japanese) Ministry of Education homepage merges the terms, stating that social education plays a key role in the realization of a lifelong learning society, with its efforts directed toward providing opportunities for learning, volunteering and participation.

Fuwa (2001: 128) refers to a National Advisory Committee for Lifelong Learning (NACLL) report on national policy for the development of lifelong learning, which identified the following areas as important (abridged by author):

- (1) the encouragement of voluntary activities..., (2) the promotion of systematic and continuing recurrent education for adults..., (3) extension of opportunities for learning about contemporary issues,...[such as] human rights, citizenship, gender, the environment, aging society, nuclear power, and (4) development of education for children... .

Lifelong Learning in Aomori Prefecture

Aomori Prefecture has a population of approximately 1.5 million, spread through three major cities (Aomori, Hachinohe and Hirosaki), five medium-sized cities and 59 towns and villages. The prefecture ranks low on most socio-economic indicators and is experiencing a net loss of population, an aging population and high social welfare dependency.

In an Education in Aomori Prefecture (2002) report, the Aomori Prefectural Board of Education states that it "prides itself on its respect for its inhabitants and its determination on building a peaceful yet prosperous lifelong-learning society" (Aomori Prefectural Board of Education; English in original).

Notes

¹ The researchers participating in this work include Professor Hikage Yayoi of the Hirosaki University Faculty of Education, Ichijo Atsuko, Ph.D. candidate at the Hirosaki University Faculty of Education, and the author.

A Lifelong Learning Division is listed among the eight Board of Education divisions, with subheadings for *shôgai gakushu* (lifelong education), *shakai kyôiku* (social education) and *seishônén katei-kyôiku* (youth at-home education). The Education Budget (2002) accounts for 20.6 percent of the total prefectural budget, with social education accounting for 2.4 percent of the education budget.

The report indicates that there were 507 classes/courses for adults with 26,491 participants in 2000, and 596 classes/courses for women's and family education with 18,815 participants and 182 classes/courses for senior citizens with 11,823 participants.

Aomori Prefecture has instituted a Lifelong Learning Information Service under its Prefectural Community Education Center, which provides information on learning opportunities, learning facilities, groups and study circles, instructors, audio-visual educational materials and a general information database. The prefecture has also initiated a *Kenmin* College (Prefectural Citizen's College), providing information and referral services to citizens as an 'independent institutional union' (*dokuritsu kikan rengôtai*). 'Graduation' is conferred on the basis of 150 credits (where one hour of class equals one credit) in courses recognized by the college in one of five 'majors': General Studies, Lifestyle Creation, International Understanding, Business Techniques, and Local Studies.

A preliminary review of education-related information from the various municipalities shows social education and lifelong learning activities referred to by around forty percent, with the range of age and demographic focus inclusive of all citizens in some cases and highly specific in others (e.g. youth, young adults, women, pregnant women, the aged). Several had curricular-based programs, organized on themes such as cooking, creative life, health, and hobbies in one case and regional issues, history-literature-tradition, outdoor challenge, health, business, and hobbies in another. Others simply referred to lectures, with topical headings in such areas as municipal government, welfare, town development, environmental issues, education, health and sports, and local history and culture. Critical inspection of both curriculum and the lecture/activity descriptions revealed a mix weighing somewhat more heavily toward hobbies, with the curriculum in one case including croquet, enjoying water sports and a bowling competition under the 'health' theme, and overnight stays at picturesque hot spring resorts under the 'local culture' theme.

Hirosaki City Lifelong Learning: Kirameki Josei Juku

The lifelong educational program examined in the present case study, the Hirosaki City Kirameki Josei Juku,² is a four-year program established with a



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² Rendered in English as Sparkling Women's School; "kirameki" is a noun meaning glitter or sparkling, obviously with a very positive connotation when used as such in this program.

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specific social objective. The program, actually organized under the Municipal Planning Division, rather than the Education Division, is outlined as follows (abridged and translated by the author):

Objective

In order to realize a society with opportunity for equal participatory planning for men and women, the goal is to create a place for activity and opportunity for interaction by women, where . . . there is the opportunity for women to develop skills of judgement, planning and action in accordance with government policy.

Period of Study

Two years, with the first year consisting of basic study organized on once-per-month lectures and once-per-month small group discussion sessions. In the second year, groups undertake theme-oriented independent research.

Participants

Hirosaki City resident women eighteen-years-of-age and older who have an interest in promotion of a society with equal participatory planning for men and women; thirty participants per year, with four classes being conducted over a five year period, for a total of 120 participants.

Preliminary Assessment

The average age of participants is 44 with about 60 percent employed. Advisors from the local university participated, offering lectures and participating in discussions in the first year and advising on the research activities in the second.

The curriculum in the first year of the program has focused on knowledge-oriented themes, such as male-female cooperative society, women's place in society, gender and women's studies, social networking, contemporary psychology, and social welfare, as well as skill-oriented themes, such as independent study, self-expression, networking, information technology, and the organization/operation of Hirosaki City municipal government.

The second-year research topics have included themes such as social welfare, children and family in society, domestic violence, local themes (history and resources), women and work, and starting a business. The program culminates in a research presentation/graduation ceremony.

Setting the curriculum and providing for the maximum and most meaningful educational and experiential potential was a work in progress. With the first group, the first year of study consisted of lectures followed by discussion held the following week; in the second year, a text-study component was added,

using the *Josei-gaku kyôiku/gakushû handbook* (Kokuritsu Fujin Kyoiku Kaikan, 1999) as the text. Preparation is required and participant accountability stressed, in the form of Weekly Feedback forms; in addition, a Group Lecture Discussion and Feedback Format was introduced in an attempt to improve discussion among participants.

The preliminary assessment of the Kirameki Josei Juku lifelong learning program highlights the potential for developing such programs in a manner which addresses specific societal objectives on the one hand, but also clearly alludes to the necessity of providing the citizen participants with the balance of knowledge, skills, and practice to pursue the program together with participant accountability on the other. Assessment of the 'graduates' of the program is being undertaken, yet it is clear even now that the next step is development of some mechanism by which these graduates have the opportunity to put their new-found knowledge and skills to use in society. □

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