David G. Hebert

Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education

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Foreword

One of the challenges that we face in teaching in postcolonial university settings is students' unwarranted assumption that Western methods are better and more advanced than Asian methods and folk pedagogies. My students in Hong Kong, including many non-local students from across China, typically see traditional Chinese pedagogies as rigid, teacher-centered, and boring, while Western methods are creative and student-centered. Those who specialize in Western music tend to not have much exposure to, nor appreciation for, folk music traditions (e.g., Chinese music, Cantonese opera, etc.). For them, Western music is their music. Part of my job is to sensitize students to the limited scope of their experiences and understandings, including folk psychology and pedagogy. Bruner (1996) highlights the importance of such work when he writes,

> *In theorizing about the practice of education in the classroom (or any other setting, for that matter), you had better take into account the folk theories that those engaged in teaching and learning already have. For any innovations that you, as a "proper" pedagogical theorist, may wish to introduce will have to compete with, replace, or otherwise modify the folk theories that already guide both teachers and pupils (pp. 46).*

Today's educational scene is a hybrid of diverse pedagogical ideas and practices, invented and borrowed from different parts of the world. Cultural borrowing of educational methods does not necessarily reach fruitful results if a proper understanding of the underlying philosophical foundations and its subsequent folk pedagogy is lacking. For instance, what is supposedly "informal" learning, as introduced by local teachers, is often teacher-centered, with a series of spoon-feeding activities for learners, reflecting the local values of education (Adamson et al., 2000). Similarly, I have witnessed STEAM classes that are supposedly creative and exploratory but actually turn out to be full of ready-made answers.

Another challenge for students is to embrace the liminality of postcolonial spaces and eschew binary thinking (e.g., East and West). They should not see the values of their traditions only in light of the West, as Said alerted decades ago (Said, 2003). They need to learn a variety of approaches and underlying values from across the world, beyond the lens of "either-or" perspectives. Keita Takayama (2020) did an

excellent job in this regard when he illustrated his embodiment of Western thoughts and values, through an exploration of the Kyoto school of philosophy. Takayama reflected on his journey from life as a graduate student in a US university, to that as an Asian scholar in Australia, and finally, as a professor in a Japanese university: "My task as an international graduate student was to show how the 'case' of Japan speaks back to the theoretical frameworks and debates widely shared in the Anglo-American scholarly context" (Takayama, 2020, p. 80). Takayama thereby questioned the underlying assumptions of comparative research: the West as method and the East as data, the US/UK academy as a "theory mill," and Japan as a "data mine," all conditions under which Japanese empirical realities are interpreted through Western theories.

These reflections also resonate with my own experience. Like Theodore Adorno and Edward Said, I began my musical training in Western classical music. I was a piano student upon entering university, which was my musical identity despite the fact that my mother played Japanese flutes. She was the only female shakuhachi player in my hometown (and perhaps even now) due to the instrument's historical association with masculinity (Matsunobu, 2018). Unlike my mother, I was ultimately able to proceed to study the shakuhachi more intensively. Eventually, like Rabindranath Tagore, my bicultural musical training led to the acquisition of "bimusicality" (Hood, 1960). It was when I moved to the US as a Fulbright Graduate Scholar that I noticed my hidden assumption: The shakuhachi was a private matter and not worth telling or exploring academically, while my training in Western music was officially recognized as valid. It took some time for my academic supervisor Liora Bresler to convince me that I was wrong, a realization that guided my decolonial journey. Since then, I began to rediscover my embodied sensitivities as someone who grew up in Japan. The silence between notes of the shakuhachi, or *ma*, began to resonate in me with the tone of a big bronze gong suspended in a local temple. My grandfather used to be a Buddhist monk, and when I was growing up, I heard his chanting every morning before I went to Catholic kindergarten. I could hear and imagine the sonority of my childhood through the shakuhachi. Later, I theorized ma in my dissertation (Matsunobu, 2009, 2013) as a moment of here-and-now where a sense of focus and flow is renewed. "*Ma* describes neither space nor time, but the tension in the silence and in the space surrounding sounds and objects" (Galliano, 2002, p. 14). Practicing the shakuhachi served me as a medium to understand what was hidden in my formal training. I came to realize that indigenous knowledge is not just private experience but should be explored systematically.

To summarize, I went through much the same process as Takayama by receiving academic training in the US, developing an early career in Australia and Japan, and now teaching as an Associate Professor in Hong Kong. I realize that I have also been doing and preaching much the same to my students. Still, I notice that in my experience of supervising doctoral students in Asia, ninety percent of references in their literature reviews tend to come from Anglo-American academic sources, while the rest are from their own cultures and typically introduced as local context rather than theory. It seems there is a pressing need to develop a wealth of non-Western theories. Can Asia be a theory mill for the West?

It is important that we are open and critical to a variety of ideas beyond the East–West, self–other dichotomy. Postcolonialism has achieved the celebration of indigenous and folk traditions but also seen an emerging sense of nationalism. For instance, Japanese educators are recently required to teach much more Japanese subjects than before; History teachers are pushed to revisit history and introduce more Japanese perspectives. Professional development opportunities for music teachers are concerned mostly with teaching traditional Japanese music. The same can be said for Hong Kong if we replace the word "Japanese" with "Chinese." Celebrating our own culture as unique and superior can easily lead to ethnocentrism.

While a preoccupation with Western values remains, students are turning to cultural nationalism with little understanding of the history of their own traditions and the beauty of other cultures. A bipolar perspective on education reinforces a country's nationalistic sentiments, as evidenced through an analysis of *nihonjin-ron* in Japan, a recurrent cultural discourse that discusses the peculiarities and distinctiveness of Japan (Befu, 1993; Sakai, 1997). Nihonjin-ron is an expression of a Japanese desire to view Japan's national culture as pure, authentic, and traditional (rather than a diverse, hybrid construction) and identify a national "self" in relation to an ideologized image of the West.[1] It also encourages viewing artifacts and products of other countries based on such a self-West perspective. In fact, it is not uncommon to find statements that praise anything Japanese simply because it is comparable to the West and that denigrate anything non-Japanese just because it is not as great as the West. (Former Confucian scholar Hahm Chaibong (2018) views the heated interest in Confucius in China as a sign of nationalism if it is studied merely because it is Chinese).

I believe developing a third perspective beyond the self-other framework is crucial in becoming a global citizen. In music, this means studying a variety of music across the globe, including those from local cultures, while decentralizing European music in the curriculum. A similar approach is needed in other educational subjects, and this volume contributes to such efforts in relation to education as a whole, across diverse subject areas. The authors of this book examine and compare the pedagogical applications of educational philosophy in various cultures. Readers will gain much insight through their in-depth analysis of non-Western theories of education. This book is timely and much needed. It is particularly useful for university students traveling through multiple spaces, places, and contexts and forming their respective pedagogical foundations. I am most thrilled that my doctoral students contributed to this book edited by my long-term friend and mentor, Prof. David Hebert. He initiated my decolonial journey since we met as Ph.D. students in Japan. He has been supportive of my intellectual development throughout my second Ph.D. in the US and beyond. His involvement in research in music education in a variety of contexts in Japan, China, New Zealand, Europe, and the US, serves as a model for

[1] Books on *nihonjin-ron* and those celebrating unique characteristics of "anything Japanese" tend to sell well in Japan, satisfying the expectation of general public who want to believe that their culture is unique, unlike other nations, with its unique language (Haga, 2004), aesthetics (Takashina, 1986), sensitivity (Minami, 1980), and even ways of brain functioning (Tsunoda, 1978).

those who aspire to be an international scholar. This book also marks an important personal milestone for Hebert: his tenth book as he reaches age 50. Who knows what the future may bring? I am glad that my students had this precious chance to work with him, just as I did twenty years ago.

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Preface

The great African philosopher Kwasi Wiredu (1931–2022) passed away in Ghana while the present book, *Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education*, was under production. Wiredu is credited as one of the very first social theorists to introduce the notion of "conceptual decolonization" in the 1980s (Wiredu, 2002), and for devoting considerable effort to assembling colleagues from across the continent to collectively define a distinctively African contribution to the field of philosophy (Wiredu, 2004). Unfortunately, I never personally had the opportunity to meet Wiredu, but on a visit to Ghana in 2011, as part of the Nordic Master of Global Music program (Hebert et al., 2010), I had the great pleasure of briefly meeting his distinguished countryman Kwabena Nketia (1921–2019), a similarly towering figure in my primary field of interest, *musicology*. Like Wiredu, for decades Nketia was known for taking a decolonial approach to challenge the universal relevance of Western epistemological assumptions, from even as early as 1962 in the article "The Problem of Meaning in African Music," in which Nketia asked whether it is reasonable for African musical meaning to be "investigated and stated in terms of Western philosophical or psychological concepts of meaning in music" (Nketia, 1962, p. 1).

Indeed, it is not unusual for some scholarly debates in music to intuitively precede debates in other academic fields. Still, it may surprise some readers to find that no less than six of the contributors to the present book specialize in *music*, and some will surely wonder why they would have the confidence to consider themselves qualified to write a book on *philosophy of education.* While it is undeniable that some forms of music conservatory education have tended to be rather narrow in scope—mostly limited to training in the techniques of performance on a particular musical instrument—the fields of musicology and music education are unusually interdisciplinary in orientation, and many music educators maintain a deep interest in philosophy, sensing its insights are necessary toward fully understanding the complexities of music as a global phenomenon (Hebert & McCollum, 2014, 2022). Moreover, musicology is one of the oldest academic fields, traceable to medieval times, and a significant proportion of the most renowned philosophers of all time have also been accomplished musicians. This can be seen in prominent examples of non-western philosophers, such as the great Chinese music teacher Confucius, and

prominent Middle Eastern musician-philosophers Al Kindi, Al Farabi, and Ibn Sinna. We can also see this tendency in the European tradition, with prominent composer-philosophers such as Jean Jacques Rousseau and Friedrich Nietzsche, while the twentieth century saw the rise of notable musician-social theorists including Theodore Adorno, Rabindranath Tagore, and Edward Said. Even today, some philosophers with expertise in comparative and non-western philosophy are also profoundly interested in music, perhaps most notably, Kathleen Higgins, but also Stephen Davies and Philip Alperson.

In the case of music education, the journal *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, and the output of such prolific scholars as David Elliott, Wayne Bowman, and Estelle Jorgensen exemplify recent thought in this field. Our motivations for writing a book on philosophy of education, rather than philosophy of *music* education, do not derive from an assumption that current ideas in philosophy of music education are necessarily inadequate. In fact, there have been some important efforts to bring non-western and postcolonial perspectives into philosophy of music education, from early work in the 1980s by Anthony Palmer to more recent contributions by Victor Fung, Koji Matsunobu, Leonard Tan, Guillermo Rosabal-Coto, Anita Prest, Juliet Hess, and others. Rather, we sense that eventual attempts toward decolonizing philosophy of music education would benefit from first establishing more foundational work in general philosophy of education with discussion that is applicable to an array of academic fields beyond music. While philosophers of music education—particularly Wayne Bowman—have argued that work in this field must begin with a definition of *music*, our position is that there is an equally strong argument to suggest it must begin with a definition of *education*, and that an international-comparative view—what we contribute to developing through this book—is prerequisite to understanding how education can be more adequately defined.

Elsewhere I have advocated that "Comparative research should be more carefully based on recent concerns in the philosophy of education" (Hebert, 2012, p. 26), so it is a pleasure to see the fruits of our efforts in the culmination of this book that aims to enable meaningful global comparison of educational philosophies. This book ultimately arose from writings by the first two cohorts of an international Ph.D. course titled "Non-Western Educational Philosophy and Policy" which began by challenging the very notions of East and West, as students reflected on why a course of this kind was even necessary in the twenty-first century (Sethurupan, 2020). The course was offered in an entirely online format through Western Norway University of Applied Sciences during the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020 and 2021.

Bergen Summer Research School also offered space for further development of some of the ideas elaborated upon in the book, and contributors Adam Switala, Dorothy Ferary, and "Eya" Czarecah Tuppil Oropilla all benefited from their experiences as doctoral students at Bergen Summer Research School. We should also acknowledge here that six of the contributing authors in this book are connected with the Education University of Hong Kong: recent doctoral students Le-Xuan Zhang, "Luna" Ning Luo, Tao Guan, and Charla Rochella Santiago-Saamong, as well as Professor Koji Matsunobu (author of the Foreword), and I have also been serving as an Honorary Professor with that distinguished institution across recent years. This

book is one initiative within our broader project to establish deeper collaboration at the doctoral level between these two institutions in Bergen and Hong Kong. Specifically, we continue to strive toward the long-term vision of developing a study option whereby students can simultaneously obtain two kinds of doctoral degrees from Asia and Europe (Ph.D. and Ed.D.), which would bolster global competence among those charged with training the next generation of teachers.

It is also important to note that this is a thoroughly peer-reviewed volume, with each chapter beginning as a Ph.D. seminar paper that was externally evaluated by a prolific philosopher of education, Māori scholar Carl Mika. Following additional development, around half of the papers were later published as articles in *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education.* Then, based on further extension from the papers, each chapter was peer-reviewed by separate individuals in the project as well as the book's editor. Finally, Springer press offered its own editorial reviews of the proposal and final manuscript.

This book features approachable and timely discussion of how the ideas of philosophers, from many countries around the world, are relevant for educators: thinkers from India, Indonesia, Philippines, China, Japan, Tunisia, Palestine, Ghana, Nigeria, and South Africa. We are most fortunate that the great African philosopher of education Yusef Waghid has agreed to develop an Afterword for the book, while my close friend of 20 years, prolific Japanese educationist Koji Matsunobu developed its Foreword. I am especially thankful to Pip Bennett and Dorothy Ferary, current Ph.D. candidates with University College London, for collaborating with me on the conclusion chapter. We believe the ideas presented in this book will be of relevance to an array of readers from across various fields of education, international relations, and the arts. It has been a pleasure to work on this project with a new generation of promising scholars from across the world, and we are hopeful that this book will inspire teachers with a global view and new ways of approaching education.

Bergen, Norway David G. Hebert

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Why Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education?

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Introduction

> "The human essence lies in complexity," she replies. "The objects of scientific investigation lie not in the object, as you know, but in the subject contained within the human body." (Murakami, 2018, p. 232)

In the day-to-day routines of education, teachers are often left with the impression that the challenges they face are permanent and universal, yet a remarkable *diversity* of contexts and approaches—some of which may embody *solutions*—is among the most common findings to arise from studies in international-comparative education. This is certainly true for comparative research on curriculum, policy, and pedagogies, but variation seen in these subfields is often shaped by profound differences in underlying *philosophies* of education. Indeed, the impetus for specific pedagogical actions often arises directly from teachers' basic assumptions and working theories regarding the fundamental nature, value, and aims of education, as well as the agency they see within themselves to create positive change. It follows that careful reflection on the philosophy of education can be tremendously beneficial for teachers of all kinds—especially those who seek a global understanding of humanity—since this promises to expand creative imagination, advance personal enrichment, and stimulate pedagogical development in multiple ways:

> For educators seeking a sense of purpose and meaning to their efforts, philosophy can offer various resources, ranging from conceptual tools to explore and clarify the underlying assumptions of competing value frameworks; to skills for critically reflecting on conventional views and assessing their worth; to proposals of positive, constructive, alternate frameworks; and, finally, to visions of radically different possibilities that can stretch the imagination and expand the spirit. (Burbules & Warnick, 2006, p. 501)

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Clearly, educational philosophy matters. Nevertheless, there have been relatively few attempts to offer an international-comparative perspective into the *philosophy of education*, and many teachers—in Europe, the Americas, and elsewhere—tend to know rather little about traditions of educational thought associated with other continents (Milligan et al., 2011). This often remains true even while they may have a general sense of differing tendencies at the surface level when it comes to contrasting features of curricular structures, instructional content, or assessment practices. As novelist Haruki Murakami noted in the epigraph (above), through embodiment, individual subjectivity is what defines human essence, and different bodies inevitably perceive experiences in diverse ways. Diversity therefore has profound implications for human learning. Nevertheless, Timothy Reagan (2018) has observed that "The idea that there might be valuable insights to be gained from a serious examination of non-western educational traditions themselves, indeed that these traditions might be fully comparable to the western tradition in their richness and diversity, is one that has been rarely voiced" (p. 1).

It may generally be assumed that because so many students from other continents currently seek learning opportunities in Europe, North America, and Oceania, educational quality in the latter continents is evidently superior, and little is to be gained from careful study of non-western philosophies of education. However, as we will demonstrate, with increasing recognition of global interdependence has come a stronger awareness of the need to understand other parts of the world, leading to the promotion of such concepts as "global competence" and "decolonization" in education.

Global Competence and Decolonization

Global competence may be understood as a major objective of the field known as international-comparative education, which seeks to empower teachers and educational policy makers by generating a meaningful understanding of the conditions of education worldwide (Bartram, 2017; Phillips & Schweisfurth, 2014). However, global competence is also increasingly recognized as a basic skill to be acquired by all students. *Global competence* is defined by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development as having "the capacity to examine local, global and intercultural issues, to understand and appreciate the perspectives and world views of others, to engage in open, appropriate and effective interactions with people from different cultures, and to act for collective well-being and sustainable development" (OECD, 2018, p. 25). While essential arts, humanities, and social studies subjects have arguably been marginalized in some school systems due to a tendency to "teach to the test" (particularly in response to the OECD's own emphasis on literacy and numeracy in its popular PISA evaluation), the organization's four assessable aspects of *global competence* now endeavors to offer a helpful counterbalance as they are adopted into local policies:

1. The capacity to evaluate information, formulate arguments, and explain complex situations and problems by using and connecting evidence, identifying biases and gaps in information, and managing conflicting arguments.
2. The capacity to identify and analyze multiple perspectives and world views, positioning and connecting their own and others' perspectives on the world.
3. The capacity to understand differences in communication, recognizing the importance of socially-appropriate communication conventions, and adapting communication to the demands of diverse cultural contexts.
4. The capacity to evaluate actions and consequences by identifying and comparing different courses of action and weighing these actions against one another on the basis of short- and long-term consequences (OECD, 2018).

The global competence concept therefore promises to improve awareness of the importance of promoting international understanding in schools, potentially providing a platform from which to generate a response from universities, particularly in the field of teacher education (Schwarzer & Bridglall, 2015). By bolstering the global competence of students, we naturally generate stronger empathy and awareness for concerns associated with inequalities and other challenges that impact the entire world (Unterhalter & North, 2019). However, a deepened understanding of global challenges may also require apprehension of features that Robert Aman (2018) describes as "inter-epistemic rather than simply intercultural," hence the notion of decolonization becomes equally important in education.

Decolonization is a related concept that is rapidly gaining currency in higher education (Connell, 2018, 2019). According to Kwasi Wiredu, "To define conceptual decolonization is easy enough. It is the elimination from our thought of modes of conceptualization that came to us through colonization and remain in our thinking owing to inertia rather than to our own reflective choices. But this is easier said than done" (Wiredu, 2002, p. 56). With roots related to multiculturalism, culturally responsive teaching, and similar movements, decolonization shifts the focus to how curriculum often fails to meaningfully represent the ideas of formerly colonized peoples, and is thereby incomplete and unbalanced, calling for a correction to school administration and pedagogy (Abdi et al., 2015; Hutchinson et al., 2023; Lopez, 2020; Moncrieffe, 2022). However, the focus is on much more than curriculum, for as Manthalu and Waghid observe, "Decolonisation of education is not just a matter of political ideological motivation where the curriculum is propped up to achieve some sort of balance of knowledge content. Rather than be reducible to mere representation in the curriculum of another knowledge body and pedagogical experiences, decoloniality ought to be regarded as a necessary result of educational justice that demands reimagining and reconstituting epistemological frameworks" (Manthalu & Waghid, 2019, p. 26).

Among the first researchers to advocate decolonial methodologies in the field of social research was Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999). Smith (2005) has noted that among the major educational concerns frequently held by Indigenous people that tend to differ from the majority population is that of epistemic self-determination, and the desire for schools that promote local language and culture

from an Indigenous perspective. It follows that a decolonized approach to educational research would uphold the values of Indigenous peoples, leading to tangible improvements in their learning. Indeed, for hundreds of millions of Indigenous peoples worldwide, rapid social and technological change are commonly seen as an existential threat, for the same forces of modernization that tend to replace the natural environment to which their lives are intwined also tends to erase their cultural expressions (Hebert, 2022; Whyte, 2018). It should therefore come as no surprise that recognition of the need for decolonial methodologies rapidly spread during the first two decades of the twenty-first century, and additional visions have been expanded and developed in Africa, the United States, and elsewhere (Chilisa, 2019; Patel, 2015).

In fact, an array of social science and humanities fields have responded to concerns associated with decolonization across recent years. In the journal *Current Anthropology*, Allen and Jobson (2016) described decolonization as an ongoing project that seeks to apprehend and, ultimately, displace a "logic of coloniality" that undergirds the experiment of western modernity. In her article "Decolonizing Sociology," Raewyn Connell (2018) wrote, "The hegemonic modern knowledge system is not so much modern science as imperial science," by which she suggests that science not only especially developed during the European age of exploration and colonization, but was also profoundly shaped by this context in ways that persist through the present day. Consequently, Connell (2018) advocates three main approaches for decolonizing the field of sociology: (1) Changing the curriculum to give greater weight to the colonized and postcolonial world, (2) Including international collaboration in every project, and (3) Sharing curriculum materials online and internationally. Connell especially notes the value of "finding new conceptual frameworks, or rethinking familiar methods, to make them usable for the social groups marginalized by empire" (Connell, 2018, p. 403).

Other authors have cautioned that decolonization, if carelessly applied, can lead to a backlash. In her article "Decolonizing English," Ruvani Ranasinha (2019) identified some common concerns regarding "political correctness" and western feminism in the context of the movement for decolonization, including: (1) Some English teachers think inclusion of global literature will lead to poorer quality works being taught alongside classic western masterpieces, (2) Feminism is often taught using a Eurocentric approach, without recognition of how gendered marginality also intersects with race, class, caste, language, religion, and location, and (3) Writers from ethnic minority backgrounds are often unrealistically assumed to speak for, and represent, an entire community. In his article "The Decolonial Bandwagon," Leon Moosavi (2020) also attempted to critique the decolonization movement, and ultimately reached the following recommendations for scholars and educators: (1) Recognize that colonialism leads to complex and multiple forms of marginalization, (2) Accept that decolonization is difficult and perhaps even impossible to fully achieve, and (3) Avoid nativist and tokenistic forms of decolonization. Clearly, haphazard approaches to decolonization in educational fields entails risks that might be curtailed through careful and systematic consideration of philosophical foundations.

Ultimately, decolonization extends on issues raised through postcolonial critiques of western epistemologies (Go, 2016), which even have inadvertently shaped the field of international-comparative education (Takayama et al., 2017). Partly for such reasons, we developed this ten-chapter volume *Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education*, but our impetus also comes from a recognition that philosophical thought from Asia and Africa can offer timeless intellectual stimulation and inspiration irrespective of one's identity or sociopolitical concerns in any given context (Reagan, 2018).

Learning from Comparisons

Despite a great diversity of educational systems worldwide, the philosophy of education may be understood as unified to the extent that everywhere it aims to bring meaning and direction to the efforts of teachers. It seeks to determine how we might better understand our objectives and make sense of competing claims regarding what most matters in our work. It serves as a fundamental basis for decision making regarding educational policy and curriculum, and even pedagogical approaches among individual teachers, and thereby exemplifies unity despite diversity. Different philosophies of education arose in part due to diverse cultural values.

The Eurasian landmass has been historically understood as divided between the Occident and Orient, or Europe and Asia, but recent generations of historians have taken great interest in processes of intellectual exchange that transcended the landmass during different eras, as well as interactions with the ancient African kingdoms of Egypt, Ethiopia, and Mali. For many centuries, the Silk Road enabled not only trade but also knowledge to be shared across Eurasia, and newer studies of such topics as Viking voyages (eighth through eleventh centuries), the travels of Chinese explorer Zheng He (1371–c.1433), and the Graeco-Arabic-Latin translation movements (mid-eighth to twelfth centuries), have enabled rediscovery of how much the early development of science in Europe actually owed to Asian thinkers. Some have even explored the extent to which ideas from Asia may have influenced European philosophers in more recent centuries (MacFie, 2003), and even how African philosophical concepts, such as *ubuntu*, have been globalized (Gade, 2011; van Binsbergen, 2001).

The importance of intercultural experience for gaining wisdom was recognized even 1000 years ago among the Vikings of Northern Europe, who were expert navigators that traveled across the world, including North America and the Middle East. As proclaimed in the Eddic poem Hávamál, "He is truly wise who's travelled far and knows the ways of the world. He who has travelled can tell what spirits govern the men he meets" (Hávamál, 1992, p. 33). Viking thought preserved in the Hávamál also celebrates the importance of health and occupations suitable to one's individual capabilities (O'Neill, 2013). Today, despite the lingering impacts of colonization, the aforementioned global examination movement has produced a corpus of results across decades that suggest schools in many Asian nations are performing well compared to Europe when it comes to testable knowledge.

Perhaps Europe has always had something to learn from Africa and Asia, and vice versa, but considerable gaps in intercontinental knowledge exchange have nevertheless persisted. For generations, a major challenge has been the meaningful translation of complex argumentation between different socio-cultural contexts that often lack equivalent concepts (Hebert, 2018). Philosophical writings can be uniquely dense and challenging even in their original cultural and historical settings, and especially in an important professional field such as education. Sensitive interpreters are needed who can effectively bridge the gap between radically different epistemologies and point to what others may learn in terms of practical applications (Crossley et al., 2015).

In 2011, an article in the journal *Educational Studies* concluded that "the increasing internationalization of educational problems, as well as efforts to resolve them" call for a "comparative philosophy of education" (Milligan et al., 2011, p. 66). Its authors noted that their review of "five of the top journals in both philosophy of education and comparative education reveals only a handful of articles that might be termed comparative philosophy of education published in the last decade" (Milligan et al., 2011, p. 53). While it is difficult to deny that educational philosophy, as known in Europe, has traditionally taken a rather ethnocentric approach to its theorization (albeit broadening with some inclusivity in recent years, as seen in *Educational Theory and Philosophy* and other journals), one may also argue that the field of comparative education has tended to take approaches that usually fail to meaningfully explore contrasting philosophical traditions that shape educational differences. Writing on the field of educational philosophy, Nicholas Burbules (2000) noted that "exclusion of people, groups, and their perspectives, *must* be taken into account if a field is not to become increasingly hermetic and self-rationalizing – to say nothing of the possible effects of personal or professional harm upon those persons and groups by excluding them" (p. 15). The field of international-comparative education is most often concerned with describing the actual policies and practices in schools rather than offering a detailed analysis of philosophical foundations. On the other hand, the philosophy of education often proceeds with a Eurocentric orientation that does not fully take into account the diverse array of philosophical thought concerning education that can be identified worldwide. We seek *synergy* in this book, to unify these fields for an international-comparative view into diverse philosophies of education.

In a major reference work, *Oxford Handbook of Educational Philosophy*, only one contributor—Martha Nussbaum—offered a significant discussion of a non-western philosopher, Rabindranath Tagore. Based on her decidedly international orientation, Nussbaum warns against educating for "Nations of technically trained people who don't know how to criticize authority, useful profit-makers with obtuse imaginations" (p. 62). Moreover, Nussbaum (2009) identifies three essential abilities in education as "crucial to the health of any democracy internally and to the creation of a decent world culture" (p. 55), which she sees as recently disappearing from technocratic public education: "the ability to think critically; the ability to transcend local loyalties and to approach world problems as a 'citizen of the world'; and finally, the ability to imagine sympathetically the predicament of another person" (p. 55). The first of these abilities may be understood as "self-criticism and critical thought about

one's own traditions," and the second leads to "flexible citizens who can adapt their thought to the nature of the current reality," while the third ability may also be described as "narrative imagination" (pp. 55–57). Nussbaum thereby demonstrates how discussion of the ideas of an Asian philosopher can bring unique insights for rethinking the problems of education in western countries, as well as how solutions may be envisioned. In this way, Nussbaum's argument is also consistent with the concerns of global competence and decolonization. It is relevant to note here that the "capabilities approach" developed by contemporary Indian philosopher Amartya Sen, and extended by Martha Nussbaum, has gained much attention recently in various educational systems worldwide, and exemplifies an intercontinental approach (Otto & Ziegler, 2010; Walker & Unterhalter, 2010). In fact, insightful comparisons are sometimes made between ideas from very different philosophical traditions even within the space of a single article (Roberts, 2012; Samuel, 2011; Tan, 2018).

We seek through this book to introduce the educational philosophies of notable African and Asian thinkers who tend to be little recognized in Europe and North America. Arguments associated with decolonization offer one timely and important rationale for any who might doubt the relevance of Asian and African philosophies for educators in Europe or elsewhere (Eriksen & Svendsen, 2020), but our purpose with this book is not so much about convincing readers that change is necessary, but rather to offer specific resources for diversification of higher education curricula. We assume that as years pass, educators will increasingly seek to know more about educational thought from across the world, as global integration—recovering from the recent hiccups of a global pandemic in 2020–2022, as well as Brexit and the Trump administration—will most likely again intensify, leading to a demand for books that offer a globally inclusive approach to the philosophical foundations of education.

To attain cohesion and engender a comparative perspective, the authors in this book have also made a point of considering how the contemporary European notion of *Bildung* may relate to themes discussed in their chapters. The *Bildung* concept is commonly understood as serving as the foundation for education in many European countries, so much so that it may often be taken for granted (Bruford, 2010; Herdt, 2019; Horlacher, 2017). It is therefore quite relevant for educators in these nations to reflect on the extent to which *Bildung* may be socio-culturally constructed or "culture-bound," how this notion looks today to educators from other parts of the world, and how it might come to be perceived by educators only a few generations into the future.

Overview of Chapters

The book begins with chapters that examine the enduring impact of twentieth-century educational philosophy in East Asia with consideration of how arguments developed there compare with western concepts. We begin with Ning Luo and Tao Guan's

chapter "Cai Yuanpei's Vision of Aesthetic Education and His Legacy in China," which deeply explores the ideas of one of the most influential twentieth-century Chinese educationists whose ideas continue to shape educational practices today. Next is Miwa Chiba's chapter, "Comparison of Self-Reflection in Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School: Rethinking Assumptions on Reflection in *OECD 2030*." This chapter discusses ways in which notable twentieth-century Japanese philosophers conceptualized the goals of education, and how these views compare and contrast with the *Bildung* concept prevalent in much of Europe as well as recent models advanced by the OECD.

Next are two chapters from Southeast Asia, a region that has hitherto received scant international attention in the philosophy of education. Dorothy Ferary's "A Philosophical Perspective on the Purpose of Education in Indonesia" offers a fascinating description of the life and ideas of Indonesia's most prominent educational philosopher, Ki Hajar Dewantara. This is followed by a chapter by Czarecah Tuppil Oropilla, Charla Rochella Santiago-Saamong, and Jean Guadana, "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*: Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines." The authors examine how the ideas of Filipino educationist Virgilio Enriquez may be especially useful toward recognizing ways of facilitating learning through direct interaction between different generations. This is followed by "Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies," by Le-Xuan Zhang and David G. Hebert, which compares the ideas of two of the most influential educational thinkers from India and China in the mid-twentieth century.

Next, we turn to examples from the continent of Africa, which has seen significant original developments in the philosophy of education across recent decades (Waghid, 2013; Wiredu, 2004). Ubuntu is among the main educational concepts to attain prominence on the continent of Africa during recent generations (Gade, 2011; Metz, 2007; Swanson, 2015; Waghid, 2019). Pip Bennett's chapter "Lessons from Ubuntu for Moral Education" carefully considers interpretations of *ubuntu* and examines the extent to which this notion may be meaningfully applied in moral education. Other notable educational concepts from the African continent include the notion of *Asabiyah* (social cohesion) developed centuries ago by Ibn Khaldun while studying Bedouin society (Alatas & Sinha, 2017; Meftah, 2011), and the West African concept *Ọmọlúàbí* (Oyinloye, 2021). We therefore offer Abass Bolaji Isiaka's chapter "Omoluabi and Asabiyah Philosophies: Afro-Arabian Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policy in Nigeria."

The book culminates with "The 'Happy Island' of Polish Music Education: Self-Orientalization of Educational Philosophies in Post-Soviet Europe," which demonstrates how education in Europe can also be illuminated through application of ideas from elsewhere. Adam Switala and Piotr Majewski's chapter shows how arguments first proposed by renowned Asian postcolonial thinkers, who also both happened to be musicians—Edward Said (from Palestine) and Rabindranath Tagore (from India)—can be useful toward understanding how music education in Eastern Europe may be decolonized in the aftermath of the USSR. Finally, our concluding

chapter, "Advancing and Applying Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education," co-authored by the editor and two PhD students associated with the Institute of Education, University College London—Pip Bennett and Dorothy Ferary—develops a synthesis by considering prospective educational applications of the various thinkers discussed across this book This is followed by "Afterword: Philosophical Remarks on Decolonizing Philosophy of Education" by prominent philosopher of education Yusef Waghid.

There is certainly much to learn from this collection of original scholarship. From the first chapters, readers may understand how particular philosophies developed in East Asia in the early twentieth century as a reaction to contact with the west—Cai Yuanpei's aesthetic concepts, and Kyoto School views of self-reflection. The chapters from Southeast Asia introduce important figures and concepts that have thus far received rather little international attention, such as Enriquez's notion *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*. The chapter by Dorothy Ferary introduces readers to Dewantara, who is also a household name (at least among teachers) in Indonesia, the world's fourth most populous country which is also home to the world's largest Muslim population. In much of Europe and the Americas, surprisingly little is widely known about Rabindranath Tagore and Hu Shih—who are surely among the most influential intellectuals to emerge from the world's most populous countries during the past century—and the chapter by Le-Xuan Zhang and David G. Hebert offers comparative insights into how their contributions may be understood. Ubuntu is a relatively well-known concept, but Bennett's chapter offers new insights through careful critique and rigorous consideration of prospective applications in the context of moral education. Writing from Nigeria, Isiaka also introduces concepts that are little discussed, including the ground-breaking work of Ibn Khaldun and the productive notion of *Ọmọlúàbí*. A later chapter, by Switala and Majewski on Poland, vividly demonstrates how non-western philosophies can also bring new insights into specific issues in contemporary European education. Each of these authors has distinguished significant gaps in knowledge, making considerable progress toward the identification of solutions to educational problems with commendable argumentation that deserves an audience.

Before proceeding to the contributed chapters, it is useful to acknowledge that the act of philosophizing requires an open disposition entailing a willingness to challenge one's own presuppositions and thereby rethink and refine understandings. It is also important to reflect on how tolerance of diverse views and a genuine openness to debate are also essential for the collective production of robust philosophical thought. Intellectual freedom remains a challenge in many parts of the world, and it is notable that the first author to have a contribution accepted for this project ultimately withdrew it from publication due to safety concerns in an Asian country torn by ongoing military conflict. It is truly regrettable that even in the twenty-first century intolerance toward differing views can interfere in such ways with the sharing of vital knowledge. Recall for a moment how through discussion of Rabindranath Tagore, Martha Nussbaum demonstrates the unique insights to be gained from respectfully considering how the work of *both* western and non-western philosophers may be applied to challenges facing universities today (Nussbaum, 2009). To proceed in such

a way is to be organically inclusive, not out of academic fashion or tokenism, but rather in genuine recognition of the inherent value of global intellectual contributions. Indeed, diversity and inclusion can be much more than mere slogans pragmatically used to define a university as "international" and therefore deserving of a higher position in ranking tables (Guzman-Valenzuela, 2019, p. 140). Rather, these notions apply to real people, entire fields of study, and specific theories, signifying—both in times of war and peace—the inherent attitude of openness associated with robust intellectual inquiry. To be of high quality, and to remain relevant in the world today, it is indisputable that higher education must be increasingly *international* in its purview, which necessarily entails a willingness to explore, accept, and learn from our differences. Deepening awareness of diversity is the very rationale for the field of international-comparative education.

Nussbaum's writings also demonstrate that timeless studies in the humanities retain their universal value even in times of great economic strain, and that humanities fields increasingly accommodate diversity (Nussbaum, 2009). The same can certainly be said of studies in the *arts*, which uniquely nurture one's ability to directly produce objects of expression and beauty that transcend the ordinary, mechanical, and mundane, ultimately giving meaning to life (Hebert, 2016). At all levels of education, the arts can be taught in ways that are responsive to the concerns of global competence and decolonization (Coppola et al., 2020). Even as educational systems worldwide are lured toward STEM models and technocratic orientations, technology CEOs themselves (such as Jack Ma and Steve Jobs) often ironically tend to defend the importance of arts in schools. With greater attention to African and Asian approaches, we may also anticipate renewed appreciation for marginalized arts and humanities subjects that merit recognition for their profound and timeless value irrespective of how bureaucrats may perceive the immediate needs of national economies. Studies of Asian and African educational philosophers promise to enrich our collective imagination as a profession, which deeply matters as we consider the vast array of possible approaches to educating the next generation. The future of educational philosophy is increasingly recognized as entailing decolonized understandings of educational concepts (Tesar et al., 2021), and it is our vision that this volume will thereby contribute to a future in which education is more robust and equitable for all students.

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Cai Yuanpei's Vision of Aesthetic Education and His Legacy in China

Ning Luo and Tao Guan

Abstract Cai Yuanpei was a traditionally educated Chinese scholar who later turned his attention to Western philosophy and played a central role in the development of Republican educational philosophies and institutions, with a legacy that continues to inform education in China. Studies tend to interpret Cai Yuanpei's approach to aesthetic education in light of his educational experience in Germany, regarding him as a Kantian scholar. However, the Confucian roots of his aesthetic education seldom draw scholarly attention. To fill that gap, this chapter examines Cai's vision of aesthetic education based on both his academic background in the East and his knowledge of Western philosophy, and maps out his influence on and legacy in aesthetic education in China. It argues that Cai's vision of aesthetic education has influenced contemporary Chinese education in four main ways: by advocating aesthetic education as social reconstruction, by bridging the gap between moral education and aesthetic education to nurture citizenship, by encouraging aesthetic education for whole-person development, and by adopting an interdisciplinary approach to school aesthetic education. The chapter concludes with reflections on the enduring value of Cai's vision of aesthetic education for contemporary China, but also worldwide, as international education is increasingly diversified and broadened by the notions of decolonization and global competence.

Keywords Cai Yuanpei · Aesthetic education · China · Humanism · Social harmony

Introduction

Cai Yuanpei (蔡元培, 1868–1940) was a prominent figure in twentieth-century China who served as the first Minister of Education of the Republic of China (ROC) and

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initiated modern education reforms nationwide. Aesthetic education (*meiyu*, 美育) was at the core of these reforms, and continues to have a profound influence on China's educational philosophy, policies, and practices. Cai interpreted aesthetics (*meixue*, 美學) as art appreciation and perceptual enlightenment, and saw aesthetic education as entailing affective ways of learning, including thinking with images, and observational processing that leads to insights into artworks, social issues, and the natural environment (Cai, 1983). Although Cai served as an official in the government of the ROC, which was replaced by the People's Republic of China (PRC) in the early 1950s, he was also held in high regard by the PRC government, and his vision of aesthetic education was adopted by PRC officials. In 2007, Peking University, one of the most prestigious universities in China, established Yuanpei College[1] (元培學院) to honour Cai Yuanpei's contribution to modern Chinese education. Examining Cai's vision of aesthetic education casts light on arts education in not only the twentieth century but also today's China, and reveals a notable example of philosophy that may be relevant to education worldwide amid growing appreciation for culturally diverse theorising in a postcolonial world (Qi, 2014; Schwarzer & Bridglall, 2015).

After being educated in the Confucian tradition, Cai proceeded to Hanlin Academy (翰林院), which was the premier institution for academic officials located near the Forbidden City in the late Qing Dynasty (Duiker, 1971). While serving in the corrupt Qing government, Cai reflected deeply on traditional Confucian teaching and advocated for social reform (Duiker, 1971). To learn from modern Western thinking, Cai spent several years in Germany (1907–1912), during which he studied philosophy, education, anthropology, and psychology at university level—knowledge that he considered helpful towards building a modern China (Duiker, 1972). In 1912, the year in which the ROC government was founded, he returned to China and was appointed Minister of Education by the leader of the ROC, Sun Yat-sen (Liu, 2019). Cai's successful career in the administration gave him opportunities to put his philosophy into practice, especially his vision of aesthetic education.

The aesthetic education proposed by Cai Yuanpei is a popular topic of Chinese scholarship. According to a comprehensive annual review of research on aesthetic education in China, Cai's thoughts on aesthetics draw the most attention (Yang & Li, 2019). However, the literature regarding Cai's theory tends to trace his ideas about aesthetics back to his educational experience in Germany, thus identifying him as a Kantian scholar (Wang, 2020) with little notice of other influences. Previous studies tend to also overlook the enduring relevance of Cai's theory in contemporary educational practice (Liu, 2019). This article aims to fill these gaps by examining Cai's vision of aesthetic education based on his academic background in the East and his knowledge of Western philosophy, and by mapping out his influence on and legacy in aesthetic education in China.

This article begins with a brief introduction to Cai Yuanpei's early life and academic experience, followed by a discussion of his thinking, which was rooted

[1] Yuanpei College provides comprehensive education that is designed to develop fully the mental and emotional strengths of its students. It puts Cai Yuanpei's advocation of education for whole-person development into practice in the higher educational level.

in humanist Confucianism and the philosophies of Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller, the two Western philosophers most prominently referenced in Cai's speeches and writings (Cai, 1983; Peng, 2018). The next section summarises policies Cai advocated regarding aesthetic education in the school, family, and social domains, which can be collectively understood as socially oriented aesthetic education. The last section explores how Cai's ideas have been put into practice, particularly by reflecting on the enduring value of Cai's vision of aesthetic education in contemporary Chinese education.

Early Life Experience

Cai's early experience had a profound impact on his later thoughts on how to transform Chinese society. He was born during the late Qing Dynasty and spent his youth in Zhejiang (浙江), on the south-eastern coast of China, one of the few areas where people could trade with the West. Western ideology travelled alongside commercial trade and made such regions into the birthplace of modernity in China (Liu, 2019). Although Cai received a traditional education in his youth, like many of his contemporaries, he showed a strong interest in Western ideology (Wang, 2020). For instance, when he began his service as an official in 1894, he advocated for the integration of science subjects into the teaching of the Hanlin Academy, the most prestigious royal institution for academic officials in the late Qing Dynasty (Duiker, 1971).

The proposed introduction of science to the Hanlin Academy was Cai's first attempt to enact reform within the imperial system. However, he was disillusioned by his experiences with the Qing government, and his reforms failed. He then moved to Shanghai, an open coastal city, where he became a member of the Revolutionary Party in 1898 (Liu, 2019). The revolutionary movement in Shanghai was attempting to overthrow the Qing dynasty and establish a Western-style republic. Despite his active role, Cai felt that his interests were too scholarly for being a revolutionary activist. To pursue his academic career and to avoid danger from enemies, Cai was obliged to flee to Germany, where he studied philosophy at Leipzig University from 1907 to 1911 (Duiker, 1971). He returned to China to serve as Minister of Education in the newly founded Republican government in 1912. However, corruption in the government again disappointed Cai, and he resigned and returned to Germany to continue his academic life (Liu, 2019). In 1916, he returned to China at the invitation of the reformed government and became the president of Peking University (Duiker, 1971).

During the first half of his life, Cai witnessed the collapse of the Confucian order, the military and intellectual challenges posed by the West, and the growth of a market society in China. He also experienced social crises, intellectual self-doubt, economic recession, and the rise of fascism in Western society after World War I. His early educational background in Confucian philosophy and his later academic experience in Europe provided him with a comprehensive worldview that served as a basis for the creation of a new Chinese society.

During his early years of learning in Germany, Cai was deeply concerned about the moral decay of his time, and he regarded aesthetic education as a promising means of social reformation. Cai attempted to synthesise the best values of traditional Chinese philosophy with modern Western ideology. He found that aesthetics could link the spiritual world to the physical world and build moral behaviours, as suggested both by Confucian thinking and by German philosophers (Fig. 1).

Unlike other leading activists in the New Culture Movement, a cultural and social undertaking to abolish the Confucian order in China in the early twentieth century, Cai received a comprehensive traditional education in his youth. At the age of 24, Cai enrolled in Hanlin Academy after passing a highly competitive examination (Duiker, 1971). From this perspective, Cai was a great success within the traditional education system and regarded as an accomplished Confucian scholar by his peers. He also admitted that his early years of Confucian learning sparked his later interest in moral issues, with a distinct emphasis on self-cultivation and social obligation (Duiker, 1971). Therefore, unlike many other activists in the New Cultural Movement, who took a radical attitude towards Westernisation and the overthrow of traditional China, Cai was an accomplished Confucian scholar who saw the value of traditional ideology and took a humanist Confucian approach to aesthetics.

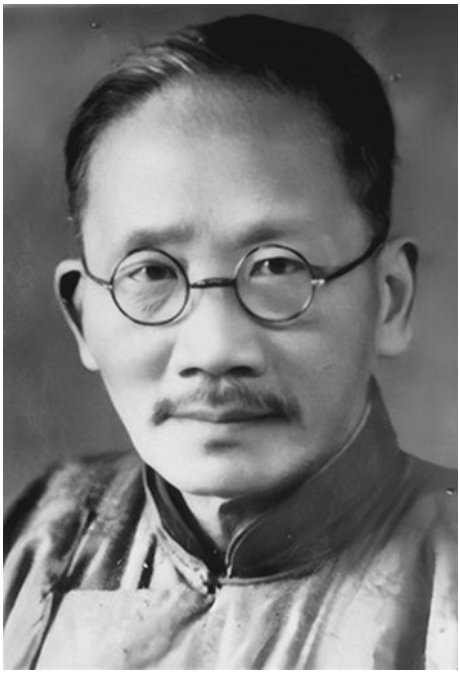

Fig. 1 Cai Yuanpei (*Source* https://www.minguowang.com)

Philosophical Roots of Cai's Reforms

Cai's vision of aesthetic education as social reform originated from his academic background. Cai's deep concern about the moral decay of his time led him to think about how to rejuvenate Chinese society. Among other approaches, he believed that aesthetics, which is associated with the affective realm, could serve the purpose of cultivating emotion and shaping a new morality (Cai, 1983). This vision of aesthetic education was rooted in Confucian teaching on aesthetics in combination with Cai's learning from the Western philosophers Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller.

Confucian Teaching on Aesthetics

Cai is not usually viewed as a supporter of Confucianism, because he advocated for the New Culture Movement and against the traditional order of Chinese society supported by Confucian ideology. However, from another perspective, he was an accomplished Confucian scholar in twentieth-century China who applied the humanist Confucian approach to reform society. During his time, there were two Confucian schools of thought—authoritarian and humanist (Duiker, 1971). Both schools served to maintain the hierarchy of imperial society; however, whereas the authoritarian school imposed social and political pressure on individuals, humanists believed in the good side of human nature. They asserted that individuals can best be led to follow *dao* (道, the Way) via education—thus adhering to the original teachings of Confucius and his successor Mencius (Duiker, 1971). Cai was an advocate of the humanist view and had demonstrated an interest in this approach since his youth (Duiker, 1971). According to the humanist school, to follow the Way is to manifest the function of *jiao hua* (教化, educating), which resembles the German term *Bildung*, in that both imply self-cultivation and harmonic growth (Danner, 1994; Tu, 1989).

Cai, like Confucius, argued that becoming fully human requires an internal transformation that can be best achieved through aesthetic experience. Cai adopted Confucian teaching on aesthetics in three main ways—learning via aesthetic activity; finding harmony in the unity of aesthetics, morality, and politics; and making use of aesthetics' capacity to engage one's body and heart.

Aesthetics as a Way of Learning

In both Cai's conceptualization and earlier Confucian thought, aesthetic experience facilitates behaviour that follows the Way and enhances the function of *jiao hua.* Art played a significant role in Confucian thought, and the early Confucians were artists, mastering ritual actions and engaging in a wide array of aesthetic activities, such as music, poetry, and calligraphy (Mullis, 2005). However, mastering art skills

was not the main purpose of engaging in such activities; rather, the primary aim was to shape people's character through aesthetic activities. For instance, Confucius viewed aesthetic education as a means of self-cultivation, 'which starts with the study of poetry, then moves to the study of rituals, and then towards accomplishment in the study of music' (興於詩, 立於禮, 成於樂) (*Analects* 8.8). This saying underlines that the purpose of learning *shi* (詩, poetry) is to develop people's will to promote their self-consciousness and empathy. The next phase is to achieve self-reliance by learning and practising *li* (禮, rituals), which help one become a responsible member of the community. Finally, through *yue* (樂, music) education, one can achieve self-cultivation and approach the status of *junzi* (君子, a superior person).

An Integrated View of Aesthetics, Morality, and Politics

Cai had a hierarchical mission for aesthetic education. In his arguments regarding the usefulness of aesthetics, Cai asked the following question: 'how can we turn the desire for beauty into self-cultivation and moral perfection, and eventually contribute to a harmonious society?' (Cai, 1983, p. 1). Cai's discourse on harmony is in line with the Confucian concept of *he* (和, harmony), which is deeply embedded in Chinese culture and influenced the manner in which morality and education are conceptualised (Feng & Newton, 2012). Methodologically, a traditional Chinese view of harmony acknowledges this virtue as 'a preference for negotiation over a fight, reform over revolution, and eclecticism over dogma' (Feng & Newton, 2012, p. 342). In an ontological sense, harmony is at the core of Confucianism, and itself manifests divine wisdom (Tu, 1989). *Yueji* (樂記, *The Book of Music*), the only text of Confucian teaching on music, defined *yue* (樂, music) as a privileged form of sound that can only be properly performed and appreciated by *junzi*, claiming that 'a superior person goes against the natural dispositions so as to harmonise his aspirations' (*The Book of Ritual* 19.5). Therefore, for both Cai Yuanpei and Confucius, art took on political and moral undertones, as a means to educate individuals to regulate their personal desires and pursue harmonious relationships between self, others, and society.

Engaging Body and Heart Aesthetically

Cai also acknowledged the capacity of aesthetics to engage people's bodily and sensuous experiences, in turn regulating their moral behaviour. He offered the example of ritual and music in Confucian teaching to support this point:

> On one hand, in the natural environment, music is the harmony of natural sounds which do not imply sadness or joy; on the other hand, in the ritual ceremony, certain music can evoke emotions that originate from the listener's heart, which embodies another kind of harmony that bridges the gap between the body and the heart. (Cai, 1983, p. 54)

This capacity was also mentioned in various Confucian texts. In *Discourse on Music*, for example, Xunzi (313–238 BCE) wrote 'where there is music, it will

issue forth in the sounds and manifest in the movement of the body' (*Xunzi* 20.2). Similarly, Mencius stated that 'when listening to music, people quite unconsciously find that their feet begin to dance and hands begin to move' (*Mengzi* 29.15). In addition, Confucius offered an interesting example of how aesthetic experience had influenced his appetite, saying, 'I could not discern the taste of meat for months after I learned this beautiful piece of music' (*Analects* 7.14). In this Confucian discourse, music is valued more than simply as sound and patterns; it is a product of aesthetics, morality, and politics, in which the body and heart of the listener are fully engaged and directed towards moral and prosocial behaviours and mindsets (Wang, 2020).

Learning from Kant and Schiller

Of the European philosophers from whom Cai gained knowledge, he considered Immanuel Kant (1724–1804) and Friedrich Schiller (1759–1805) the most important masters of aesthetics, stating that

> Since Baumgarten (1717–1762) established aesthetics, Kant and his *Critique of Judgment* contributed the most to its discourse and system, and Schiller was the person who further developed aesthetics from the perspective of moral and ethics, laying the ground for aesthetic education. (Cai, 1983, p. 66)

Cai adopted Kant's dualistic standpoint of the phenomenal world and the noumenal world, arguing that 'aesthetics would bridge the two worlds and transcend human experience' (Cai, 1983, p. 4). In education, the phenomenal world concerns the material goals of making students as productive members of society, while the noumenal world, the 'thing-in-itself' (Zarrow, 2019, p. 154) in Kantian philosophy, are viewed as fundamental goals of education, which is about 'morality or transcendental laws' (You et al., 2018, p. 260). Cai specified that 'the ultimate goal of the phenomenal world is to return toward the noumenal world' (Cai, 1983, p. 5). He argued that aesthetic experience embodies this transcendent quality, and that the ultimate goal of aesthetic education is to lead people into the spiritual realm, which will help them achieve spiritual freedom and become moral citizens (Cai, 1983). To strengthen his argument for the transcendent quality of aesthetic experience, Cai borrowed from Kant the two key features of aesthetic judgement, disinterested and universal, claiming that 'aesthetics could help to develop humanism because of its disinterested and universal features would transcendent the self-centred personality' (Cai, 1983, p. 56). In other words, Cai believed that aesthetic experience could reduce people's selfishness and prejudices in the phenomenal world and promote a feeling of the sublime that could transcend the material world of mundane concerns.

Although Cai adopted Kant's ontological understanding of the nature of the world and the essence of aesthetic judgement, his thoughts on the intertwining of morality and aesthetics came from Schiller (Cai, 1983). In his aesthetic discourse, Schiller reflected on the ways that the body and sensations could be educated to attain collective rules and maintain a bourgeois social order. Aesthetic education would allow

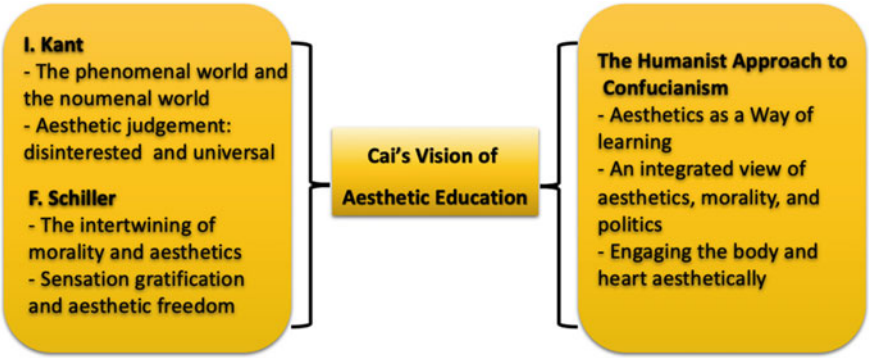

Fig. 2 Origins of Cai's Vision of Aesthetic Education

for sensory gratification and aesthetic freedom, which were regarded as a solution to political problems. As Schiller (2004) stated, 'If we are to solve political problems in practice, follow the path of aesthetics since it is through beauty that we will arrive at freedom' (p. 27). Similarly, Cai's objectives for aesthetic education were to achieve moral perfection and to create an environment conducive to political engagement (Cai, 1983). However, unlike the disconnection of the phenomenal and noumenal worlds held by Kant and Schiller, Cai (1983) argued that the two worlds are actually the two sides of one world that complementary to each other in human's perception, because 'we perceive the world materially and immaterially' (p. 4). This argument is underpinned by the ontological holism in traditional Chinese philosophy, originating from the dialectical relationship between spiritual and phenomenal worlds (Liu, 2019) (Fig. 2).

Socially Oriented Aesthetic Education

Based on his systematic understanding of modern Western thinking and the Humanist approach to Confucianism, Cai called for a new education that makes its ultimate purpose to foster the 'complete person' with intellectual, moral, and aesthetic capacities. Specifically, he argued that aesthetic experience could help to solve moral problems and purge politics for the sake of modern society (Cai, 1983). It offered a possible solution to moral decay that could foster civic virtue and build a democratic society. Cai showed no interest in the formalist aesthetics of art for art's sake, nor was he interested in aesthetics merely for sensory satisfaction (Cai, 1983). He believed that aesthetic education was intended to instil a humanist worldview, promote public morality, and nurture people's emotional and rational personalities. These characteristics were considered fundamental to modern citizenship and essential to the new Republican politics in China (Cai, 1983). In the early twentieth century, the transformational era of Chinese society, modernised reform denied the old morality, which

was bound to a hierarchical network of kinship, whereas the new order had not yet been established.

As the Minister of Education in the newly founded government, Cai was a visionary reformer who promoted aesthetic education in parallel with physical, intellectual, ethical, and worldview education in the Educational Proclamation issued by the first Republican government in September 1912 (Duiker, 1972). The five components of education, named *wuyu bingju* (五育並舉, 'education in five aspects'), gave the arts an unprecedented role in Chinese educational policies that even today serves as a key element of the Chinese nine-year compulsory education system (Ministry of Education, 2011). Aesthetic education was emphasised because it could 'cultivate good character in the Republic's citizens' (Cai, 1983, p. 68). Specifically, Cai's proposals for aesthetic education were grounded in the school, family, and social domains.

School and Family Aesthetic Education

Regarding school education, from kindergarten through university, Cai proposed that aesthetics did not consist solely of the art, music, and literature curricula, but rather, was part of every aspect of school life (Cai, 1983). In other words, aesthetic education was not a synonym for art education, but instead was a broad concept embedded across the school. For mathematics and chemistry, for example, 'the mathematical law of geometry is embedded in aesthetics; chemistry is closely related to the beauty of colour' (Cai, 1983, p. 136). This interdisciplinary perspective is similar to the recent movement (in response to STEM) of science, technology, engineering, *arts*, and mathematics (STEAM) education today. Cai further suggested that teachers should use aesthetics to facilitate students' learning and stressed the importance of maintaining a pleasant campus environment (Cai, 1983). He also felt that environmental aesthetics played a significant role in the family domain, in which people spend the most time. He stated that 'no matter how expensive the furniture is, the living room should always be clean and tidy and the arrangement of things should enable a sense of beauty' (Cai, 1983, p. 137).

Aesthetic Education in Society

Unlike the bourgeois ideology, in which aesthetic education is aimed at elites, Cai proposed that 'aesthetic experience should be promoted in the public sphere where everyone can get access to museums, parks, and theatres' (Cai, 1983, p. 221). He raised money to establish art centres in the community and advocated art as leisure for citizens, urging them to contemplate artworks in concert halls and museums and recommending the equal distribution of material and aesthetic goods. Well-designed urban infrastructure, he believed, was important, as clean and tidy streets and parks

would offer an aesthetic approach to fostering civic behaviour (Cai, 1983). They would provide an enjoyable public space, foster shared values, and eradicate the backward and immoral behaviours that persisted in traditional Chinese society, such as gambling, prostitution, and opium smoking (Cai, 1983). In addition, Cai was among the founders of a prestigious visual arts academy that nurtured many talented Chinese artists—the China Central Academy of Fine Arts (Cao, 2018). He also established various arts-related communities (e.g., in such fields as music, Chinese painting, and calligraphy) as grassroots units intended to bring together progressive artists (Cai, 1983).

Cai's Legacy in Contemporary China

Cai's vision of aesthetic education has had a profound impact on Contemporary Chinese educational policies. Aesthetic education remains an important component in the Chinese public education domain, which was highlighted in the conference of the Ministry of Education in 1951 (Ministry of Education, 2015a). It was the first official conference about national education policy-making after the establishment of the PRC government. In China, aesthetic education is not a subdomain of arts education but rather serves as an educational priority in parallel with intellectual, moral, and physical education, which was explicitly noted in the documents issued after the conference held in 1951 (Ministry of Education, 2015a, 2015b). It then became the cornerstone of 'Comprehensive Education' (*quanmian jiaoyu,* 全面教育) and 'Quality Education' (*suzhi jiaoyu*, 素質教育)[2] proposed by the Ministry of Education in the late 1980s to the late 1990s. The concept of Comprehensive Education first appeared in the *Compulsory Education Law of the People's Republic of China* promulgated on July 1, 1986 (Ministry of Education, 2015a). However, this concept was not fully developed until June 13, 1999, when the State Council issued its *Policy of Education Reform and Promoting Quality Education*, offering a series of approaches to reform public education by changing the examination-oriented ideology (Dello-Iacovo, 2009). In particular, it emphasised the role of aesthetic education to ensure the quality of public education. The high status of aesthetic education was inherited from Cai's vision and is manifested in four ways: aesthetic education as social reconstruction, bridging the gap between moral education and aesthetic education to nurture citizenship, aesthetic education for whole-person development and an interdisciplinary approach to aesthetic education.

[2] *Suzhi jiaoyu* also has been translated as 'competence education', 'essential qualities-oriented education', and 'character education'.

Aesthetic Education as Social Reconstruction

As the first Minister of Education in modern China, Cai Yuanpei laid the foundation of aesthetic education as social reconstruction (Liu, 2019). During that time, social reconstructionism advocated by Dewey was accepted broadly by Chinese scholars, and Dewey himself was also invited to China to give lectures and recommendations for the development of modern Chinese education (Ying, 2020). Cai agreed with Dewey's view of the progressive education movement and considered this ideology would also help to transform traditional China into a modern country (Ying, 2020). Cai (1983) stated that 'aesthetic education should not only be carried out in schools, but also be integrated into daily life to serves the social domain, so as to improve people's living environment and deal with everyday problems and reconstruct our society' (p. 56). This view was encoded in the theme of social reconstructionism that highlighted the connection of aesthetics and everyday life. In the aesthetic education policy and art policy in general, this view of aesthetic education as social reconstruction was inherited by the CCP government. Back in 1942, in the famous *Talks at the Yan' An Conference on Literature and Art* (延安文藝座談會講話), Mao Zhedong denoted that art production should not be divorced from reality and people's everyday lives (Ying, 2020).

The view of social reconstruction serves as one of the principles in contemporary Chinese art and aesthetic education (Wang, 2019). Taking the art movement 'Rural Reconstruction through Art (藝術鄉建)' for example, in the past decade, Chinese artists initiated this movement in rural China in order to develop critical reflection towards urbanisation by employing art as 'an agent of social intervention, community building, and cultural change' (Wang, 2019, p. 245). This movement signifies art as an artefact or performance that reflects and facilitates the cultural life of a community.

Artists play the role of social workers who lift art to reconstruct rural areas and enhance their publicness and sociality. In such practices, aesthetic education is the means of social intervention and community participation, with the goals of facilitating conversations around social problems.

For instance, the Xu Village Project (許村計畫), a project of Rural Reconstruction through Art in the village of Xu located in Shanxi Province, China, included an aesthetic education project designed by a Chinese art educator. Prof. Bian Xia, from Nanjing Normal University. This project was implemented in the Xucun rural primary school aimed at facilitating local culture learning and enhancing students' socio-cultural identity for the purpose of community reconstruction (Xu & Bian, 2020).

Conjunction of Moral Education and Aesthetic Education to Nurture Citizenship

Cai's vision of aesthetic education was intended to provide a moral basis for society (Duiker, 1972). The Chinese translation of 'aesthetic education' (美育) was introduced by Cai in 1912, from the German term *Asthetische Erziehung.* In his interpretation of the concept of aesthetic education, Cai (1983) explained that 'aesthetics is a means of transcending materialism… appreciating art could help to describe the nature of the real world and elevate its understanding in human society' (p. 461). For Cai, the appreciation of beauty could reduce prejudice, and aesthetic education was thus the best approach to connect people with the noumenal world. This interpretation laid the ground for the conjunction of moral education and aesthetic education in Chinese discourse, which is manifested in China's educational policies. The most recent educational policy issued by the State Council (2020), addressing the nature of aesthetic education, noted that,

> aesthetics and morality are intertwined. Aesthetic education is about beauty, morally good and spiritual… Aesthetics is closely related to students' spiritual, emotional and character development. It can improve the sense of aesthetic quality, cultivate moral behaviour and promote social cohesion. (p. 1)

In this statement, aesthetic education is a way to promote social harmony because aesthetics can nurture a moral citizenry by connecting the physical world and the spiritual world. This is a legacy of Cai's explanation of the function of aesthetics: to bridge the gap between the phenomenal world and the noumenal world.

Cai's vison of aesthetic education addressed not only the moral identity of modern women and men, but also retained traditional moral components (Wang, 2020). In the early twentieth century, when Chinese authorities first sought reformation under the massive cultural and economic invasion of the West, many intellectuals advocated for the replacement of traditional Chinese philosophy with modern Western ideologies and thus the formation of a new moral basis for a common social identity. However, Cai opposed this call, believing that a philosophy that retained the positive aspects of traditional Chinese teachings would be the most practical solution for the new society (Duiker, 1972). Although this vision could not be put into practice due to the corruption of the Republican government, it has attracted scholarly interest in the new century and become a mainstream topic of debate among modern Chinese intellectuals on the ideologies of the East and West (Zuo, 2018).

This synthetic view is also consistent with a national cultural campaign endorsed by the PRC government: the new trend of reviving Chinese traditional culture in education. Since 2013, the PRC government has enacted several cultural and educational policies to promote the integration of traditional Chinese culture into aesthetic education. For instance, the *National Standards for Visual Arts* highlighted a community-based approach to teaching art, namely 'employing local and traditional art and materials to enrich students' aesthetic experience and develop a sense of community' (Ministry of Education, 2011, p. 2). That is, art education is not simply

about learning artistic skills; it also has the aim of nurturing community membership via appreciation of local and traditional arts.

Aesthetic Education for Whole-Person Development

In contemporary China, aesthetics does not comprise a subdomain of arts education; rather, it is an educational objective regarded as essential for whole-person development in school education (Ministry of Education, 2011; State Council, 2020). This educational policy was adopted directly from Cai's vision of 'education in five aspects', of which aesthetic education was one (Cai, 1983). As the Minister of Education in the newly founded government, Cai was a visionary reformer who placed aesthetic education in parallel with physical, intellectual, moral, and worldview education in the Educational Proclamation issued by China's first Republican government in September 1912 (Duiker, 1972). This proclamation is still a key element of the Chinese compulsory education system (Ministry of Education, 2011).

As stated above, Cai's vision of aesthetic education was rooted in Confucian teaching, which emphasised comprehensive mastery of the 'Six Arts' (六藝),[3] the process of becoming *junzi* (君子), an ideal member of society and a moral exemplar for others (Li & Xue, 2020). For those who master the Six Arts, the important issue is not whether they can perform the best in the arts, but rather that they live a life that follows the 'way of truth' (道) and advance physically and mentally. Therefore, art plays a prominent role in classical Chinese philosophy and teaching of education. Being skilled in the arts is considered part of being a 'complete' person and the proper development of a moral agent.

The above views are evident in Chinese national education policies. For instance, in the first version of the educational objectives issued by the Minister of Education of the PRC in 1950, aesthetic education was highlighted and placed in parallel with the mastery of knowledge and skills to foster the development of well-rounded people (Li & Hasan, 2013). However, the practice of education was featured as examination-oriented, which has been widely criticised and recent reforms have attempted to implement the notion of developing well-rounded individuals rather than only memorisation for high examination scores (Dello-Iacovo, 2009).

[3] The Six Arts refers to the six disciplines of rituals (*li*, 禮), music (*yue* 樂), archery (*she* 射), charioteering (*yu* 御), calligraphy (*shu*, 書), and mathematics (*shu,* 數), comprising the domains of Confucian education.

An Interdisciplinary Approach to Aesthetic Education

An interdisciplinary approach to aesthetic education outlined by Cai in the early twentieth century was also included in contemporary Chinese arts education. It originated from Confucius' commentary on 'skill' or 'craft' (藝/技), a concept similar to that of 'technology', in which Cai asserted that the greatest mastery of skill or crafts lies in the master's virtue and that the combination of skill/craft and virtue (以藝載道) is signified by aesthetics (Li & Xue, 2020). In Cai's vision, technology alone was not enough to transform the Chinese nation. That is, as a human endeavour, technology should serve the purposes of human ends, and aesthetics is embedded in humanity, which should thus be integrated with technology education in schools, and teachers should design a technology-related curriculum integrated with aesthetics (Cai, 1983).

This view is evident in contemporary Chinese education reform. The recent emphasis on STEAM education, for example, seeks to offer new space and roles for arts-related subjects in the school curriculum. For instance, in 2015, the Ministry of Education issued an educational plan on science and technology and introduced STEAM education as a curriculum model (Ministry of Education, 2015b). This was also endorsed by the policy issued by the State Council (2015), stating that 'school subjects should be integrated with aesthetics for the purpose of the comprehensiveness of the curriculum…Teachers should integrate aesthetic education with mathematics, physics and other science disciplines and develop extracurricular activities to enrich students' campus life' (p. 2).

Concluding Remarks

This chapter has examined Cai Yuanpei's vision of aesthetic education, which is rooted in the humanist strain of Confucianism, the branch of Confucian tradition that is closest to the original Confucian–Mencian model. For Cai, an aesthetic education lies at the core of a humane society. He advocated faith in the good side of human nature, particularly self-cultivation and social obligation. Cai combined this strain of Confucianism with Western aesthetics to arrive at his formula for Chinese modern education, which has had a great influence on contemporary Chinese education.

Although Cai adopted the humanist strain of Confucianism in his proposals for aesthetic education, it is important to note that as the first Minister of Education, one of his contributions to the educational system was to de-Confucianise the national curricula. This groundwork did not seek to overthrow the essence of Confucian philosophy; rather, it was a systemic reform that sought to eliminate the institutional constraints imposed by the imperial order. Some may argue that, all in all, Confucianism was developed to serve the imperial system. For example, the anti-traditionalists involved in the May Fourth Movement contended that the ideology that supported the imperial system should be totally abandoned in modern China. Cai believed otherwise. His experience in Europe, where he had witnessed World War I,

had led him to value the humanist strain of Confucianism; therefore, he advocated for an intercultural perspective, which he felt would best serve the needs of Chinese society. Based on his unique academic background, Cai tried to synthesise Western knowledge with Chinese knowledge, declaring that 'we should learn and integrate Western thoughts and borrow their good qualities to strengthen our own' (Cai, 1983, p. 28).

Today, we arguably see similar sentiments growing in many parts of the world, where as a consequence of the decolonization movement, educators increasingly apprehend the limitations of a Eurocentric vision, and seek to attain a more robust understanding by also learning from non-western philosophies (Abdi et al., 2015; Fung, 2017; Tan, 2022). With such an openness to diversity, it seems there is now an opportunity for Cai's rich contributions to become more broadly appreciated by educators not only inside China but also in other countries worldwide.

Cai's views on cultural interchange were visionary in the sense that they embodied cherished faith in the humanist strain of Confucianism for a harmonious society. During China's Republican period, a time of immense political uncertainty, education reform was not the priority; therefore, few of his plans were put into practice in that period. However, in the long run, Cai's thinking set the tone for contemporary education in China, and his vision of a moral and democratic Chinese society has enduring value.

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Comparison of Self-Reflection in Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School: Rethinking Assumptions on "Reflection" in *OECD Education 2030*

Miwa Chiba

Abstract This chapter analyzes the underlying assumptions concerning "reflection" in learning proposed by the OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 (OECD Education 2030) in light of the conceptualizations of Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School, as represented by Nishida Kitaro. Both philosophies, from the West and the East, emphasize the importance of reflective experiences in education, which is in line with the proposals of OECD Education 2030. However, there is a significant difference in terms of how *self* is considered in relation to *world*. Such differences guide alternative educational approaches, namely as seen in the idea of *negative education* proposed by the Kyoto School. By comparing the two schools of thought, the chapter reveals the underlying assumption of *self* in Western mainstream educational philosophy, and argues for the importance of open-mindedness toward the other worldview, in order to further develop the proposal of "reflection" in learning for the OECD Education 2030 to attain its ambition of becoming truly global in its orientation.

Keywords Self-reflection · Humboldtian (neo-humanistic) *Bildung* · The Kyoto School · Negative education · OECD Education 2030

Introduction

The importance of reflective experiences in education has been discussed across human history and is of central interest to many scholars and educators around the world. In the recent discussion of the OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 (OECD Education 2030), the critical role of "reflection" in learning is emphasized. It states that "Through planning, experience and reflection, learners deepen

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their understanding and widen their perspective".[1] It also proposes the so-called Anticipation-Action-Reflection (AAR) process, by which learners are expected to "continuously improve their thinking and act intentionally and responsibly, moving over time towards long-term goals that contribute to collective well-being".[2]

This chapter analyzes the underlining assumptions concerning "reflection" in learning within the OECD 2030 framework, through a comparison of two major Western and Eastern educational philosophies: Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School (represented by Nishida Kitaro). The rationale for this comparison is that while both Kyoto School and *Bildung* focus on the importance of reflective experiences in education, the position of *self* in the *world* is different within each conceptualization, and the ultimate goal of the reflective experiences is also different as a result of varying cultural contexts. As Phillips and Schweisfurth (2014) referring to Michael Sadler argue, comparative study helps us to achieve a better understanding of ourselves (p. 15). Through a comparative lens, the unique characteristics of each school of thought are better understood. Furthermore, looking into the OECD Education 2030 in light of these approaches regarding reflection helps to reveal the underlying assumptions of "reflection" in the OECD Education 2030 framework, and potentially expand our views of what reflection in learning potentially means in the global era.

Rationales for "Reflection" in the OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030

The OECD Education 2030 project, initiated in 2015, aims to provide a common understanding of the knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values students need in the twenty-first century.[3] Carefully accepting some criticisms to earlier educational policies, such as PISA and knowledge-skill-based competencies that tend to focus on particular aspects of learning outcomes, the 2030 learning framework, and compasses issued in 2019 reflect the importance of the relatively *holistic developments* of learners,[4] including the transformative competencies which include values and attitudes such as creativity, reconciling tensions and dilemmas, and taking responsibility. As for the competencies, the OECD explains that learners need to develop both cognitive and meta-cognitive skills (such as critical thinking, creative thinking, learning to learn, and self-regulation), social and emotional skills (such as empathy,

[1] https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/teaching-and-learning/learning/aar-cycle/in_brief_AAR_Cycle.pdf

[2] ibid.

[3] https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/about/

[4] According to the report by MEXT on the OECD Education 2030 project, Japanese experts have joined the project since its beginning and contributed with proactive discussion, especially in terms of the viewpoint of holistic development of learners which Japanese education has traditionally emphasized. https://www.oecd.org/education/2030-project/about/documents/OECD-Education-2030-Position-Paper_Japanese.pdf

self-efficacy, and collaboration), and practical skills (such as using new IT devices). Additionally, the OECD notes that each competency is intricately interrelated with the others, and the ability to develop competencies is itself something to be learned using a sequenced process of reflection, anticipation, and action (OECD The Future of Education and Skills, Education, 2030, p. 6).

As such, a new focus in the OECD Education 2030 is the process of Anticipation, Action, and Reflection (AAR). This is an iterative cycle of planning, experience, and reflection, which is understood to entail a form of learning that often takes place within a community, in interaction with others.[5] John Hattie (2020) argues that the AAR approach steers learners to more of a focus on the *phases* of learning than common claims about high achievement—as if the latter can happen without the former.[6] He emphasizes that reflection does not mean looking back to where we think we have been, but rather, is the process of seeing your learning through others' eyes, seeking and using feedback on progress, checking our cognitive biases (especially confirmation bias), and adjusting our learning to more effectively attain the expectations developed in the anticipation phase. Through the AAR process, it is expected that learners can deepen their understanding and broaden their perspectives in relation with others in a community.

Contemporary Relevance of Western and Eastern Philosophies of "Reflection" in Education

Li and Auld (2020) illustrate the development of OECD's educational emphases, explaining the shift of agendas and approaches based on historical circumstances and processes in which OECD has adopted and expanded its educational activities. They claim that, in contrast to its approach during the 1950s–1990s (i.e., education for economic recovery and growth) or 1990s–2010 (i.e., neo-liberal globalization and development of international comparisons), OECD's approach since 2015 can be interpreted as a humanitarian turn (Li & Auld, 2020, p. 504). While expanding PISA's relevance to establish it as a truly global metric (such as PISA-D), it expands the scope of the assessment into non-cognitive domains (i.e., transformative competencies) (p. 509). OECD explains that meta-cognitive dimensions of learning (such as social skills, creativity, resilience, and responsibility) are needed for current and future generations in an unpredictable and uncertain society.

In its transformed policy, the OECD Education 2030 proposes the AAR cycle and emphasizes the role of "reflection" in learning. While such an approach seems to be new in the OECD's policy development, looking back on the history of educational philosophy, one finds that the importance of "reflection" in learning is not actually a

[5] See Vygotsky (1978), as cited in the OECD learning conceptual learning framework's Concept note: Anticipation-Action-Reflection cycle for 2030 (OECD, p. 120).

[6] John Hattie is a Laureate Profesor in Education at University of Melbourne.

new discovery. In this chapter, the two educational philosophies of Humboldtian (neo-humanistic) Bildung and the Kyoto School are compared. The reason is that, although their origins and social contexts are different from each other and from contemporary society, both philosophies criticized the limitations of (cognitive) knowledge-skill-based educational approaches whereby students do not deeply understand what they are learning, nor how to use what they learnt in their real lives (and further, how to flexibly adjust and re-create what they learned). Thus each philosophy advocates the importance of awakening of the inner drive of students through their "reflections" for deeper learning, which aligns with current discussions in OECD Education 2030. Further, both systems consider the importance of "reflection" in relation with others, which is also in line with the OECD's proposal. In the next sections, the two educational philosophies are explained and compared, before analyses of the implications of these orientations in the concluding section.

The Humboldtian (Neo-Humanistic) *Bildung*

Background

Wilhelm von Humboldt (1767–1835) is widely regarded as the most representative philosopher of neo-humanistic *Bildung*, having made a crucial contribution to the development and canonization of the German conception of self-formation or self-cultivation (Sorkin, 1983, p. 55). The neo-humanist interpretation of *Bildung* first emerged after Prussia's defeat in a war against Napoleon in 1806, during a period when Prussian society was in flux. Before the educational reform of Humboldt, the Prussian educational system was based on the idea of Utilitarianism linked to professional skills and knowledge considered to be useful in society. This was in the movement of the German Enlightenment,[7] as seen in the thought of educational reformers such as J. B. Basedow (1724–1790), who insisted that education should encourage the development of useful abilities (rather than a search for truth), or J. H. Campe (1746–1818), who argued that education should teach students knowledge and skills to prepare for their future professions (Okawa, 2005, p. 40). Campe proposed to close the University, and instead establish a *Spezialfachschule* (a professional school directly linked to future professions), and the government widely accepted this idea. As a result, not only in Prussia but in all of Germany, schools that specialized in certain professions such as agriculture, mining, medicine, craft, etc., were established, and from 1794, comprehensive universities began to decline and even cease activity (Okawa, 2005, p. 41). However, facing the uncertainty of its very existence after the war, Prussia needed to conduct large reforms to rebuild the country.

[7] Humboldt's childhood tutors introduced him to the Enlightenment, and the tutors who prepared him for university studies were eminent representatives of the last wave of the Berlin Enlightenment (see Sorkin, 1983, p. 57).

Humboldt was placed in charge of educational reform in Prussia, which brought a paradigm shift in education.

Core Concepts of Humboldtian Bildung

Humboldt's philosophy placed great importance on self-cultivation in human development. For Humboldt, education is not something given by somebody, but rather, something a person participates in of their own volition. According to Humboldt, *Bildung* is understood as harmonic growth and development, the unfolding of all inner forces and potentials of the human being (Danner, 1994, p. 8).

In contrast to earlier educational reformers, Humboldt thought education should provide not only the knowledge and skills targeting specific purposes, but more importantly should provide individuals the opportunity to cultivate their unique abilities with increasing freedom in moving up the educational ladder (Sorkin, 1983, p. 63). For Humboldt, "*Bildung* is not *training* in the sense of preparing for certain purposes which are set from the outside, but, rather, the most comprehensive and at the same time most balanced development of human talents" (p. 376). In Humboldt's opinion, the schools were divided into two units, elementary school where students learned basic skills, and high school where students are taught to be intellectually independent. The curriculum aimed to show students both how to learn as well as to learn specific material. In his opinion, a student was considered mature when "he had learned enough from others to be able to learn by himself" (*Gesammelete Schriften*, referenced in Sorkin, 1983, p. 63). Humboldt explained, "Based on mathematics, classical languages and history, the curriculum's goal was to provide a general education (*allgemeine Menschenbildung*) which would respect the individual development of each student. Only after such a general education would students proceed to specialized training".[8] In his opinion, all the schools established by the government for the public should aim at universalism in education with self-cultivation as its sole purpose, whereas the knowledge and skills necessary for living or individual professions should be taught after finishing such general education. Those two aims of education, i.e., universal education (*allgemeine Bildung*) and skill/professional based education (*specielle bildung*), in his opinion, should not be mixed, otherwise, both would become incomplete (Okawa, 2005, p. 47). Humboldt argued that universal education strengthens the individual human him/herself, and professional education without universal education would only enable humans to learn skills for simple use without understanding any deeper reasons.[9]

In the process of self-cultivation, two fundamental concepts for Humboldt were *alienation/isolation* and *freedom*. *Alienation* or *isolation* is not meant in the sense that one should be isolated from others during learning. Rather, for Humboldt, "*Bildung*

[8] *Gesammelete Schriften* (referenced in Sorkin, 1983, p. 63).

[9] "Understanding, acquisition of knowledges…should not be from outside condition, but it should be from inside of the students" according to Humboldt (Okawa, 2005, p. 48).

is about linking the self to the world…and the student should not lose himself in the alienation (from the world) but rather should reflect back into his inner being" (Løvlie & Standish, 2002, p. 318). Humboldt explained in *The Limits of State Action* that one develops through the voluntary interchange of one's individuality with that of others. Self-formation, in other words, requires social bonds. However, as discussed, he regarded *Bildung* as the initiative coming from one's own inner forces, and he regarded the importance of one's own reflection and understanding through the interaction with others in society.

One of Humboldt's essential arguments in *Bildung* is the freedom of the individual.[10] For him, this freedom entails limitations to State intervention in education. Specifically, he argued:

> the State must wholly refrain from every attempt to operate directly or indirectly on the morals and character of the nation… Everything calculated to promote such a design, and particularly all special supervision of education, religion, sumptuary laws etc., lies wholly outside the limits of its legitimate activity. (Limits of State Action, 1852, p. 65)

Humboldt argued that education should serve the person, not the citizen,[11] and an egalitarian system should be created which suits the person rather than the citizens, by providing an education in an atmosphere of freedom (Sorkin, 1983, p. 63).

With this brief review of the Humboldtian perspective on *Bildung* as background, it is now possible to consider how this common European view differs in important ways from the most notable alternative view to emerge from Japan in recent centuries, that of the Kyoto School's educational philosophy.

The Kyoto School of Educational Philosophy

Background

The Kyoto School (*Kyōto-gakuha*) is the Japanese philosophical movement centered at Kyoto University that assimilated Western philosophy and religious ideas and used them to reformulate religious and moral insights unique to East Asian cultural tradition in the twentieth century.[12] The term "Kyoto School" was first used in an article by Tosaka Jun in 1932.[13] According to Fujita (2009)—referring to an

[10] Östling, J., Josephson, P., & Karlsohn (2014) explain the core idea of Humboldt's in relation to university education that "knowledge is a collective and joint concern, and one that should take place at a certain distance from society", referring to Humboldt's idea of "isolation and freedom" (Einsamkeit und Freiheit) (p. 2).

[11] His contrast between citizen and human is influenced by the idea of Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786), according to Naka (1989, p. 15–16).

[12] http://www.kyoto-u.ac.jp/ja/about/public/issue/research_activities/documents/2013/vol3no3/RA2013-3-4.pdf

[13] Tosaka did not use this term to positively evaluate Nishida's or Tanabe's philosophy which he thought was rather abstract. Fujita concludes that the Kyoto School is not a philosophical school

article by John C. Maraldo (2005)—there are six characteristics which establish the scope of the Kyoto School: (i) connection with Nishida, (ii) relationship with Kyoto University, (iii) relationship with Japanese/East Asian intellectual tradition, (iv) relationship with political thoughts, nation-state, and the problem of war at that time, (v) relationship with Buddhist tradition, and (vi) evaluation of "absolute nothingness". They built a constructive response to Western philosophy, drawing in equal parts on emerging Western critiques of Neo-Kantianism and Mahayana Buddhist thought, ultimately leading them to question key epistemic and ontological foundations (Yano & Rappleye, 2021, p. 4).

The school's first generation included distinguished philosophers such as Nishida Kitaro (1870–1945), Tanabe Hajime (1885–1962), and Nishitani Kenji (1900–1990). During the era of this first generation of Kyoto School philosophers, Japan was in the middle of its efforts to modernize the country. People were trying to import Western thought and incorporate it into the culture and practices of Japan. In this context, it is not surprising that Kyoto School philosophers, as represented by Nishida, tried to mix Western thought and Japanese traditions. Nishida Kitaro began his career as a teacher, and then became a professor of philosophy at Kyoto University.[14] From a young age, he had practiced *Zen* Buddhism with his best friend, Suzuki Daisetsu, who later became a renowned *Zen* Buddhist scholar. Naturally, Nishida's thoughts are based on the ideas of *Zen* Buddhism, which he mixed with Western philosophy.

Core Concepts of Kyoto School Educational Philosophy

Similar in some ways to the aforementioned *Bildung* concept developed by Humboldt, central to the Kyoto School educational thought was the concern of how best to cultivate the self. The Kyoto School developed an original perspective that stood between Western philosophy of *being* and the *Zen* Buddhism conception of *nothingness.*[15] The core educational concept of the Kyoto School, which is *investigation of self,*[16] is rooted in *Zen* Buddhism, which explains that essential to the process of the self becoming manifested is a *denial* of the self. Okamoto (2015)

where the philosophers started to establish a particular thesis, but a group that naturally developed at the time when Japanese philosophy started to become independent in accepting Western philosophy (Fujita, 2009, p. 36).

[14] The Kyoto School does not primarily focus on philosophy of education; however, as pointed out by Sevilla (2016), looking at their thought is relevant for the discussion of educational philosophy, because they discussed human transformation not only as scholars but also as educators themselves.

[15] http://www.kyoto-u.ac.jp/ja/about/public/issue/research_activities/documents/2013/vol3no3/RA2013-3-4.pdf Also, see https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OeOTbyy7uYE

[16] In *Genjokoan* by Dogen Zenji, it is explained that "learning self is forgetting self or leave from one's attachments". While self-reflection is often considered to be the conscious activity to investigate one's mind, self-investigation in Zen Buddhism is different in the sense that, through self-investigation (for example, in the practice of Zazen), one tries to let go of oneself and to be unified with its experiences or environment.

explains this as the process whereby one regards the self as the existence of a deep mystery without bottom (*Jiko no Muteisei*), and seeing this bottomless existence in the self and the other, then considers how self should be in mutual interaction. Here, Okamoto points out that the process is different from that of the Western view, where self-investigation assumes the existence of the self as self-evident (p. 172).

In the Kyoto School educational philosophy, the ultimate status of human development is toward nothingness, i.e., human development is considered to start from ego-self (mind) to non- self (casting-off), and finally to true-self (no-mind, or formless self) (Sevilla, 2016, p. 646). To understand this idea of ultimate non-self or true-self, it is necessary to understand Nishida's idea of *place (ba)* and the relationship of *self* and *place* which led him to the idea of *absolute nothingness (zettai mu)*. Nishida, contrary to Western philosophy, reconsidered realism from the perspective of the predicate. While Western philosophy, as represented by Aristotle, confirms existence based on the subject (i.e., the most basic component is the distinction between the subject and the predicate), Nishida reconsidered this fundamental conceptualization and reached the view that existence can be confirmed based on the predicate. Abe (1995) explains that, while "Aristotle seeks true Reality and the formation of judgement in the direction of the grammatical subject", Nishida, on the other hand, "was convinced that in order for the individual as the grammatical subject (Substance) to be known, there must exist that which encompasses it, the place in which it lies, and that this place must be sought in the plane of the 'transcendent predicate', not in the direction of the logical subject" (p. 168).

Nishida thereby placed importance on the concept of *place (ba)*, as the basic component that reflects oneself infinitely. In his opinion, no-self includes infinite presence (Nishida, 1927). In the status of non-self, Nishida considered that subjectivity reflects everything in the mirror of *place (ba)* inside of the self as the shadow. He proposed to *see without the subjectivity to see* and *listen without the subjectivity to listen* (Yokoyama, 1981, p.95, 97). Nishida argued that we should think of the world not from outside of it, but that we, as the thinkers ourselves, are part of the world (Nishida, 1937). Nishida considered that a human being is not a closed unit (or in the Kyoto School terminology, a solid self or ego) and through letting go of the self, of the attachment to the subject, the self is able to open up to reality in its fundamentally paradoxical nature (Sevilla, 2016, p. 643).

In terms of educational aims, Nishida put emphasis on awakening the drive which lies dormant in the depths of the heart of each student (Jainto, 2016, p. 187). According to the Kyoto School, education is not necessarily about training to acquire skills, as the Latin *educationem* might indicate, nor it is merely socialization of the child, or a maturing of the immature, or the expanding continuity of experience (Sevilla, 2016, p. 642). In this context, the School proposes the way of *negative education.* While education, especially school education, is generally seen in the light of *being*, whereby learning is an addition, a further solidification of the self, and the path of education march toward the fulfillment of the selfhood of the human being, the Kyoto School of thought focuses on a flexible self (toward true selflessness) in relation to the surroundings or outside influences without fixing the aims and

goals in human developments (Sevilla, 2016, p. 645). In a recent essay by Takayama, the Kyoto School notion of *negative education* is explained as follows:

> affective experiences of discomfort, perplexity and confusion as an important catalysis for generative learning and unlearning….learning to let go of the familiar language and frame of seeing the world and embracing disruption as a critical moment for new learning. (Takayama, 2020, p. 79)

The Kyoto School educational philosophy thereby focuses on individual self-investigation. However, at the same time, the School (at least some of its philosophers, including Nishida) explained that the development of self should be in unification with the environment (including society or nation).[17] This point can be seen from Nishida's speech below, from March 1940:

> In short, creation is impossible only by oneself. There must be a thought of predicate, but there is a subject and environment, and their relation is what creates. And this subject and environment correlate, as in the subject makes an environment, and the environment makes a subject, and this is how creation works… So, that is, every human being can create, and because every human being can create, every human being has creativity. Furthermore, this unified world, the world which environment correlates and integrates, has a trend, a trend of era. Action toward this trend creates history and the historical world. And to participate in this creation and the will to create would explain the morals of human being, in other words, a purpose of culture.[18]

This statement is a good example of how the Kyoto School understands *self* in *environment*. This uniqueness of understanding of *self* and *world* is one of the keys in comparing the goal of reflective experiences in Humboldt's *Bildung* and in the Kyoto School, which will be explained in more detail in the following section.

Comparison of Two Educational Philosophies

Based on the above descriptions, it is now possible to meaningfully compare significant features of the two philosophies of education.

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[17] While the Kyoto School is sometimes interpreted as linked to Japan's nationalism or imperialism, Yano & Rappleye (2021) analyze how the Kyoto School considered both nation-state and cosmopolitanism, and their relationship. Specifically, Kimura Motoji (a student of Nishida), explained "world-historical people" as national citizens sublated by the dialectic of the specific (i.e., national citizen) and universal (i.e., world citizen) (p. 5). Considering the "continuity-in-discontinuity", Kimura emphasized that the core idea was "absolute nothingness", whereby relations between state and individual person occurred within the broader field of the world-historical expression of absolute nothingness (p. 7).

[18] Nishida's speech in March 1940, broadcasto in NHK radio on April 30, 2018, in the program called "radio archives". The speeches were recorded in the year before Japan entered the war. The recording was not published at that time due to diverging interpretations which could be supportive (or not supportive) of participation in the war. In the postwar period, it was often discussed whether Nishida and the Kyoto School supported participation in the war.

Similarities

(1) **Knowledge and skill-based approach vs awakening of inner drive**

As reviewed in the former section, in contrast to earlier educational reformers, Humboldt thought education should provide not only knowledge and skills targeting specific purposes, but it should aim for harmonious growth and development of a person, unfolding inner forces and potentials of the human being. He criticized the former educational system, based on the idea of utilitarianism and linked to professional skills and knowledge considered to be useful in society. Instead, Humboldt proposed general education should be offered first, where students acquire knowledge of how to learn, and only after such a general education would students proceed to specialized training.

A rather similar idea is seen in the Kyoto School educational philosophy, as formulated by Nishida. According to the Kyoto School, education is not necessarily about training to acquire skills but rather is the process of cultivation of self in the world, awakening the drive within each student.

(2) **Importance of reflection in relation with others in education**

Another similarity is the importance of reflection in education. Humboldt explains that the process of self-cultivation is based on *Bildung* linking the self to the world. Humboldtian *Bildung* regarded the importance of one's own reflection and understanding through relations with others in the society in the process of self-cultivation. The Kyoto School, similar to the Humboldtian concept of *Bildung*, concerns how best to cultivate the self. In the process of self-cultivation, it emphasizes the interaction between self and world and reflective experiences, especially which lead to "negative education".

Differences

I and World in Reflective Experiences

There are also important differences between Humboldt's *Bildung* and the Kyoto School in terms of how they conceptualize the (goal of) reflective experiences in education. These differences seem to stem from different ways of positioning *I* with respect to *World*.

For Humboldt, the purpose of human activity is to improve oneself (ability by nature) and to add value for self-essence, and for that purpose there is a need for materials (or objects) which Humboldt named *World (Welt)* or *not oneself (Nicht-Mensch*), in contrast with *I (Ich*). He paid attention to the relationship between *I* and *World*, particularly in the interaction between the internal self and the external

world, where one experiences reflection from the World into the internal self and then deeply reflects on oneself (Ito, 2014).[19]

On the other hand, Nishida, while influenced by German philosophers such as Fichte (1762–1814), stated "I think Fichte created the new conceptualization of Realism with substantiation of subjective recognition".[20] Nishida consequently took different position in understanding of the relationship between *I* and *World*. Instead of the assumption of absolute self in the Western thought, Nishida proposed the idea of absolute nothingness. In developing his thought, Nishida explained his position as follows:

> Philosophy starts with the contradiction of self. Doubting itself is the issue. I think there are two ways to go from here, because of our self-contradictions. One is the direction toward affirmation of self, and the other is the direction toward negation of self. It can be said that Western culture went to the former direction, and Eastern culture has the strong point in the direction toward the latter.[21]

Nishida's ideas were influenced by his familiarity with *Zen* Buddhism. In Buddhism, *non-self (Muga)* means the state of being that self is not coerced by one's own desires or judgements, or in other words, is removed from one's fixed ideas and prejudices.[22] In Western culture, as Nishida saw, although the process of reflection on interaction with the World is acknowledged as important by some educational philosophers, the fundamental assumption of the process is that the being *I* exists, and *I* is to be affirmed in such reflective experiences. Komatsu and Rappleye (2020) argue that "The western liberal ontology begins with the presumption of selfhood as substance, one grasped on the higher plane of reason", and therefore, "the substantive self remains the primarily educational project of Western modernity, liberal, and otherwise" (pp. 22–23).

Nishida challenged the Western view based on his *Zen* Buddhist experiences, arguing that when human beings are born, the only existing thing is *Pure consciousness/Pure experience* (*Junsui Ishiki/Keiken*). Accordingly, it is assumed that at this stage that there is no distinction between subject and object (*Shukyaku Mibunri*), and only afterwards, in the process of growing up, a human being somehow misunderstands that there is subject and object in binary opposition. Moreover, how the subject sees an object is based on a limited awareness (*Gentei teki na Jikaku*), which is not absolute but changes in the relationship to *world*. Nishida's fundamental idea is

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[19] Ito (2014) explains the commonality between Humboldt and Fichte (1762–1814) discussing the influence of German Idealism.

[20] Section II 13 work of Nishida Kitaro, "About philosophy of Descartes.".

[21] Section II 13 work of Nishida Kitaro, "About philosophy of Descartes.".

[22] For standard definitions, see, for example, *Digital Daijisen* (Japanese dictionary) or *Encyclopaedia Nipponica* by Shougakukan Inc. Also, Nakagawa (2015) in his article of Buddhism and Holistic Education, explains that Buddhist thinkers recognize the mind's ability to create distinctions between things, but at the same time they underline that such an ability is the primary cause of our delusive perceptions, false attachments, and therefore, suffering (p. 47). He explains "when we revisit education, it is important to recognise that Buddhism provides not only moral and religious teachings to be taught at schools but also offers fundamental worldviews or frameworks, upon which a whole edifice of education can be built" (p. 46).

that *world* creates self as a part of *world*, and neither is static. Therefore, for Nishida, what is important is that one becomes not limited, but released from a misconception of self, and the ultimate goal of humans should be a denial of self so the border between self and *world* can disappear.

Based on this underlying view, the Kyoto School proposed the importance of *negative education.* As opposed to positive education, where knowledge and skills are added for students' development, instead, they valued the moment of negativity in education whereby students experienced disruptions and uncomfortableness, allowing them to separate from their familiarities (fixed-self) toward non-self, which leads students to open their minds to become unified with their environment (*world*).

The idea of negative education itself is not solely unique to the Kyoto School. For example, Rousseau explained a similar concept in his educational thought (as referred in his book *Emile*). Andrea English (2013) in her book on Western philosophy *Discontinuity in Learning* also explains the importance of moments of disruption, unexpectedness, and doubt which lead to discontinuity in learning. However, while these Western educational philosophies also value the importance of negativity of education and self-reflection, the fundamental difference between these and that of the Kyoto School seems to be that Western thought orients self-reflection toward the development of the learner's self-determination. The Kyoto School's proposal of negative education is thereby different from Western thought, which contrarily features the educational goal of developing students to become self-determined, independent, and ultimately free and autonomous in the environment, with self-reflection leading to the practical outcome of self-enrichment.

Implications for "Reflection" in OECD Education 2030

The direction of the OECD's recent development of Education 2030 appears to be in line with the educational thought proposed in both Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School, in the sense that it mostly rejects skill-based education, placing importance on the role of "reflection" in education for the holistic development of students. In order to move the discussion one step forward, this section discusses the underlying assumptions embedded in the OECD's policy, as illuminated through comparison of Humboldtian *Bildung* and Kyoto School thought: (1) student as agent: co-agency, and (2) consideration of social trends.

(1) **Student as agent: co-Agency**

The OECD Learning Compass 2030 emphasizes the need for students to learn to navigate by themselves through unfamiliar contexts and find their direction in a meaningful and responsible way, instead of simply receiving fixed instructions or directions from their teachers (OECD Learning Compass 2030, p. 6). The idea is based on a student-centered approach. Agency is defined as the competency to think, initiate, and act intentionally and responsibly to shape the world toward individual and collective well-being (OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030, Concept

note: Anticipation-Action-Reflection cycle for 2030, p. 123). Students are expected to learn to exercise their sense of purpose and responsibility while learning to influence people, events, and circumstances around them for the better (OECD Learning Compass 2030, p. 6). Students are to be equipped to act rather than be acted upon; shape rather than be shaped; make responsible decisions and choices rather than accept those determined by others (OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030, Concept note: Student Agency, p. 4).

It is argued, however, that a student is not acting solely as an agent based on his/her autonomy or choice, but most importantly needs to grow and exercise their agency in social contexts.[23] The OECD conceptualizes student agency which is different from student autonomy or student choice (OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030, Concept note: Student Agency, p. 4). The OECD warns of the risk that the concept is misinterpreted as students acting and functioning in social isolation, or solely in their own self-interest (p. 4). Further, the OECD Learning Compass explains the important concept of co-agency (OECD Learning Compass 2030, p. 6). Since the development of an agent is a relational process, not only the students but also the surrounding agents (such as teachers, families, or a wider community) are expected to work together for the development of the society.

These concepts of student agency and co-agency as a student's position in society are similar to the idea of self-cultivation in Humboldtian *Bildung* in the West. It seems that the underlying assumption is that self is positioned *in contrast to* the world. Therefore, reflective experiences in interaction with society ultimately serve the affirmation or determination of self.

In Nishida's thought, however, the self is positioned within the world, so it is actually a part of the world. Therefore, reflective experience does not necessarily reach the affirmation or value adding of the self, but ultimately is aimed toward finding the true-self (formless self, non-self), casting-off ego-self, where the world is not static.

In discussing the OECD's concept, especially transversal competencies, this perspective can expand the potential discussion, because as proposed by Kyoto School thought, "negative education" in discussions of educational matters can enable awareness of how limiting our assumptions can be, particularly in a diverse global society.

(2) **Consideration of *social trends***

Another aspect to consider is the argument of the OECD Learning Compass, which states the importance of having an understanding of the global challenges and social trends shaping our world (OECD Learning Compass 2030, p. 8). This is reminiscent of the statement by Nishida of situating self in the world, while Humboldt places

[23] In the experts meeting held by MEXT in December 2018, the characteristics of OECD's concept of agency were explained by the Ministry as contextual, non-linear, and multi-dimensional. The Japanese Ministry, referring to the latest revision of the national course of study, emphasized the position of student agency in society, reconfirming the importance of working together with others to solve issues and reach agreements. https://www.mext.go.jp/b_menu/shingi/chousa/shotou/142/shiryo/icsFiles/afieldfile/2019/01/28/1412759_2.pdf

more emphasis on the importance of freedom. The OECD argues that understanding social *trends* helps us to prepare for the future and identify the kinds of competencies that today's students will need to thrive in an uncertain future (p. 8).

It is somehow contradictory that, while the Learning Compass emphasizes the individual's role as an agent to create a future society, the learning should nevertheless be in line with current trends in society. Especially concerning the nature of the OECD itself (i.e., industry-driven, economy-focused), there is a risk that such trends could be (either intentionally or unintentionally) narrowly interpreted. Also, as the OECD itself acknowledges, the most challenging nature of current and future education is that the future is *uncertain and rapidly changing*. In that case, how can we foresee such a future based on global or social trends? Similarly, the OECD argues for the importance of well-being[24] in the Learning Compass, noting that economic prosperity accounts for only one part of the well-being of the individual or society (p. 8). However, it can not be denied that the OECD framework for measuring well-being is still focused more on economic aspects, rather than on individual character.

As Humboldt argued, we need to carefully ask how students would not be lost within the (current) society. Instead, they should/can develop themselves in relation to society, creating their own future for their own well-being. It might be worth carefully reviewing what kind of trend(s) we are discussing here, and to make sure that we do not take such trend(s) for granted. Referring to Hattie's (2020) statement, policymakers and educators themselves also should not fall into the trap of confirmation bias in reflection of trends.

Conclusion

In a globalized world, international organizations such as the OECD arguably should be able to hold themselves up to scrutiny in relation to both major Western and non-Western philosophies of education. Still, it is only with recent movements to decolonize curricula, and the popularization of such concepts as "global competence" (advocated by the OECD itself) that a basic obligation to consider non-Western philosophies is becoming more widely accepted (Lopez, 2020; Reagan, 2018). This chapter, therefore, attempted to analyze the underlying assumptions concerning "reflection" in learning proposed by the OECD Education 2030, in light of a comparison of two prominent philosophies from West and East: Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School as exemplified in Nishida's thought.

Both in Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School, reflective experiences during interaction with others in society are considered to be the core of education. Both

[24] J. Rappleye et al. (2020) criticizes the understanding of well-being by OECD's measure of student well-being, in consideration of Asian cultures. They analyze the OECD 2017 report that most significant parts of student well-being is measured based on individual characteristics, and relations with others denoted as proximal (i.e., near to but not actually the center) (p. 263). They argue that this "biased" understanding of well-being shows misperception of students' well-beings in Asian countries, including Japan.

criticized the systems in which skill-based education was the sole aim, and thereby generally align with the current proposal from the OECD Education 2030. However, a closer look at each philosophy also revealed notable differences, especially in terms of how they position self and world. While Humboldtian Bildung values self-reflection in relationship with others for the purpose of affirmation of self, Nishida's view on the ultimate goal of human development is self-negation in "negative education", with which self and world are unified. There is also an important difference in terms of emphasis on freedom (Humboldt) and social/global trends (Nishida).

Reviewing the proposal of the OECD Education 2030, the underlying assumption of self-affirmation is rather similar to the ideas of Humboldtian Bildung in the West. Nevertheless, the OECD Education 2030 also warns of "self-confirmation bias" in the reflection process. On the other hand, the idea of nothingness in the Kyoto School does not mean to kill the sense of self in the world. It might be the case that, in fact, both educational approaches, with different expressions, may actually agree with each other in the sense that "self" is of course important, however, in the process of learning, one must sometimes withdraw for a period to empty one's bias or *ego* and make one's mind open to others to be a part of the world. As such, it is worth learning from both of these philosophies, critically comparing them, and reflecting on their alternative takes on "reflection" that emerged in different parts of the world. This enables a truly global level of discussion regarding the nature and practice of "reflection" in learning.

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A Philosophical Perspective on the Purpose of Education in Indonesia

Dorothy Ferary

Abstract This chapter will look at the purpose of education in the context of Indonesia's past and present. I will draw on the philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara (1889–1959), who is regarded as the father of Indonesian education. In conceptualising education, he was influenced by his upbringing, local culture, and international influences from various educators and philosophers such as Rabindranath Tagore, Maria Montessori, and Friedrich Fröbel. This chapter is particularly timely because the Indonesian government has started to critically re-examine two of the educational concepts proposed by Dewantara, which are "*pendidikan karakter*" (character education) and "*merdeka belajar*" (independent learning). The chapter will start with a discussion on the purpose of education before introducing Dewantara and his background. I will then offer two comparisons; First, between Dewantara's purpose of education and the aims of Dutch schools during the colonial period in Indonesia, highlighting the importance of imparting local wisdom and values in Dewantara's school which were ignored by the colonial schools. Second, between Dewantara's purpose of education and the current government's policies. By doing so, I will highlight the different purposes articulated for education in various contexts, from the colonial era to present-day Indonesia. The conclusion of this chapter is that there have been profound changes to the very purpose of education in Indonesia. Nevertheless, Dewantara's philosophy is still very much relevant today and thus, the Indonesian government should revisit its conceptualisation of the foundations of education. Dewantara's thought is also likely to see increased interest in other countries due to a growing global demand for awareness of non-Western educational philosophies.

Keywords Indonesia · Ki Hadjar Dewantara · Philosophy of Education

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Introduction

What is the purpose of education? There is no simple answer to this question. In fact, it has been an ongoing debate for centuries. Some would argue that the purpose of education is to attain knowledge, while others would emphasise the instrumental value of education. To contribute to this debate, I will look at it from an Indonesian perspective, to explore how the purpose of education in Indonesia has changed over the decades.

My starting point will be in the 1920s, focusing on Ki Hadjar Dewantara (1889–1959) and his philosophy of education. Dewantara was a pioneer in the field of education in the Dutch East Indies, which later gained independence as Indonesia. He was appointed as Indonesia's first Minister of Education and is known as the father of Indonesian education. Moreover, Dewantara's birthday is celebrated as National Education Day and his image even appears on the 20,000-rupiah banknote. An abbreviated version of his leadership motto "*tut wuri handayani"* (which means to encourage from behind) is still embedded in the official seal of the Ministry of Education. The full-length slogan that Dewantara promoted is *"ing ngarso sung tulodo, ing madya mangun karso, tut wuri handayani,*" which means "when you are in front you set an example, when you are in the middle you motivate, when you are behind you encourage".

To show how the purpose of education has changed in the Indonesian context, I will compare the concept of education in three types of schools: Dewantara's schools, the Dutch (colonial) schools and the current approaches to schooling in the present Indonesia. This chapter thereby re-examines the purpose of education and explores the extent to which Dewantara's philosophy remains relevant in today's society.

This chapter is divided into six subchapters. First, I will discuss the two main arguments for the purpose of education: to train (*educare*) and to lead (*educere*). Second, I will introduce Dewantara and how his background influenced his views. Third, I will look more closely at his philosophy of education and how other educators or philosophers such as Rabindranath Tagore, Maria Montessori, and Friedrich Fröbel influenced his ideas. Fourth, I will contrast the purpose of his schools and the Dutch schools during the colonial period. Fifth, I will then bring in contemporary examples to demonstrate the similarities and differences between Dewantara's school and the present schools. I will argue that the Indonesian schooling system has long emphasised the creation of skilled labourers. To some extent, this is similar to the purpose of the Dutch Schools in the 1920s. However, the recently updated national curriculum, with its incorporation of "character education" and "independent learning" suggests a growing recognition of the significance of Dewantara's ideas. In the last subchapter, I will conclude that there have been major changes to the purpose of education in the Indonesian context. However, Dewantara's philosophy of education is still very much relevant in Indonesia today.

What is the Purpose of Education?

We can answer this question by looking at its etymology. According to Craft (1984), the word "education" comes from two Latin words. The first word, "*educare*", means to train or to mould. In this view, education's importance is to preserve knowledge; educators pass on their knowledge to their students. This approach calls for rote learning, where students learn from memorisation. Rote learning is employed in many schools around the world, including Indonesia. Bjork (2005) observed how Indonesian teachers have ascribed to the long tradition of rote learning. Proponents of this view believe that "*remembering knowledge is essential for meaningful learning and problem solving when that knowledge is used in more complex tasks*" (Mayer, 2002, p. 227). This method sees education as a place to produce good workers. Some argue that this "factory education model" limits students' critical thinking. Instead of building their own understanding, students are indoctrinated by their teachers on how things should be.

The second word, "*educere*", means to lead out. In this view, education is seen as a tool to prepare learners for changes. Thus, it requires critical thinking, creativity, and innovation (Bass & Good, 2004). In this model of education, teachers are facilitators; they plan the lessons based on their understanding of the students' interests, abilities, needs, and preferred learning methods. Teachers provide necessary scaffolding by offering support and advice when needed. However, the students are the ones who build their own understanding and sense of the world. These two different concepts represent the current central conceptions of the purpose of education internationally.

Burbules and Warnick (2006, p. 491) proposed ten methods of philosophical inquiry about education, one of them focusing on the purposes of education. Debates regarding the purpose of education can be viewed by looking at who benefits from education (p. 496). Some scholars look at the intrinsic value of education, where education is valued by the individual. Acquiring knowledge in itself is the result rather than a means to an end (Koosgard, 1983). This knowledge acquisition can enhance one's appreciation of the field of knowledge (McCowan, 2012, p. 118). In addition, in higher education settings, universities also provide a space for students to critically develop their self-realisation (Nussbaum, 1997, p. 30) and give students an opportunity-making space to rethink and expand their aspirational possibilities (Walker, 2018, p. 129). Thus, the purpose of education is not just to acquire knowledge but also to reflect on oneself.

Other researchers focus on the instrumental value of education, where the purpose of education is to benefit society. For example, Dewey (1916) suggested that promoting democracy should be the central aim of education. Studies have also shown that the level of education correlates with levels of civic participation (Brand, 2010; Dee, 2006; McMahon, 2007, 2009). The most common approach, however, is to look at education as an investment. A series of studies commissioned by the World Bank emphasised the economic gains of education (Psacharopoulos, 1972, 1973, 1981, 1985), noting that acquiring a higher level of education translates to higher income that helps build the economy of the country. Several empirical studies

such as in Vietnam (Doan & Stevens, 2011; Glewwe et al., 2002), the Philippines (Schady, 2003), and Pakistan (Afzal, 2011) have shown such a link. However, this approach often relies on a narrow concept of education.

In a narrow concept of education, learning takes place in a controlled situation and is related to schooling or training, which prepares students for a vocation (Aggarwal, 2010, p. 13). However, in a broader concept, education is seen as an ongoing process of life which can take place anywhere. "*Bildung*" is one notable example of this wider view of education. *Bildung* is a concept that emerged in late eighteenth-century Germany, initially with a strong religious purpose. However, it was articulated as a "specific structure of education" in the late nineteenth century (Blankertz, 1983, as cited in Masschelein & Ricken, 2003). It is hard to precisely explain *Bildung* in English because there is no single word that allows direct translation from the German (Varkøy, 2010, p. 86). *Bildung* is an ongoing process of learning that results in personal and cultural maturation (Gidley, 2016, p. 87), but also involves individual self-realisation in all spheres of social reproduction (Masschelein & Ricken, 2003, p. 140). Moreover, Danner (1994, p. 5) suggested that *Bildung* is a process and status of a "cultured person" with three main components; the knowledge that is mastered and criticised, the question of value orientation and quality, and the responsibility for the human community.

In this chapter, I will highlight that there should be a balance between the intrinsic and instrumental values of education. In addition, since education is an ongoing learning process, it should have a broader concept, and not necessarily only take place in classroom settings. Education should also provide a degree of freedom and independence. These three important aspects of education have been highlighted by various educators and thinkers. For example, according to Maria Montessori, education is a way to create a free learning environment that helps children to reach their fullest potential and become an adult who contributes to society (Montessori, 1949). Her emphasis on the importance of learning from nature (Montessori, 1948) shows that learning should not be constrained by the four walls of classroom. Similarly, Rabindranath Tagore (discussed at length in Chapter 6) put freedom at the centre of his idea of education, this included free interaction with nature (Tagore, 1929). He also put an emphasis on unity in harmony (Tagore, 2003, p. 78), suggesting the importance of international brotherhood. According to him, although an individual belongs to one nation, the individual shares the world with citizens of other countries (p. 81). Thus, education should promote intercultural understanding for the unity of mankind. Likewise, Frederich Fröbel (also discussed in Chapter 3) put forward the idea of student-centred learning to give children a degree of freedom and independence. He suggested that the most important aspect of children's education is to understand and recognise nature (Fröbel, 1967). This is why gardening is an important aspect in his schools. He was a strong proponent of a play-based curriculum and rejected rote learning and punishment (Strauch-Nelson, 2012). With this type of education, children will be able to develop their self-awareness and will grow to be adults who support the wellbeing of themselves and others (Serry, 2012). The views of Montessori, Tagore, and Fröbel can also be seen reflected in the educational views

of Ki Hadjar Dewantara, a pioneer in the field of education in what is now known as Indonesia.

Ki Hadjar Dewantara

Ki Hadjar Dewantara was born on the 2nd of May 1889 into the Javanese royal house of Paku Alam, with the birth name *Raden Mas* Suwardi Suryaningrat. He later changed his name to Ki Hadjar Dewantara (also spelled as Ki Hajar Dewantara) and dropped his aristocratic title of "*Raden Mas*". Dewantara completed his studies at *Europeesche Lagere School* (a Dutch elementary school) in Yogyakarta. At that time, only those who came from royal, noble, or upper-class families could attend schools. He then enrolled at a local *kweekschool* (a Dutch school to train teachers). He was informed of a scholarship opportunity to study at the medical school, *School tot Opleiding van Indische Artsen* (STOVIA), in Jakarta by Dr. Wahidin Sudiro Husodo (Wirypranoto et al., 2017, p. 149). Dr. Husodo was a medical doctor who took an interest in improving educational opportunities for elite Javanese youth. Dewantara applied, got accepted, and then moved to Jakarta to continue his studies at STOVIA. However, during his studies, he fell ill for four months. As a result, he could not complete his studies (Muthoifin, 2015, p. 302). His scholarship was then cancelled and he was even expelled from the school. According to Wirypranoto et al., (2017, p. 149) there was another reason why his scholarship was cancelled. A few days before the cancellation, Dewantara had publicly read a poem by Dutch writer Multatuli about Ali Basah Sentot Prawirodirdjo, a prominent leader in an armed struggle against the Dutch in the early nineteenth century. The director of STOVIA therefore reprimanded Dewantara for inciting a rebellious spirit against the Dutch government.

After Dewantara was expelled, he started to become involved in journalism, politics, and education. Dewantara was an active member of Dr. Husodo's political organisation called *Budi Utomo* (literally "Noble Endeavour"). *Budi Utomo* was a pioneer in social, cultural, and political organisation in the Dutch East Indies. During his time in *Budi Utomo*, Dewantara further developed a political, social, and cultural consciousness (Scherer, 1975, p. 75). He also worked for, among others, the *De Express* newspaper and wrote his first article titled *Kemerdekaan Indonesia* (Indonesian Independence).

Together with D. Dekker and T. Mangoenkoesoemo, he established a short-lived political organisation, the *Indische Partij* (Indies Party), in 1912. The following year, he published his most well-known work, an article titled *Als ik een Nederlander was* (If I were a Dutch Man) which heavily criticised the Dutch colonial government. This led to the disbandment of the party by the Dutch government because it was deemed to be a threat to the colonial government (Kelch, 2014, p. 16). The three founders were exiled to the Netherlands. Two weeks before he was exiled to the Netherlands, Dewantara married his wife, Sutartinah Sasraningrat (later known as Nyi Hadjar

Dewantara), and brought her with him to Europe (Wirypranoto et al., 2017, p. 153). She had previously completed her studies at the *kweekschool* in Yogyakarta.

During his exile in the Netherlands, Dewantara revisited his interest in becoming an educator, as did his bride. He completed a certificate in education (Yusuf, 1969, p. 21) and his wife found a kindergarten teacher position at a Fröbel School in Weimaar, Den Haag. Nyi Hadjar Dewantara would later become known as a proponent for gender equality and political education for women. In 1913, the same year Dewantara arrived in the Netherlands, Indian writer, Rabindranath Tagore, received the Nobel prize for literature. Dewantara met with Tagore and was very much influenced by Tagore's ideas on education (Dewantara, 1962a; Tsuchiya, 1987, p. 41). He was also exposed to other educators' views during his exile. In his writings, he shows his appreciation for the work of Maria Montessori (Dewantara, 1962a, 1962c) and Friedrich Fröbel (Dewantara, 1962e), among others.

In 1918, after completing his period of exile, Dewantara returned to the Dutch Indies and participated in *Paguyuban Selasa-Kliwon* (the Tuesdays Society), a scholarly society for the discussion of Javanese mysticism that was led by Prince Surjamataram of Mangkunegara. The *Paguyuban* (Society) met every *Selasa* (Tuesday) that fell on the Kliwon day in the Javanese calendar, hence the name *Paguyuban Selasa-Kliwon.* The society agreed that there was a need for a Javanese education system that incorporated local wisdom. The society was disbanded when Dewantara opened the first Sekolah *Taman Siswa* (Garden of Students School) because it had achieved its primary objective (McVey, 1967, p. 130).

Dewantara's Philosophy of Education and Schools

Dewantara suggested the concept of *tri pusat pendidikan* (three centres of education): family, school, and environment, according to which the responsibility to educate a child does not rely on teachers alone but also on parents and the wider society (Saefuddin & Solahudin, 2009). Therefore, parents, teachers, and the community must work together to educate the child. This is similar to an African proverb, "it takes a village to raise a child". Furthermore, Dewantara argued that these agents of education instilled societal values and norms and therefore shape the child's character to be aligned with society and reflect what surrounds them. To a certain extent, this is similar to the African concept of *Ubuntu* (discussed at length in Chapter 7), meaning "a person is a person through other person", which highlights the role of connectivity in society and has guided some African communities in interacting with each other. As Odari (2020) explained, the concept ensures that "*each member of society works towards improving their character, exuding the fundamental human qualities of kindness, respect, compassion, and gratitude*" (p. 63).

Dewantara's philosophy of education was partly influenced by his values, which were shaped by his family and upbringing. At home, he learned manners and etiquette, how to read the Qur'an in Arabic, how to dance, play gamelan (a traditional Javanese

and Balinese instrumental music ensemble), and read Javanese literature (Hadiwijoyo, 2016, pp. 1–2). He later wrote a chapter on the role of family in children's education (Dewantara, 1962f, pp. 369–392), suggesting that men and women have equal roles as the leaders of the family. Therefore, both mothers and fathers play an important role in their children's education. He wrote, "Although fathers are generally seen as the head of the family, sometimes it is the mothers who hold power" (p. 381).

Dewantara saw parents as facilitators who help guide the children, as well as role models who set an example for their children.

Dewantara was a proponent of a broad concept of education, noting that education extends beyond the four walls of classroom. He believed that parents, regardless of their educational background, are the first teachers of their children. He wrote, "*do not think that only educated parents* (meaning royal, noble, or upper-class families who go to Dutch schools) *can educate their children. Parents who live in villages* (meaning commoners) *can also educate their children* (p. 375)". Dewantara also emphasised the importance of each family member learning from each other, for just as he saw fathers and mothers have equal roles in the family, he believed education is equally important for both sons and daughters and therefore advocated for girls' education.

Dewantara wrote his tripartite *tri ngo* concept of education, which includes *ngerti* (to understand), *ngroso* (to feel), and *lan nglakoni* (to act). Taken together, this means that education aims to understand and to feel what is around us so that we can implement actions that bring goodness to society (Wijayanti, 2018, p. 89). This is why in all of Dewantara's teachings, he emphasised the concept of *budi pekerti,* (good character, manners, ethics) where the action is made because there is a unity of mind, feeling, and willingness (Dewantara, 1962d, p. 484). This is similar to the concept of "*bildung*". Although Dewantara never used the word "*bildung*", his concepts were closely linked to the concept of self-realisation.

Dewantara's philosophy is also influenced by educators and philosophers from various countries. As mentioned earlier, Dewantara appreciated the works of Tagore and Montessori and vice versa. Both Tagore and Montessori visited Taman Siswa Schools; Tagore visited a Taman Siswa School in 1927 and some Taman Siswa students studied at Tagore's Santiniketen School (Gupta, 2002, p. 458). Montessori visited a Taman Siswa School in Yogyaarta in 1940 (McVey, 1967, p. 133). Dewantara was also influenced by Fröbel as seen in his writings.

Dewantara wrote four volumes on education, sharing his views on the different principles and concepts of education. For Dewantara, the purpose of education is to achieve perfection of human life, fulfilling the needs of both body and soul (Dewantara, 1962d). This is similar to Fröbel (1887) who suggested "*the purpose of education is to encourage and guide man as a conscious, thinking and perceiving being in such a way that he becomes a pure and perfect representation of that divine inner law through his own personal choice; education must show him the ways and meanings of attaining that goal*" (p. 2).

Dewantara brought forward three learning steps, called *tri N*. The first concept is *niteni*. It is difficult to translate "*niteni*" as there are nuances to it. It can be translated as

"to remember". However, this concept is not to be confused with rote learning. Unlike rote learning where learners are being taught to memorise, *niteni* concept emphasise on learners' ability to uses their senses to do activities. The experience of doing the activity with their senses will help them to process and remember information. The second step is *niroke* which means to mimic. In this step, learners mimic or imitate the action that they have learned previously. Students can combine niroke and niteni while doing the activity. The third step is *nambahi*, which means to enrich. In this step, learners develop their capabilities through the process of learning (Prihatni, 2014, p. 279). An example of the implementation of *tri* N can be seen when students learn to play a musical instrument. The students see the teacher playing an instrument and listen to the sound that comes out of the instrument (*niteni*), the students then mimic the teacher playing the instrument (*niroke*) while at the same time touching and feeling the instrument (*niteni*). The students then try to play the same sound that the teacher made and/or add their own sound (*nambahi*). These concepts share similarities with Montessori's approach to education, which is well-known for its sensory focus.

The central principle of Dewantara's approach to education is the "sistem among" (literally "among system"), which does not translate easily into English. "Among" can be understood, however, as "sole" or "individual" and therefore learning should be based upon the student's unique nature (Radcliffe, 1971, p. 222). With this concept, Dewantara emphasised *merdeka belajar* (independent learning), whereby students should be at the centre of learning activity instead of the teacher. This is similar to the student-centred education proposed by Montessori and Fröbel. He explained the system using the concept of *tri mong*, whereby teachers' acts more like parents who should guide their children. Thus, in the process of learning, teachers should *momong* (take care), *among* (offer an example), and *ngemong* (observe), so that learners develop their knowledge based on how they make sense of the information and their surroundings, not simply because the teachers indoctrinate them.

Both Dewantara and Tagore opposed the colonial education system and suggested that it is important for indigenous populations to learn their history and culture (Supardi et al., 2018). Dewantara wrote a chapter on arts education which heavily emphasised the importance of learning local culture. For example, he wrote that students should learn the *Serimpi* dance. At one point this dance became exclusive to the palace, thus not everyone could learn how to dance *Serimpi*. However, Dewantara wrote that "all arts if they were kept in the palace would not last […] because they did not belong to the people. Thus, we should learn and cultivate the interest to learn them so the arts can belong to the people […] (Dewantara, 1962g p. 305)".

Both Dewatara and Tagore also suggested the use of mother tongues in their teaching. In his schools in Java, Dewantara advocated for Javanese as the medium of instruction (Dewantara, 1962h, p. 508). He acknowledged that Indonesia is a multicultural country, thus while it is important to use mother tongues in schools, students should also learn the Indonesian language as the national language. He argued that learning Indonesian would unite the different cultures within the country.

Although Dewantara opposed the colonial education system and promoted the use of mother tongues, he did not advocate an inward-looking approach to education,

nor did he oppose internationalisation or international cooperation. He discussed the importance of international relationships (Dewantara, 1962i pp.126–128) and the relationship of his schools with other schools abroad (Dewantara, 1962j, pp. 135–137). Indeed, his schools sent students to study in various countries such as India, Japan, and the Philippines. He also wrote that learning other languages is important and suggested that students should learn English in lower secondary school because English was considered an international language (Dewantara 1962k, p. 534). Dewantara saw "Western" languages such as Dutch, French, and German as equally important to "Eastern" languages such as Arabic and Urdu, thus he also supported the establishment of language schools.

In looking at education and culture, Dewantara viewed school as a place to promote local culture and recommended three attitudes towards culture, known as *tri con.* These attitudes are *continuity* (to preserve our unique identity and continue the traditional values and elements of our own culture), *concentricity* (to be open yet critical and selective towards other cultures before assimilating positive values of other cultures), and *convergency* (to work with other nations in building a universal world culture based on individual national characteristics) (Towaf, 2016, p. 169). The tri-con concept shared some similarities to what we now called "glocal education". Glocal education explores local and global connections to maximise glocal consciousness (Niemczyk, 2019, p. 12).

Dewantara, Montessori, Tagore, and Fröbel all acknowledged the importance of learning from nature (Dewantara, 1962d, 1964; Fröbel, 1967; Montessori, 1948; Tagore, 1929). Dewantara believed that lessons could be learned from nature, everyday objects, and everyday human interaction. Both Tagore and Dewantara also saw the purpose of education as beyond economic concerns (Marzuki & Khanifah, 2016, p. 179). For Tagore, the purpose of education is to give a sense of identity as a "total man" or a whole person, in harmony with life. This is similar to Dewantara's concept of "life perfection" by fulfilling the needs of the body and soul. This concept is also related to the self-realisation concept in *Bildung*.

Both Tagore and Dewantara also saw the role of teachers as supporters or guides for their students. Tagore (1992) used the metaphor of teachers as gardeners with their role being to ensure the students (garden) flourish. Dewantara explained the role of teachers as "*Ing ngarso sung tulodo. Ing madyo mangun karso. Tut wuri handayani"* (When the teachers are in front of the student, they should set an example. When the teachers are in the middle, they should raise the student's spirit and initiative. When the teachers are behind, they should encourage the student never to give up). If we use a metaphor of a teacher and a student walking together to demonstrate Dewantara's role of the teacher, we can see that the emphasis of education is the student's progress. Starting with the student walking behind the teacher, then alongside the teacher, and eventually in front of the teacher. This concept is closely linked to the *Among* system, where students learn independently.

Dewantara shared Montessori and Fröbel's views on student-centred learning and freedom in the classroom. This was done by acknowledging the importance of self-expression and adjusting teaching methods based on the students' capabilities (McVey, 1967, p. 133). In addition, all three believed that learning should be done

through activities (experiential learning) and that it is important to use and develop the students' five senses (Rokhman et al., 2017, p. 120). Montessori's method, however, is more structured. The teacher's role is to be an instructor; to show students how to do things and let the students try themselves (Burnett, 1962, p. 73). Fröbel, on the other hand, used games and activities in class. He went on to develop unique materials such as wooden bricks and balls for his classroom activities. Dewantara chose to incorporate local cultures in the classroom, for example through dance, playing traditional musical instruments, or shadow puppets. This approach reflected the influence of Dewantara's participation in the *Paguyuban Selasa-Kliwon.*

One thing that sets Ki Hadjar Dewantara apart from his influencers was his greater attention to the finances underpinning education. This is perhaps because unlike the Dutch schools, Taman Siswa school did not receive government funding (McVey, 1967, p. 134). For Dewantara, an educational institution needed to be self-sufficient. One of the ways to be self-sufficient is by charging fees. However, to uphold their principle of inclusivity, everyone should not be denied access to education because of financial constraints. Thus, those who could afford could sponsor those who could not afford it (Rizal, 2013, p. 65). In addition, he suggested that an educational institution should have a branch that undertook profit-making activities (Muthoifin, 2015). According to the Taman Siswa Schools principles, the profit-making activities should adhere to the principles, foundations, characteristics, and objectives of the Taman Siswa schools.

Dewantara's philosophy heavily influenced his schools and how they are operated. His first *Taman Siswa* (Garden of Students) school was established in Yogyakarta in 1922. The name shows a strong resemblance to Fröbel's "*kindergarten*", which shows Dewantara's recognition of Fröbel's ideas. Taman Siswa promoted seven fundamental principles, which reflected Dewantara's philosophy of education. The principles were (1) The right of a person to self-determination, (2) Educating children to be liberated in their spiritual life, thoughts, and energies, (3) Using one's civilisation and culture as signposts, to search for a new life, that is in accordance with our characters, and that gives us peace in our lives, (4) Education for all members of the society, (5) Working freely but guided by fundamental principles, (6) Independence in terms of funding, and (7) Educators should surrender themselves to serve the child (Dewantara, 1964, pp. 26–28).

Taman Siswa Schools vs Dutch Colonial Schools

The differences between Dewantara's Taman Siswa schools and the Dutch colonial schools can be seen in four areas: purpose, methods, curriculum, and funding. Before I compare Taman Siswa schools and the Dutch schools in more detail, I want to acknowledge that during the 1920s, there were also Islamic boarding schools (pesantren). In fact, the pesantren have existed in Indonesia at least from the 1600 s (Woodward, 2015, p. 8). Unfortunately, there is insufficient space to discuss Islamic

education in depth here. Detailed studies of Islamic schools can be found in the work of Dhofier (1999), Steenbrink (1986), Zakaria (2008).

The first main area of difference between Dutch colonial schools and Dewantara's schools was the purpose of education. It is important to understand the background of the emergence of Dutch schools in their colonial context. In 1901 the Dutch colonial government introduced the *Ethical Policy*, which was predicated on the view that there was a moral obligation for the colonial government to help improve conditions in the Dutch Indies. Although this policy was intended to prepare the Dutch Indies to be self-governed, the so-called "self-governed" nation was still very much under the control of the colonial government. This was reflected in the purpose of the Dutch Colonial schools, which set Dewantara's schools apart. A consequence of the *Ethical Policy* was the introduction of Western education for a select group of locals. To a large extent, although individual teachers may have had a broader view of education, the Dutch schools functioned as instruments to train an elite group of natives to support the running of the colonial government (Furnivall, 1944; Rahardjo, 2013, p. 2). Thus, Dutch schools served to perpetuate colonial gains, where students learned to work in the service of the colonial government, instead of teaching them to think critically for themselves. By contrast, *Taman Siswa* schools were established to achieve perfection of human life, fulfilling both the body and soul's needs. Thus, the emphasis was on the development of the learners themselves. Therefore, unlike the Dutch selective education, *Taman Siswa* schools offered an inclusive education, opening their doors to anyone regardless of their background, believing that everyone has a right to education.

Furthermore, *Taman Siswa* schools taught self-sufficiency to their students, and therefore students learned the importance of making a living. However, the schools did not reduce the purpose of education to economic gains. Thus, *Taman Siswa* schools encompassed both intrinsic and instrumental values of education and to a certain extent, the concept of *Bildung* through self-realisation, as discussed in the first chapter. However, the Dutch schools emphasised education's instrumental value; a Dutch education was an instrument to get a job.

The second main difference was the teaching methods. *Taman Siswa* schools emphasised student-centred methods where teaching practices were adjusted to the students' condition. The schools provided holistic learning where students could develop their thoughts through creative, innovative, independent learning, and be open to any ideas, yet guided by their own culture. Students used their senses and their surroundings to process information and develop their capabilities critically. These capabilities will prepare them to fulfil the needs of their body and soul. It will also help them prepare for life as they learned that their actions should bring goodness to society. Overall, these methods put more emphasis on the *educere* (lead out) purpose of learning. On the other hand, the Dutch schools were very much teacher-centred, where the teacher had all the knowledge. Teachers passed on their knowledge to their students through rote learning. This method emphasised the *educare* (preserve knowledge) purpose of learning.

A third difference was the curriculum. The Dutch schools followed the Western curriculum, and the language used in the schools was Dutch. The schools were indifferent to local culture. Taman Siswa schools, however, acknowledged the importance of local culture and incorporated this into their lessons. Lessons were taught in Javanese, and the local culture and local wisdom were important elements of learning in the schools. By engaging with local music, dance, and visual arts, students developed a sense of their own culture (McVey, 1967, p. 134).

A fourth major difference was funding. Since Taman Siswa schools used their curriculum and did not follow the Dutch colonial curriculum, the schools were considered to be "not meeting the colonial government's standard". As a result, they did not receive any subsidy from the colonial government. This contrasted with Dutch Schools, which received colonial government funding. McVey (1967) argued that Taman Siswa purposely ran a self-sufficient institution so as not to adhere to the colonial government's agenda. In doing so it demonstrated the capacity of the local people to provide for themselves (p. 134).

When looking at these four differences, it can be argued that Dewantara had a progressive way of looking at the purpose of education. He was able to build a modern system ahead of his time. While other thinkers influenced him, he made the system unique to Indonesia by incorporating the local culture and local knowledge. When Indonesia proclaimed its independence from the Dutch in 1945, Dewantara was appointed as the first Minister of Education. His concept of *tut wuri handayani* was included in the Ministry's logo, which is still used up to the present day. While many of his views were not reflected in the education system of the independent Indonesian state, the Indonesian government has recently re-introduced two of the education concepts proposed by Dewantara: "*Pendidikan karakter*" (character education) and "*merdeka belajar*" (independent learning).

Education in Present-Day Indonesia

In looking at education in present-day Indonesia, we need to start with the 2003 Law no.20 on the National Education System. This act sets out the foundation of education in the country. In article 1, part 1, education is defined as a "*conscious and well-planned effort in creating a learning environment and learning process so that learners will be able to develop their full potential for acquiring spiritual and religious strengths, develop self-control, personality, intelligence, morals and a noble character and skills that one needs for him/herself, for the community, for the nation, and the country*". From this definition, we can see that the country (at least rhetorically) first emphasises spiritual learning, followed by the intrinsic value of education, and only then the instrumental value of education. The combination of spiritual and practical (physical needs) resonates with Dewantara's concept of fulfilling both body and soul's needs.

This definition of education, which includes spiritual education, is arguably one reason why religion is taught in all schools in Indonesia, including non-religious

schools. Students learn about their religion from primary school until they finish secondary school. However, students only learn about their own religion. Thus, during religion class, students go to their respective religion sessions. We can criticise this practice for focusing on exclusivity; learning one religion only. Such a practice can create a more segregated society as a result of students knowing very little about other religions. One might argue that students should learn all religions to build a sense of understanding of other religions. Currently, the seven government-approved religions are taught in civics classes in schools in Indonesia. However, the lessons only touch the surface, such as learning about the other religions' holy book, their places of worship, and their religious celebrations.

The definition of education also mentions the importance of building moral character. In 2010, the then Minister of Education, Mohammad Nuh (2009–2014), suggested an education curriculum based on character building (known as the 2013 curriculum). Teaching good character should go hand in hand with conveying subject knowledge. For example, when doing a science experiment, teachers allow their students to fail and continue to re-do their experiments until they get it right. By doing so, not only do they teach the knowledge but also the value of persistence and honesty. Instead of manipulating data or cheating to get the correct result, students are taught that it is acceptable to make a mistake and the importance of never giving up (Putra, 2007). This character-building curriculum is in line with Dewantara's aforementioned concepts of *tri ngo* and *budi pekerti.*

Character education is one of the priorities for the Indonesian government. During his first term as president (2015–2019), President Joko Widodo included character building in his nine strategic programmes, known as the *nawa cita* (nine aspirations). Programme number eight encouraged a character revolution by restructuring the national curriculum to emphasise civic and moral education, such as teaching Indonesian history and patriotism. The Ministry of Education (2010) identified 80 values associated with character building. These values are classified into five categories, which are character in relation to: (1) God, (2) Oneself, (3) Others, (4) The environment, and (5) Nationalism. This resonates with Dewantara's purpose of education, which is to achieve the perfection of human life by fulfilling both body and soul's needs. The teaching of nationalism also echoes Dewantara's belief that Indonesians should have a strong foundation of their own culture before critically accepting any assimilation of a new culture.

On paper, Indonesia's contemporary character-building curriculum seems to provide direction for teachers. However, in practice, the integration of character building in the curriculum is challenging to implement. One reason is that the Indonesian curriculum is burdened with too many modules to learn. Another is the role of an ongoing ranking process (Triatmanto, 2010). For example, secondary school students in Indonesia must learn at least twelve modules per semester and pass a school exam or national exam for each of the modules in order to graduate. Furthermore, every semester, students are ranked based on their grades. Thus, the students' primary objective is not to develop their character but rather to get good grades.

Similarly, many teachers do not see the importance of character education because it does not feature in the national examinations and it does not have any weight in

deciding whether a student can graduate or not (Wahyu, 2011, p. 144). Here, the purpose of education is reduced to achieving good grades. Students and teachers focus on grades because of the nature of competition in contemporary society. The education system in Indonesia has been overshadowed by the need to compete globally, with the purpose of education tending to be reduced to creating high levels of "human capital". Thus, it can be argued that the traces of Dutch Colonial school (which emphasised human capital), can still be clearly seen in present Indonesia.

This view has been further entrenched during President Joko Widodo's second term (2019–present). This may have been influenced by the background of key policymakers. Both the president and the current Minister of Education, Nadiem Makarim are known for their entrepreneurial background. Joko Widodo built a successful furniture business. Harvard graduate Nadiem Makarim founded Gojek, the first Indonesian technology company to be a "unicorn" company (valued over $1 billion). Despite his lack of experience in the education sector, Nadiem explained that he understands employment challenges that stand ahead of the younger generation in Indonesia. The president believes that his background in technology will help to bring innovations to Indonesian education (Yanuar, 2019).

While acknowledging the importance of moral education, both President Joko Widodo and Nadiem Makarim put more emphasis on the production of human capital. Both pushed for secondary and higher education curriculums that are tailored to follow the market demand. The Ministry of Education and Culture (MoEC) proposed several education policies to support the President's strategic programme. These include the revitalisation of vocational schools to fulfil the demand for skilled workers and the proposal to teach computing technology and coding in schools. The MoEC also pushed for a "link and match" curriculum that both educators and practitioners create. In this curriculum, an internship is an essential part of education, and the main objective is to ensure that the graduates will be employed upon completing their education (Ministry of Education & Culture, 2020a). With these policies, the Indonesian government hopes to compete with other countries in the globalised knowledge economy.

Reducing the purpose of education to economic gain does not necessarily correlate with building a national identity, engaging with local culture, and promoting human flourishing as suggested by Dewantara. Instead, it focuses on how to compete globally. To a certain extent, parents see learning English as more important than learning local languages. Parents who can afford it prefer to send their children to international schools instead of a local school. This is because English is seen as a language that brings opportunities with a brighter future for their children. Diniyah's (2017) study shows that parents acknowledge the importance of learning English as early as possible to help them to achieve success (p. 33).

In practice, the government's approach to education has strongly emphasised the human capital perspective; it sees education as an investment that yields an economic gain. Once again, the purpose of education is reduced to its instrumental value, framed in terms of preparing for global competition, and getting a better job, and better income. If a century ago, such a reductive framework was applied by the Dutch colonial government, today it is done by the Indonesian state, supported by

international institutions that continue to promote a neoliberal agenda. Thus, it can be argued that there are some traces of the approach of Dutch colonial schools in present-day Indonesia.

This way of looking at education is a backward step from Dewantara's approach. Currently, the instrumental value of education is heavily emphasised, and education is tailored to what the market needs. This market is shaped by global power structures. With this approach, Indonesia is likely to always follow the standards set by the global power instead of creating standards based on Indonesian values. As Dewantara suggested, there should be a balance between the instrumental and intrinsic values of education. Education should aim to make a person whole, both body and soul. Education should encompass self-realisation, as suggested in the concept of *Bildung*, rather than merely following market demand. As mentioned before, according to Dewantara there are three centres of education which are family, school, and environment. Unfortunately, in the present Indonesian education, these three centres rarely appear to work together, with teachers having the sole burden of educating the students (Wijayanti, 2018, p. 90). Teachers still take a central role in the learning process.

Efforts to implement character education in Indonesia highlight the challenges of putting philosophical concepts into practice in schools. For the process to succeed, everyone needs to have the same understanding of what is the purpose of education. This includes the government, teachers, students, parents, and other stakeholders. This is not an easy task because each stakeholder will have their own interests to serve.

A recent MoEC's policy of *merdeka belajar* (independent learning) tries to involve various stakeholders. I see this policy as another attempt to draw on Dewantara's philosophy of education. To shape the *merdeka belajar* policy, Nadiem Makarim has been helped by, among others, the *Pusat Studi Pendidikan dan Kebijakan* (Center of Education Study and Policy) founded by Indonesian educator, Najelaa Shihab. Shihab has been voicing the need for independent learning, not only for students but also for teachers, since 2014 through her *Komunitas Guru Belajar* (Teachers Learning Community) (Shihab & Komunitas Guru Belajar, 2017).

The first change of MoEC's policy is the removal of national exams for all levels of education in Indonesia starting in 2021. The national exams will be replaced by the national assessment and character survey (Ministry of Education & Culture, 2020b). The assessment and survey will be done not at the end of the academic year but in the middle of the academic year. The aim is to give a picture of the students' condition so that the teachers can help the students further improve their learning process. Unlike national exams, the assessment and survey are not to be used to determine enrolment for subsequent educational levels. The new policy stated that student enrolment would be based on their residential zone. The school in that zone will accept anyone from the same zone.

Other policy changes include increasing school operational assistance funds and the freedom given to schools to design their own teaching practices that suit their students. The government is now promoting the *sekolah penggerak* (activator school) programme where schools are encouraged to create a holistic environment for students to learn to become creative, independent individuals with critical thinking,

good morals, and a sense of nationalism, promoting unity at a national level but also globally. To build this holistic environment, school principals and teachers will work together with parents, local communities, and community leaders. This echoes Dewantara's *tri pusat Pendidikan* concept.

In addition, in 2020, the government started an *organisasi penggerak* (activator organisation) programme that provided financial support to selected local education organisations. These organisations provided teacher training and other education training programmes based on proven best practices and research (Ministry of Education & Culture, 2021). However, this programme was met with opposition from various educational institutions as it was deemed to lack transparency. The government has since stopped the programme, though it has indicated that it may be offered again next year with better scrutiny.

The impact of the *merdeka belajar* programmes proposed by the government is yet to be seen as some of them only take place in 2021. However, it is clear that the government has made some moves towards a modern version of Dewantara's philosophy in present-day schools in Indonesia. This shows that his philosophies are still very much relevant in today's society.

I believe that revisiting Dewantara's philosophy will help recalibrate Indonesia's approach to education, by moving from a heavily instrumental approach to one that involves a more balanced combination of intrinsic and instrumental purposes. However, I also acknowledge that it is not an easy task to bring philosophical concepts of education into practice. This is because in order for the policy to work, all stakeholders need to be on the same page in defining the purpose of education.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have considered education's purpose from the vantage point of three lenses: Ki Hadjar Dewantara's philosophy of education as reflected in his *Taman Siswa* schools, Dutch colonial-era schools, and schooling in contemporary Indonesia. By doing so, I have shown that there have been changes to the purpose of education in Indonesia. Initially, the purpose of formal education in Indonesia was to serve the colonial government. This purpose was clearly embedded in the Dutch schools. This was relevant to the concept of "educare" for creation of good workers. This concept employs teacher-centred learning whereby teachers are the sources of knowledge and rote learning, while students are expected to learn and memorise the lesson. The establishment of *Taman Siswa* brought a new dimension to Indonesia's education. Dewantara's purpose of education was leaning towards the concept of "educere", where education is seen as a tool to prepare learners. It allows students to develop their critical thinking, creativity, and curiosity. In this model of education, the teacher's role is to facilitate learning. Dewantara's schools encompassed various values such as intrinsic value, extrinsic value, and to a certain extent, the concept of *Bildung*.

The contemporary Indonesian education system has increasingly returned to the "educare" purpose which emphasises the instrumental value of education. If the Dutch schools served the colonial government's purposes, Indonesian schools today serve the present government's agenda. Similar situations appear to be rather widespread in other countries that have faced the aftermath of colonisation, which is why decolonisation of education is both a pressing concern and a particularly challenging endeavour today (Hutchinson et al., 2023; Moncrieffe, 2022). In this chapter, I have also discussed some recent educational reforms in Indonesia which offer a glimmer of hope that some of Dewantara's philosophy may be brought back into the present education system.

In this chapter, I have also argued that there is a need to revisit Dewantara's philosophy of education to help re-balance the purpose of educating young Indonesians. I firmly believe that Indonesia needs to look back at its pre- and post-colonial history to recreate its own identity. However, I also acknowledge that there are also some practical challenges to implementing Dewantara's philosophy in Indonesian schools.

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Sikolohiyang Pilipino: Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines

Czarecah Tuppil Oropilla, Jean Canino Guadaña, and Charla Rochella Santiago-Saamong

Abstract This chapter offers a brief introduction to Sikolohiyang Pilipino (Filipino psychology) and its proponent Virgilio Enriquez. Afterward, it delves into a discussion of how Sikolohiyang Pilipino can impact both educational institutions and informal institutions such as in family and community settings. The use of Sikolohiyang Pilipino as a lens through which one can view education can deepen one's understanding of educational concepts within Filipino culture. The chapter focuses on the case of the Philippines and presents the importance of the use of philosophical arguments associated with diverse cultural perspectives to challenge existing biases in research. Emphasis is also placed on the need to be mindful in the process of applying concepts that predominate in one culture to another.

Keywords Intergenerational · Learning · Engagements · Program · Research · Filipino · Culture · Indigenous psychology

Introduction

For a long time and even up until this point, Western educational philosophies have dominated learning arenas. Prominent names such as John Dewey, Lev Vygotsky, Jean Piaget, Friedrich Froebel, Jerome Bruner, Albert Bandura, and Howard Gardner—among many others—float to the surface when educational theories and discourses are taught, discussed, or applied to practice. Seldom are the opportunities when the limelight is placed on non-Western proponents who could potentially offer culturally appropriate and nuanced understanding and insights to learning and development within a specific culture. Today, amid the growing influence of a recent intellectual movement called "decolonization", there is a new awareness of the

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need to respectfully examine educational traditions and theories from other parts of the world (Aman, 2018; Moncrieffe, 2022; Reagan, 2018). In this chapter, we aim to highlight/exemplify the Philippine context and discuss *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (SP), which is the work of a Filipino psychologist named Dr. Virgilio Enriquez. While SP was not conceptualized as an educational philosophy, Dr. Enriquez' work has implications for both formal and informal learning settings in the Philippines. This chapter considers the applications of SP, expanding on a journal article first published in the *Nordic Journal of Comparative and International Education* (Oropilla & Guadana, 2021).

The chapter will begin with a discussion of the genesis of Sikolohiyang Pilipino, by describing Virgilio Enriquez' life and legacy to contextualize SP's provenance before discussing the principles and concepts on which SP is built. Further, we will offer a discussion on the application of SP in formal and informal educational settings, as well as the possibilities of its application as a guiding force for pedagogical practice.

Genesis of Sikolohiyang Pilipino

Virgilio Enriquez' Life and Legacy

Virgilio G. Enriquez is considered the father of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Filipino psychology) (Fig. 1) (Navarro, 2013). His views were clearly influenced by various events that he encountered throughout the course of his life.

Early in his life, Enriquez's father instilled in him the importance of communicating and expressing himself in his mother tongue—Filipino (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). Enriquez began his academic career as a professor of psychology at the University of the Philippines, Diliman, in 1963; there, he used the Filipino language as a medium of instruction (Demeterio et al., 2017), an unusual practice in a university patterned after the American educational system. Enriquez also urged his students to use Filipino in their writings to further the growth of the national language and hopefully discover important Filipino ethnic concepts (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000).

Enriquez taught in the field of Psychology at different universities in the Philippines from 1963 (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). After being awarded a doctoral degree in Social Psychology from Northwestern University in Illinois (Demeterio et al., 2017), he returned to the University of the Philippines in 1971. While he brought back foreign theoretical and practical knowledge to his country, Enriquez did not impose these onto his students and colleagues; rather, he chose to be more Filipino-oriented in both his research and teaching in psychology, having prepared to teach psychology in Filipino even before his return from Northwestern University (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 51). He began establishing the

principles of "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*" (Filipino Psychology) and would later organize the First National Conference on Filipino Psychology in 1975 (Demeterio et al., 2017).

(Particulars of) Sikolohiyang Pilipino

The development of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (SP), also called "Sikolohiyang Mapagpalaya" (Liberation Psychology), could also be seen as part of a worldwide movement in the 1960s that was a response to local neocolonial formations linked to capitalist globalization from Western countries (San Juan, 2006). Despite resistance, the Philippines was under Spanish rule from the late 1500s to 1898. It was then annexed by the United States through the Treaty of Paris and briefly occupied by Japan during the Second World War. It shares a colonial history with other countries situated within the region (i.e. Cambodia, Laos, Indonesia, Malaysia, Myanmar, Singapore, and Timor) that have for a time been under the rule of Western countries and Japan (Cotterell, 2014). From the Philippines' long history of being colonized and ruled by Western thought and systems, the emergence of SP represented a path toward an indigenous and decolonized psychology from within, despite Enriquez's education and training in the USA.

Fig. 1 Virgilio G. Enriquez[1]

[1] With permission granted on behalf of Dr. Virgilio Enriquez through the Secretariat of *Pambansang Samahan sa Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (National Association for Sikolohiyang Pilipino, Inc.).

SP is a deliberate research framework anchored in Filipino thought and experience, as understood from a Filipino perspective, based on indigenous Filipino culture and history (Enriquez, 1975; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000; San Juan, 2006). It is a response to centuries of Filipino everyday life, community, personality, and behaviors studied, analyzed, interpreted, and judged in the light of Western theories of dubious relevance, which had arguably led to distorted and inaccurate understandings of Filipinos (Enriquez, 1975; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). Hence, SP is "designed to be a psychology of, for, and by Filipinos, one appropriate and applicable to dealing with health, agriculture, art, mass media, religion, and other spheres of everyday life" (San Juan, 2006, p. 54). In this sense, SP could be considered a theoretical framework that maps out the Filipino values system with cultural and historical roots manifested in practices, traditions, and behaviors in everyday life.

Central to SP is the use of national language in the study of the Filipino psyche: "what makes *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* different is its intense pursuit of developing the indigenous national culture and its program of using the indigenous language in its conferences, research, teaching, and publication" (Enriquez, 1992, p. 57). In the study of SP, researchers unravel Filipino characteristics and explain them through the eyes of the native Filipino (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 51). As such, the promotion of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, as part of decolonization of psychology and other fields in the Philippines, may be understood as having a four-pronged aim: (1) it pushes forth the development of local identity and national consciousness; (2) it encourages social awareness and involvement; (3) it maintains a focus on national and ethnic cultures and languages, and (4) it creates the basis for development and implementation of culturally appropriate methodologies and strategies in fields that have been dominated by Western theories, such as health and medicine practices, mass media, art, education, agriculture, religion, among others (Enriquez, 1992).

Be that as it may, SP has received its share of critiques. Clemente (2011) reviewed three decades worth of literature involving SP. In the review, noted criticisms of SP were that it was "based largely on knowledge about the publishers of the paper and the affiliations of the authors" (p. 2). Ong (2016) also expressed concern that SP-based research appears to thus far have done little to critique gender issues such as patriarchy and to problematize social inequalities and unjust systemic social structures within Philippine society. Another critique is that SP needs to further develop discourse centering on important issues such as multiple conflicts within Philippine society, in addition to considerations of environmental, geopolitical, and historical factors in explaining societal fragmentation to fully encompass the dynamic totality and diversity of Filipino society (San Juan, 2006). Furthermore, in her analysis of SP, Sta. Maria (in Demeterio et al., 2017) suggested that while SP emphasized that theories and concepts are tied to culture, it still needs to continually examine its methods of seeing psychological phenomena within a given culture. In many ways, SP is still in its infancy stage which warrants further validations and clarifications.

As a formalized and intentional indigenous psychology applicable also to other disciplines, Enriquez identified the following concepts as the subject matter of study to understand people's conscience: *kalooban*, or the study of emotions and feelings, *kamalayan* or consciousness, including both emotive and cognitive experiences or

experiences knowledge; *ulirat* or awareness of one's immediate surroundings; *isip*, referring to knowledge, information, and understanding; *diwa*, including one's habits and behavior; and *kaluluwa* or psyche, which translates to the soul of a people (Enriquez, 1974). Through this work, Enriquez envisioned *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* as an "interdisciplinary humanistic-scientific endeavor" (San Juan, 2006).

Through his work, Enriquez highlighted the relational and interactional nature of Filipinos through the concept of *kapwa*, which can be viewed as the core concept of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Clemente, 2011; Enriquez, 1978; 1994; Yacat, 2013; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). He conceptualized *kapwa* as a recognition of shared identity and what he referred to as "the unity of self and others" (Enriquez, 1978, p. 11). It is a concept that, if translated to the English language, does not encapsulate the true meaning in the Filipino context, as it is reduced to the word "others" that usually connotes a separation of self from the other which is the complete opposite of the concept of *kapwa.* Enriquez argues that *kapwa* starts from the self and not from the presence of others:

> A person starts having kapwa not so much because of a recognition of status given him by others but more because of his awareness of shared identity. The ako (ego/ [self]) and the iba-sa-akin (others) are one and the same in kapwa psychology: Hindi ako iba sa aking kapwa (I am no different from others). Once ako starts thinking of himself as separate from kapwa, the Filipino "self" gets to be individuated in the Western sense and, in effect, denies the status of kapwa to the other. By the same token, the status of kapwa is also denied to the self. (Enriquez, 1992, p. 43)

As such, the concept of *kapwa* posits that Filipino relations focus on "sentiments of agreement, felt affinities and other bonds of solidarity" (San Juan, 2006, p. 56), and notably, that it illustrates relations that are forged by treating other people as equals with full regard for their worth and dignity (San Juan, 2006). To further emphasize kapwa as the core of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, Virgilio conceptualized an elaborate system of values deriving from kapwa, which includes the Filipino values *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude rather than filial piety) earlier linked with intergenerational relations in the Philippines. He has also associated the core of kapwa with *paninindigan*, conviction or commitment, interspersed with *paggalang at pagmamalasakit* (respect and concern), *pagtulong at pagdamay* (helping), *pagpuno sa kakulangan* (understanding limitations), *pakikiramdam* (sensitivity and regard for others), and *gaan ng loob* (rapport and acceptance). We offer a visual representation of *kapwa* in Fig. 2.

In this figure, we tried to capture the concept of *kapwa* as being the union of the self and others, which is the core of Filipino values. In this figure, one will notice that we have made use of the Venn diagram to also visually show that the concept of *kapwa* recognizes that there is a part of ourselves that is not part of others, but that a person is never just by themselves but always merged with others. There are more values that stem from the core that is *kapwa* but in this figure we have only included the values mentioned in the previous paragraph as examples.

In unfolding the concept of *kapwa*, Enriquez (1978) reflected on the different levels of interaction, and the intricacies one engages with when relating to other people:

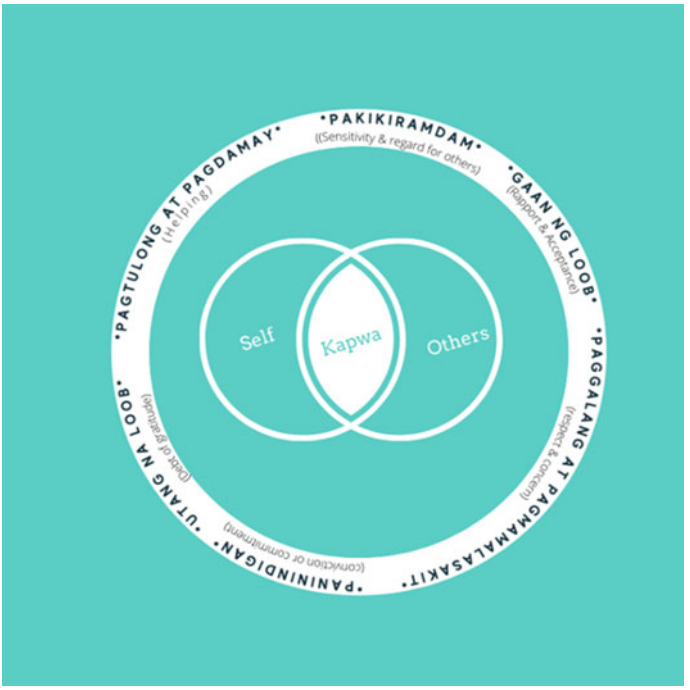

Fig. 2 Kapwa

> There are two categories of *kapwa*: the *Ibang-Tao* (outsider) and the *Hindi-Ibang-Tao* ("one-of-us"). In Filipino social interaction, one is immediately "placed" into one of these two categories; and how one is placed determines the level of interaction one is shown. For example, if one is regarded as ibang-tao, the interaction can range from *pakikitungo* (transaction/civility with), to *pakikisalamuha* (interaction with), to *pakikilahok* (joining/participating), to *pakikibagay* (in-conformity with/in accord with), and to *pakikisama* (being along with). If one is categorized as *hindi-ibang-tao*, then you can expect *pakikipagpalagayang-loob* (being in-rapport/understanding/ acceptance with), or *pakikisangkot* (getting involved), or the highest level of *pakikiisa* (being one with). (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000, p. 56)

Enriquez came to realize through his work on Filipino concepts and values that Filipinos are not only concerned with maintaining smooth interpersonal relationships, rather they are intent on treating the other person as *kapwa,* a fellow human being—fully summed up in the term *pakikipagkapwa* (Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000), which could also be understood as human concern and interaction as one with others (San Juan, 2006).

SP's Impact on Formal Educational Institutions

Since its conception in the 1970s, *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* has ignited discussions and propagation of research in psychology that is rooted in the context of the Filipino people. Its permeation in the field of education is also to be expected, as the global spread of psychology typically includes integration of psychological principles into educational training programs and curricula as a means to perpetuate and enrich educational professions (Adair, 2006). Specifically for the Philippine setting, *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* is offered as a separate course or is included as a topic in Psychology classes for both graduate and undergraduate psychology programs, both within and outside of the University of the Philippines (the place of origin of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*). The revision of the Philippine basic education system under the Republic Act 10533 in 2012 also enabled students at the senior high school level who choose the Humanities and Social Science track to attend courses on "Discipline and Ideas in the Social Sciences". Among the topics in this course include indigenizing the social sciences, with *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* as one of the specific topics (Department of Education, 2022).

The establishment and growth of *Pambansang Samahan sa Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (PSSP), which is an organization founded by Enriquez in 1975 also paved the way for propagation of SP in different sectors of the society as an interdisciplinary and Filipino-centered perspective and methodology (PSSP, n.d.). With the growing interest in psychology that is rooted in the Philippine context, in 2007, the PSSP also held the first all-psychology student congress, known as "PSYnergy" which has since been held annually to allow students to present their papers. A student arm of the PSSP called *TATSULOK (Alyansa ng mga Mag-aaral sa Sikolohiyang Pilipino)*, has also been established to create a bridge among students in propagating the principles of SP (PSSP, n.d.). Currently, the TATSULOK has 43 student member organizations from universities across the Philippines (PSSP, n.d).

Undeniably, SP continually impacts and elevates the scholarship of psychology in the Philippine educational institutions. The development of local books and resources is one of the manifestations that psychology is in the "authochthonization" stage or that "*refers to the processes leading to the emergence of a self-perpetuating discipline independent of its imported source*" (Adair, 2006, p. 472). Recently, two volumes of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* handbooks were published as a resource material for Filipino psychology perspectives and methodology (Pe-Pua, 2018) and its applications in various fields including developmental psychology, health and religious psychology, psychology of language, and social psychology (Pe-Pua, 2019).

SP's Impact on Education in Family and Community Settings Under the Context of Intergenerational Engagements

Interactions among and between generations happen organically on a daily basis and are part of everyday lived experiences. Such interactions are crucial to learning, a social process that aids the development of higher psychological functions (Vygotsky, 1998). Hake (2017) expounds on this by describing the process of learning as the "social organization of deliberate, systematic, and sustained learning activities" wherein learners are organized, by themselves or by others, for transmission or acquisition of knowledge (p. 26). This furthers the understanding of education through expanding learning opportunities beyond formal school institutions while also situating intergenerational learning within the concept of lifelong learning (Boström & Schmidt-Hertha, 2017).

An emerging topic in different research arenas (i.e. gerontology, education, and pedagogy), intergenerational learning occurs among generations in both informal settings and formal settings with formal, non-formal, and informal activities (Hake, 2017; Oropilla, 2021). For the purposes of this chapter, intergenerational *engagements* refer to informal and non-formal intergenerational learning activities that involve various cultural and community practices occurring in informal settings such as gardens or community public spaces. In contrast, formal initiatives that bring younger children and older adults together refer to intergenerational *programs.*

Decentering Intergenerational Learning

Western colonizers used education as a tool for territorial expansion and foreign missions; in addition, it was used to share economic, social, and religious ideologies leading toward cultural exchange (Rogoff, 2003). Akinnaso (1992) argued that while this may illustrate that formal schooling had Western roots, schooling was already present in the local communities prior to colonization; Western colonizers had failed to acknowledge the variable nature of education and failed to recognize that it could be organized in a variety of ways and for many different aims (p. 69). Already in place in the Philippines during precolonial times were forms of religious schooling, apprenticeship training, and initiation lessons through formal and informal learning, imparting wisdom about practical and specialized knowledge (Akinnaso, 1992).

Looking into the definition of intergenerational learning, one can argue that these were examples of intergenerational engagements as there was a lack of segregation into age-specific institutions in communities (Chudacoff, 1992). Participation in community practices and traditions enabled children to gain practical knowledge with peers and community members (Rogoff, 2003). Similarly, elders, or members of the community that were older, often served as knowledge transmitters or teachers/mentors; they held high positions in their communities which facilitated

their transfer of knowledge and wisdom to those who needed it (Akinnaso, 1992). Transmission of practical and specialized knowledge to younger people occurred during informal everyday discussions or exchanges as older adults and younger people participated together in community ceremonies and meetings (Akinnaso, 1992).

The reduced role of the family and community in learning and education came alongside the conception and realization of age-ordering of societies through national registries (Akinnaso, 1992; Rogoff, 2003); a similar phenomenon experienced in non-Western countries with the propagation of age-specific institutions for formal learning and education (Mehta & Thang, 2006). Nevertheless, a strong sense of community and family interdependence persists in Asian families (Mehta & Thang, 2006) with the data from some Asian countries indicating that the responsibility for the care of younger children and older adults still largely remains with the immediate family (Thang et al., 2003). This means that to this day, this remains as the prevalent situation in many households in the Philippines. Further, researchers have found that when concepts such as intergenerational learning and programming are discussed, it is primarily understood in the context of the family social unit (Thang et al., 2003).

In order to fully grasp this phenomenon, it is necessary to explore what constitutes a common Filipino view of intergenerational learning, which has roots in *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Filipino psychology) concepts and values.

Intergenerational Learning in the Philippines

In their paper examining intergenerational programs in Asia, Thang, Kaplan, Henkin (2003) made the supposition that "although intergenerational programming as a tool to meet human needs, build community, solve social problems, and so forth has gradually been recognized in North America and Europe, so far, the concept of intergenerational programming seems to receive little scholarly attention in this part of the world" (pp. 52–53). In the Philippines, there has been a tendency to emphasize the family unit, as strong family ties are perceived as an asset to the establishment of intergenerational programs (Cabigon, 2002 in Thang et al., 2003, p. 65). Even as the Western concept of learning and education was firmly set in place across recent generations, learning within the family is still given high regard (Rogoff, 2003). While many different contexts exist within Philippine society, the Filipino family unit remains widely considered as the cornerstone of social relations and identity (Root, 2005, p. 322). The Filipino family is the focal point for cultural values, where knowledge and learning are transmitted—hence where *Bildung*, herein understood as cultural self-formation, develops with certain conditions and mechanisms for individuals to act, be, do and think (Ødegaard & White, 2016) and participate in social practices and institutions of culture (Good & Garrison, 2007). *Bildung*, a concept that originated from Europe, has parallels in the Filipino context, which Rogoff (2003) has linked to learning by being integrated within a community setting—cultural formation through everyday habitual participation. It is within the family

that young Filipino children first learn from elderly relatives—always intergenerational in nature as multi-generational households are commonplace (Thang et al., 2003; Root, 2005). This necessitates an understanding of intergenerational learning as part of the *Bildung* process. This is something that Root (2005) emphasized in her chapter on understanding Filipino families, where she discussed cultural nuances passed on within families, particularly via therapy programs. Although young children attend age-specific institutions, it is within the family that Filipino children first learn the complexities of society—social dynamics within and outside their kin, how to respond appropriately to people depending on their status and age, how to communicate, what to expect from people and institutions, and how to maintain social relations among others (Root, 2005). Traditionally, older adults are expected to impart knowledge and wisdom in addition to providing financial, material, and emotional support (Marquez, 2019, p. 163). Younger generations, on the other hand, reciprocate and show gratitude by taking care of the older generations, whether by providing resources (Marquez, 2019, p. 164) or new knowledge necessary for adaptation in changing times (Ogena, 2019, p. 143). This traditional view presents intergenerational learning as a series of exchanges that occur over time in not just a unidirectional transfer. This creates a ripple effect that endures for generations, even in recent years when there have been changes in demographics and family constellations brought about by industrialization and Western influences. In this light, the Filipino values *utang na loob* (debt of gratitude) and *respeto sa matatanda* (respect for the elderly) could easily be misconstrued as filial piety, a concept whereby young people are taught to respect and care for their parents and grandparents in old age—suggesting a hierarchy of relations:

> The Filipino value of 'Utang-na-loob' or gratitude is most appropriately applied to the gratitude of children to their parents, which includes expectations that parents will live with their children when old age comes. From the viewpoint of the elderly, the living arrangement may be a realization of their expected benefits from having children. Assistance in old-age is one of the most important values attached to children. (Thang et al., 2003, p. 57)

Such an illustration of intergenerational learning in the Philippines situates it within everyday life contexts, an informal educational setting rather than an institutionalized program. Intergenerational relations can also be viewed as a dialogue between generations, as explored in a media review of a Filipino song (Oropilla, 2020). Rather than merely a general description of cultural tendencies, it is also important to understand how these concepts are formally promoted from within the culture being examined (Oropilla & Ødegaard, 2021). This is precisely what Enriquez (1975) pushed for as he initiated *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*.

Sikolohiyang Pilipino and Intergenerational Learning

In many Asian countries, including the Philippines, cultural values underscore that the well-being of the family inevitably contributes to the well-being and the happiness of

the individual, and might even be interpreted as suggesting "the welfare of the family is valued over that of the individual" (Root, 2005, p. 322). Thus, in the cultural context of the Philippines, *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* could be the means to further understand the findings of Thang et al. (2003) focusing on intergenerational learning, engagements, and programs in the Philippines, as it is firmly weaved with cultural values that need to be understood in their entirety and intricacy.

Although SP is now well established as a framework for understanding Filipino behaviors and experiences, few academic texts demonstrate its applications in education. One such attempt discusses the emergence of interpersonal values during transgression in teaching Filipino psychology and values education in university students (Rungduin et al., 2014). Rungduin and colleagues used the concept of *kapwa,* the implications of relationships thereby formed, and the value of forgiveness to map out teaching the two subject courses. Another such attempt focuses on the integration of the concepts of SP and Filipino teachers' effective delivery in their classes with the aim of developing an instrument to measure teaching effectiveness and investigate how students evaluate charisma of a classroom teacher (Torio & Cabrillas-Torio, 2016). While these attempts focus on characterizing learning in formal and institutional settings, these do not relate to intergenerational learning, highlighting a gap in the pool of literature. In putting together intergenerational learning and *Sikolohiyang Pilipino*, we highlight possibilities of using a local and indigenous lens to understand the dynamics of intergenerational learning and to inform Western-centric literature of considerations when designing intergenerational engagements and programs. This necessitates recognition of local voices and perspectives from within the culture being investigated.

The Filipino value of *utang na loob* (gratitude) helps explain why formal intergenerational programs as conceptualized by "the West" and located within age-specific institutions are not popular in the Philippines, particularly homes for older people or in other age-based institutions. One reason includes the stigma associated with the placement older adults in elderly homes (McBride, 2006). For older adults in the Philippines, dwelling in a nursing home evokes feelings of abandonment by their family members (De Guzman et al., 2012). Caring for family members is "a part of the very fabric of the Philippine society" and failure to provide for needs and resources is culturally frowned upon, seen as shameful (*hiya*) and lacking in gratitude (*walang utang na loob*) (Badana & Andel, 2018), while to engage in intergenerational learning within the family is *malaking utang na loob* (great gratitude). The value of *utang na loob* brings to light social relations that are built on reciprocity, and a sense of faithfully investing in and returning of favors, which even the next generation honors and respects (Enriquez, 1977; Pe-Pua & Protacio-Marcelino, 2000). This explains the prevalence of multi-generational households in the Philippines (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2015), arguably the setting where most Filipino intergenerational learning occurs. In addition, by having the concept *kapwa* at the core of Filipino relationships, SP highlights the feelings and emotions evoked by interactions thus moving beyond the traditional lessons and learning outcomes. Based on this knowledge, design of intergenerational engagements and programs for Filipino learners should place value

on how the initiatives make the participants *feel* throughout the whole process, rather than merely what the participants will learn.

Further, because intergenerational relationships and opportunities for intergenerational learning are woven into everyday lives in community and home settings in the Philippines, the dynamics are so complex that there is a considerable need for cross-sectoral studies that consider both formal and informal settings. Research that uses tenets of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* is recommended to unpack these complexities. One relevant approach will be to problematize key terminology and basic concepts, such as "intergenerational" in order to identify differences. In this case, the root word is "generation", pertaining to groups of people commonly sorted and categorized by age with a prefix that signifies a positionality, even hierarchy, with relationships between the root word and essentially pointing to one's relation and position to "*kapwa*". If one were to unpack the most common Filipino translation *salinlahi*, it is actually composed of two words: "*salin*", which means copy, transfer, or pour, and "*lahi*", which pertains to race, ethnicity, lineage, or ancestry. The combination of these terms could be translated into the duplication or transference of one's racial characteristics, lineage, or ancestry- a concept that could describe intergenerational learning through interactions. An alternative word that may be even more appropriate is "*saniblahi*", as "*sanib*" translates to overlapping, joining, or coalescing, which we find to be a most suitable concept for understanding intergenerational relations in the Philippines. This analysis does not signify an enormous breakthrough, but it is just the first step. Such reconceptualization of intergenerational relationships using a *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* lens could prove to be beneficial in planning and implementing culturally sensitive intergenerational programs that are more likely to thrive in the Filipino context.

SP as a Guiding Force for Pedagogical Practices

In this chapter, we sought to discuss SP and its potential for shaping educational practices in different settings. In summary of this chapter, we point toward several salient points:

1. Although not conceived as an educational philosophy, SP penetrates educational settings. SP's roots can be considered somewhat revolutionary as a response to the prevailing Western pedagogies of the time–looking back to the past and the present in order to move to the future. For Dr. Enriquez and the scholars propagating SP in institutional settings, SP is a revisiting and re-capturing of the essence of what it is to be a Filipino.
2. SP could be a useful approach to culturally sensitive and nuanced pedagogical practices–not just in formal institutions, but also in family and community settings. SP gives value to learning indigenous Filipino values, which are inevitably intertwined with other historical, political, and economic factors that govern societal institutions.

3. Lastly, we allude to SP as a driving force for decolonized pedagogical practices. Western theories and philosophies will likely always be part of the Philippine educational system but offer an addition to the non-Western educational philosophies and approaches to learning. This is not to suggest that there is underlying cultural ethnocentrism, that is, manifestations of tendencies to see one's cultural group or practices as superior to others (Reagan, 2018), but rather, to show that non-Western thought might often be overlooked or misinterpreted in favor of Western thought. This discourse on SP merely opens a discussion rooting in what Reagan (2018) identified as a seemingly false dichotomy of Western/non-Western thought from which emerges "an effective way of challenging and reforming racist and ethnocentric assumptions and biases" (Reagan, 2018, p. 10) by offering a space for non-Western thought.

Through this chapter, we articulate a space to understand education and learning as having cultural–historical groundings that necessitate both global and local interpretations, as well as the importance of examining cultural concepts within the societies being examined (Enriquez, 1975). This space warrants further exploration through research and conceptual work, but we believe it will prove to be a powerful addition to Filipino pedagogy.

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Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies

Le-Xuan Zhang and David G. Hebert

Abstract This chapter compares the personal backgrounds, educational practices, and political standpoints of two leading Asian philosophers from the twentieth century—Rabindranath Tagore from India and Hu Shih from China—on how education can be used to cultivate individual, social, and global development. The chapter begins with biographical details that led to the formation of their philosophies and activities and then compares diverse interpretations of their political standpoints in order to illustrate their educational intentions and practice. Further, the chapter considers three underexplored layers for the interpretation of Tagore and Hu Shih's respective educational visions in a broader domain. Specifically, balanced perspectives for a harmonious relationship between the individual and society as well as the fragmented culture and integrated world were endorsed by both educational theorists. We conclude that the two philosophers' intentions and contributions toward using education as individual cultivation and social development remain invaluable for today's new generation of educators.

Keywords Tagore · Hu Shih · China · India · Asian education · Twentieth century

Introduction

In 1924, a remarkable series of meetings occurred in Beijing between Asia's leading intellectuals: India's renowned poet, philosopher, and educationist Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) and the brilliant Chinese philosopher and educationist Hu Shih (1891–1962). While the details of this historic event were not captured on film, it is clear from personal journals that the meeting featured an enthusiastic exchange of ideas, due to the shared interests and mutual respect evident between these great

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thinkers. Now after a century has passed, we may in hindsight better understand the significance of Tagore and Hu, which continues to resonate through both their writings and the institutional outcomes of their leadership, as seen today in multiple Indian universities and institutes named after Tagore as well as the sustained success of both Peking University and Academia Sinica, which were led by Hu Shih.

Today the world is "flat" (Friedman, 2007), particularly in the sense that it is tightly interconnected and both globalized and *glocalized* by different regions and multiple cultures (Hebert & Rykowski, 2018; Roudometof, 2016). As such, living in the twenty-first century, with ever-growing attention to how globalization may support a sustainable and harmonious relationship between humans and the world, and how education may support this endeavor, becomes a vital concern (Samuel, 2010). In the recent past, an array of philosophical positions has globally impacted the direction of education, including *learner-centered education* to enhance students' autonomy and authority (Schweisfurth, 2013), the *authentic learning* approach for improving student insights through real-life problem-solving (Roach et al., 2018), and the *deep-learning* method for constructing different layers of meaning-making for students to process and analyze (LeCun et al., 2015). However, while many innovative educational approaches have gained attention for their direct benefits on students' psychological and cognitive development at an individual level, there is also a need to make education transformative for global civilization and societal development. In this regard, such policy documents as the OECD's (2018) *The Future of Education and Skills* and UNESCO's (2015) *Education 2030* recommend that students are to be educated to become a whole person, fulfilling their potential with equal opportunity to gain valuable competencies, and thereby to collectively forge a sustainable global community. To that end, across recent years it has become increasingly clear to educators worldwide that there is a need to *decolonize* curriculum, thereby ensuring that the traditional heritage and current ideas of non-Western peoples are fully included in a more globally just, intellectual robust, and sustainable form of education (Hutchinson et al., 2023; Qi, 2014).

To support deepened understanding of the antecedents to this educational vision and provide a unique perspective on past educators' efforts and influences, this chapter aims to introduce two influential Asian philosophers, Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) from India and Hu Shih (1891–1962) from China, who advocated the use of education for both national-political and social development. Their similar educational visions from a global perspective contain three layers of balance, which made them unique in their historical and geographical contexts, not only for promoting whole-person cultivation but also for their illuminating arguments toward further development of knowledge as a contribution to world civilization. Accordingly, this chapter first explores Tagore and Hu Shih's personal experiences related to the formation of their philosophical ideas and then illustrates how their educational intentions were transformed into practice. Next, it examines the different interpretations and debates regarding their educational standpoints. Three layers of balanced perspectives embodied in their philosophies will be explained in detail, with a discussion of their prospective implications for the decolonization and strengthening of education today.

Fig. 1 Rabindranath Tagore[1]

Genesis of Tagore's Vision for Education

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) was born into a wealthy, patriotic, and religious family in India (Fig. 1).

As the 14th child in his family, Tagore was immersed in an artistic environment of poets, musicians, playwrights, and novelists during his early years, as well as a patriotic atmosphere, as he learned Indian culture and literacy from his brothers and sisters (Bhattacharya, 2013; Kumar, 2015). Growing up with a father who constantly traveled for business and political activity, Tagore (2003) recalled that although his family embraced many foreign customs, actually "[in] its heart flames a national pride which has never flickered" (p. 56). As Tagore became one of the leading reformers of Bengali society and participated in the Indian vernacular movement, his father's strong patriotic sentiment profoundly influenced not only his own life but also that of his descendants (Tagore, 2003).

When Tagore was young, Indian society was experiencing a clash between two main socio-political forces: a pluralistic society combining Western modernity with the Indian tradition, and a long-existing caste system with strict barriers between different groups of people (Tagore, 2021). Under the British administration's national system, English was taught predominantly for communication and education in most schools rather than Indian local languages; however, Tagore attended both English

[1] Public domain image retrieved from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Rabindranath_Tagore_in_1909.jpg

and local school and showed strong interest in and great respect for the Bengali language and Indian culture (Jha, 1994; Kumar, 2015).

Different from other schoolboys, young Tagore withdrew from formal schooling and began a unique home school experience when he was 14. His creative mind and expressive passion grew rapidly during this period as he traveled with his father and brothers. Their encouragement of his reading, discovery, and self-reflection made him realize that "the main object of teaching is not to explain meanings, but to knock at the door of the mind" (Tagore, 2007, p. 32). Later, motivated by what he saw as increasing injustice and irrationality in Indian society, Tagore expressed his thoughts through writing Bengali poetry. The more positive feedback he received from the public, the more confidence he gained to write about his impressions. Tagore studied law at University College London, but would eventually become the most globally prominent South Asian writer of recent centuries, as a recipient of the Nobel Prize in literature in 1913, and author of the lyrics for the national anthems of both India and Bangladesh.

In 1892, in his first published essay on education, Tagore advocated for "Bengali as the medium of instruction," which he saw as "a first step in the direction of decolonizing education" (Moitra, 2015, p. 212). Tagore's indigenized education gave him strong concerns about the danger that increasing Westernization posed to India's local languages and cultures. His two stints living in London also increased his awareness that although Western cultures were valuable, all cultures were needed in the coming "age of co-ordination and co-operation" (Tagore, 2007, p. 44). Consequently, Tagore's desire to change education, based on his personal experience, ultimately led him to put his beliefs into direct action through school leadership (Bhattacharya, 2013; Jha, 1994).

On one side, Tagore believed that indigenous growth of culture requires both "freedom of self-expression" and "individuality of judgment." In his view, although the spread of English seemingly introduced Western civilization to Indian society, it actually also became an impediment for Indian people, not only for quickly adjusting their familiar surroundings with the unfamiliar language but also by posing increasing obstacles for young generations to preserve their cultural traditions (Tagore, 2007). With this conviction, Tagore began his involvement in the vernacular movement through his creative and philosophical writings. In an 1895 essay, he described the Bengali language as a neglected first wife who had been overshadowed by a wealthy second wife, English. Emphasizing the importance of the children born to the first wife, Tagore expressed concern that the children of the second wife might be stillborn (Lahiri, 2018). In 1917, he offered another metaphor to warn of the harm of prioritizing foreign languages while neglecting local heritage. In this story, Tagore compared "knowledge learning" as the process of "eating." To Tagore, the process of learning should be the same as digesting, since the taste of food begins with the first bite, and digestion proceeds all the way in order to end smoothly. However, if one studies only English instead of the local language in school, its unfamiliar spelling and grammar, and misinterpretations likely become problematic and cause a phenomenon resembling "choking and spluttering" in the digestive process (Tagore, 2003, p. 27). Consequently, Tagore wrote a large number of poems and songs in

Bengali for young generations throughout his life, seeking to rejuvenate attention to learning with indigenous culture and heritage (Kumar, 2015).

On the other hand, Tagore also realized that focusing solely on indigenized education would also limit students' understanding of the world. He considered the purpose of education to be the development of a community that unites individuals rather than creating geographical barrier between cultures. Tagore therefore established his own schools: Santiniketan in 1901 and Visva-Bharati in 1918. In his schools, the curriculum provided a localized international education system that differed from that of radical indigenous schools, which enrolled local students for studies of vernacular literature. Tagore's students learned general academic subjects in Bengali at an early age, along with applied social subjects such as gardening, weaving, and moral education. Later, modern scientific subjects such as science, mathematics, and technology were added to the curriculum for older students (Jalan, 1976; Jha, 1994). Tagore believed that school should be a free and open place where young people could "grow their experience, express their creativity and realize their full potential" (Samuel, 2011, p. 1164). Tagore described his school as follows:

> It is my hope that in this school a nucleus has been formed, round which an indigenous University of our own land will find its natural growth—a University which will help India's mind to concentrate and to be fully conscious of itself; free to seek the truth and make this truth its own wherever found, to judge by its own standard, give expression to its own creative genius, and offer its wisdom to the guests who come from other parts of the world. (Tagore, 2007, p. 45)

Accordingly, for Tagore, his advocacy of Bengali tradition and language was a way to show his attitude of respect for indigenous culture and identity, and his promotion of a combined school curriculum with both Bengali culture and international scientific subjects presented his open-mindedness in education for his students to master diverse kinds of knowledge. Based on his personal experience, a strong educational vision emerged through the development of Tagore's philosophical formation. It is to encourage young generations to be independent individuals, to respect and accept both indigenous cultural religion and foreign advanced academic culture, and foster individuals with creative minds and hands, judicious inquiries and thoughts, as well as personalized experiences and characteristics.

Genesis of Hu Shih's Vision in Education

Like Tagore, the Chinese educational philosopher Hu Shih (1891–1962) was born into a well-educated and wealthy family (Fig. 2).

Hu Shih lived in China during a time of complex political change, as the nation transitioned from the monarchic Qing dynasty to the Republic of China. Similar to Tagore, family influence impressed Hu Shih with the importance of education. Hu Shih's father worked as the chief manager of the ancestral temple and later became a political reformer, teaching rural people and working for the military. Although his father passed away when Hu Shih was only three years old, Hu Shih's educational

Fig. 2 Hu Shih[2]

aspirations were impacted by a note his father had left behind: "Hu Shih, the youngest son in the family, is gifted at study and should not give up on education" (Hu, 2016a, p. 19).

Hu Shih was also impacted by his father's mottos for educational attitudes and beliefs:

> The student must first learn to approach the subject in a spirit of doubt … The philosopher Chang Tsai (1020–1077) used to say: "If you can doubt at points where other people feel no impulse to doubt, then you are making progress." (Hu, 2013, vol. 2, p. 192)

Following his father's last wishes, young Hu Shih was sent to a traditional private school to study moral and classical Chinese literature, including the texts of Confucius and Mencius. Hu Shih thus studied both the traditional Chinese Four Books (四书) and Five Classics (五经) in classical Chinese as well as many modern novels in the vernacular. Later, Hu Shih's learning included modern education influenced by both the Chinese educational reformer Liang Qichao and the American philosopher John Dewey. He learned modernized subjects such as mathematics and science in his middle school years, then went to the U.S. to explore such fields as agronomy, liberal arts and science, business, and philosophy. After obtaining a degree in agriculture at Cornell University, he switched to philosophy and studied further under John Dewey at Columbia University. When his exploration of Western pragmatic theory and practice collided with his own reflections on China's conservative society, with its unchanged classic language and conservative culture, Hu Shih's desire to advocate for new reforms in China only strengthened (Grieder, 1962; Zhang, 2007). To

[2] Public domain image retrieved from: https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hu_Shih.jpg

this end, when he returned to China, Hu Shih began to write for a popular reform journal called *New Youth* and published many articles. He also gave many public speeches arguing for change in the use of academic language and for a rational and scientific attitude toward truth and facts (Lei, 2020). In 1939, Hu Shih was nominated for the Nobel Prize in literature, and he would eventually apply his skills in international relations to many prominent leadership roles, including as Ambassador to the United States (1938–1942), Chancellor of Peking University (1946–1948), and President of Academia Sinica in Taiwan (1958–1962). While primarily seeing himself as a historian, Hu Shih's contributions to an array of fields would ultimately lead to his being credited as having "played a leading role" in each of the major philosophical movements in China during the first half of the twentieth century (Chan, 1956, p. 3).

To promote modern scientific truths as an alternative to stubborn belief in old Confucius traditions, Hu Shih first advocated for the adoption of the spoken vernacular (*bai-hua*) to enable people from diverse contextual backgrounds to attain the same level of understanding with an equal opportunity. Hu Shih also dedicated himself to China's "New Cultural Movement," not only by physically participating in meetings promoting the new spoken language and scientific knowledge but also by writing in many publications to present his vision of reforms.

In his writings, Hu Shih argued that the educational literature should be based on what is important to people in their daily life, and not merely be the memorization of classics. He also urged people to abandon traditional but inaccessible "classicist" writing habits. In one of his famous articles, "*Wen Xue Gai Liang Chu Yi"* (Tentative Proposal for Literary Reform), Hu Shih suggested eight adjustments to literature writing, advocating the abandonment of classical allusions, imitations of the past, vague but wordy expressions, and vulgar words. He also promoted vernacular language that included strict parallel structure with clear objectives, rational and empirical evidence, and critical thought (Hu, 2013):

> If we really want education, general and universal education, we must first have a new language, a language which can be used and understood by tongue and ear and pen, and which will be a living language for the people. For years and years, we tried to have education, but we feared to use the spoken language. We tried to compromise in various ways, but we clung as scholars to the scholarly language. (Hu, 2013, p. 20)

Besides seeking to help more Chinese people move away from closed-minded traditions toward critical open-mindedness, Hu Shih also promoted the urgent need for educational reform in China. He invited his teacher John Dewey to visit China and give presentations nationwide on Western modernized education. He also worked as a professor at Peking University, China's top educational institution, promoting the importance of education, and demonstrating what an authentic educational approach should be in practice. Hu Shih published many articles on China's educational development. In one of his articles, *Only Education Prevents Educational Bankruptcy* (Hu Shih, 2015a), he harshly criticized the type of people who complained about "China's broken education" yet refuse to learn any modern scientific knowledge and theory. Hu Shih argued that for the government, education should be "a general obligation for all Chinese people" rather than "a political instrument to constrain people's minds."

He also encouraged radical locals to "regain confidence in their motherland" and then to "take a look at the outside world":

> The fundamental way to remedy the failure of education is to establish the foundation of the lower class with education. In other words, to make up one's mind to popularize primary school compulsory education in the shortest period of time. ... When more people can receive education, the certification of graduation will not be enough for life and work, and then most people will naturally seek more true (modern Western) knowledge and skills instead. (Hu Shih, 2015a, p.2)

Therefore, for Hu Shih, the development of his standpoint on education, based on his personal experience, contrasted in some ways with Tagore. Hu Shih emphasized the need to foster the kind of individual who could courageously break with oppressive traditions to become open-minded and accept foreign diversity. Then, Hu Shih also called on his nation's young generations to develop creative and critical minds by building on national identity and cultural confidence. Even with different actions in promoting education in China compared to Tagore in India, his intention in encouraging people to believe in scientific truth rather than historical tradition, to embrace critical thought rather than stereotypical impressions, and to grow an independent and creative mindset instead of holding on to traditional beliefs and "old-fashioned" habits are similar aspects to Tagore's educational standpoint.

A Meeting of Minds

In 1924 and 1928, Tagore made some visits to China, where he met with both the younger Hu Shih and the even younger Chinese poet Xu Zhimo (1897–1931). By that time, several of Tagore's books of poems had been published in Chinese translation, and he had received formal invitations to visit both Beijing and Shanghai. While in Beijing, Tagore visited the Forbidden City, the Great Wall, and the Ming Tombs, and gave many speeches, including a notable one titled "Civilization and Progress" (Dasthakur, 2015, p. 218). The hosts in Beijing offered a great celebration for Tagore's 64th birthday, for which they staged his play "Chitra" (Chou & Hu, 2013, p. 197). Interestingly, as Hu Shih recalled, the only sad moment for Tagore during this visit was when "leftist youths of China" unexpectedly boycotted his lectures and even spread leaflets claiming that Tagore was opposed to science. Tagore was apparently very surprised and disappointed by this misinterpretation and reminded Hu Shih that he actually had very positive things to say about science. Hu Shih reportedly explained to Tagore, "Your lectures are so poetic and so much devoted to the spiritual freedom of man that the listeners are apt to forget your laudatory references to modern science" (Chou & Hu, 2013, p. 198). Tagore would write in his essay "China and India" that under Western influence people of both great nations must not be "misled into believing that which is ancient is necessarily outworn and that which is modern is indispensable" (Mohanty, 2015, p. 75). Indeed, Hu Shih and Tagore adopted rather similar positions regarding ways of reconciling between

rich local traditions, Westernization, and scientific thought and both were sometimes misunderstood by their own countrymen.

Mixed Reception of Tagore's and Hu Shi's Political Standpoints

Due to Tagore and Hu Shih's dedication to their national educational development, they both received ample praise for modeling what a philosophical scholar and educational reformer should be, committed to fostering young generations with new perspectives (Kumar, 2015; Lei, 2020). However, while there was wide approval of their educational contributions, their political standpoints regarding combined West–East experiences and political aspects of education and social development also provoked critical debate. Among the strongest of such debates concerns whether Tagore and Hu Shish should be understood more as nationalists or cosmopolitanists. The most essential tendencies of their respective arguments can be boiled down to some essential points (see Table 1).

From one perspective, both Tagore and Hu Shih clearly showed their patriotism but were not generally recognized as nationalists. For Tagore, even though he wrote many patriotic songs and poems, and dedicated himself to India's vernacular movement and national–cultural preservation (Alam, 2015), he did not self-identify as a nationalist. Rather, in Tagore's view, people are living beings, but a nation attains its

Table 1 Nationalist and Cosmopolitanist Arguments

	Tagore	Hu Shih
Nationalist	- Promoted mother-tongue language application and awareness of Indian cultural heritage - Showed concern for people living in poverty and worked to benefit them - Wrote many patriotic poems and songs in Bengali for local people to study and reflect on	- Advocated vernacular language in the New Cultural Movement to modernize China - Encouraged students to learn from China's moral tradition and historical experience - Worked at Peking University as a teacher, professor, and president to develop comprehensive education for Chinese students
Cosmopolitan	- Established comprehensive schools for students to experience modern education - Wrote extensively, emphasizing the individual's development and harmonious relationship with the world - Believed that multicultural cooperation required a synthesis of Western and Eastern influences	- Encouraged students to be independent critical thinkers and to learn from other countries - Promoted the abandonment of old traditions and the adoption of multiple cultural influences - Believed that comprehensive and rational education would benefit society more than a radical social movement

potential meaning through the "power of organization." When people accept a "cult of the nation," and act as policemen to guard the borders of their home, nationalism inspires the training of people for narrow ideals with "moral degeneracy" and "intellectual blindness." In his *The Nation*, Tagore asserted the importance of presenting India's heritage to the world, not in a way based on nationalistic motives, but rather from appreciation for the construction of "harmonious unity" among all races and cultures (Tagore, 2007). Similarly, Hu Shih, demonstrated strong patriotism, as he emphasized the urgent need for education in his writing and speeches, and worked at Peking University to reform formal education, but although he sought to modernize conservative China, he was not recognized as a true nationalist. Ren (1955) argued that Hu Shih was rather a promoter of Western philosophy because he was concerned more with pragmatic theory than with China's political context. Li (2012) reported that Hu Shih was even criticized by radical students as a "traitor" to China because he asked students to stay on campus rather than participating in any social movements with parades and violence.

On the other hand, while some scholars emphasize the nature of cosmopolitanism (but not nationalism) embodied in Tagore and Hu Shih's educational philosophies, others point out different perspectives. Saha (2013), for instance, argued that Tagore's nationalism never undermined his attachment to his native Bengal. Although his writing contained international-minded ideas, his intention and action both worked as a nationalist advocating for the benefit and development of his nation, India. Samuel (2011) also observed that Tagore's patriotic nationalism never disappeared, and he sought to create international education in India out of a desire to provide the best education for indigent people in his beloved country. Lv (1955) considered Hu Shih's effectiveness in adopting a cosmopolitan perspective to tackle China's problems, and argued that the importance of being equally understandable, reasonable, and just in a larger social context (and *socialism*) were missing elements in Hu Shih's efforts. A local newspaper in An Hui province criticized Hu Shih's philosophy, writing, "At a time of national crisis, the whole people should rise up to fight against Japan, his talk about the independence of education and international mindedness are obviously out of place. It is personal radical cognition but not cosmopolitan awareness" (Chen & Cheng, 2006, p. 722).

In fact, no matter which perspectives previous educators take on Tagore and Hu Shih's educational political standpoints, any binary judgmental discourse on a nationalism–cosmopolitanism dichotomy is inappropriate for the following two reasons. Firstly, neither Tagore nor Hu Shih was a radical reformer who insisted on the extreme side of being either a nationalist or cosmopolitanist. Instead, their actions in educational advocation have shown a combination of nationalist and cosmopolitan standpoints. They valued both indigenous culture and tradition and Western scientific truth and innovation, and they opposed absolute colonialism and stood for a de-colonialist localized education. As such, a focus on only one side of the scale, conversely, is likely to lead to an inaccurate interpretation of their educational philosophies. Besides, when people debate both philosophers' standpoints as nationalism, they likely seek to point to "civic" or "liberal" nationalism, but we must also consider the

concern of equal rights and opportunities for citizenship—including multiple ethnicities and races—over blind adherence to nation (Bayram, 2019; Bowden, 2003). Therefore, based on Taylor (1996), it might be a "mistake" to see cosmopolitan identity as an alternative to nationalism. With the reality of social development relying on the citizenry to create free and democratic societies, modern democratic systems require both preserving traditional nationalism and constructing a liberal modern cosmopolitism for long-term development.

Balanced Perspectives Embodied in Their Educational Philosophies

No matter what political standpoints both Tagore and Hu Shih held for their nations, their combined West–East personal experiences as well as their dedication to a national de-colonized educational revolution led to rather similar educational visions. Essentially, that was to educate people not only for the specific goal of self-cultivation but also for nation-construction and world-harmonious development from a balanced global perspective. To illustrate this further, it is helpful to consider three layers of balanced perspectives embodied in both Tagore and Hu Shih's philosophies that demonstrate their futuristic visions of global education.

West and East

The first layer of the two philosophers' balanced perspectives is that of a combined knowledge inquiry and acquisition from both the Western and Eastern intellectual traditions. Tagore and Hu Shih showed equal admiration and respect for the under-explored "Western outside" and the long-existing "Eastern inside" in their respective philosophical positions.

Specifically, for Tagore, at his schools, both Indian cultural traditions and Western scientific knowledge were taught in English using textbooks he created and a liberal curriculum he designed. As Puri observed, "In Tagore's view, Indians could not ignore the role of Western education as a means to encourage freedom" (Puri, 2015, p. 9) Tagore's balanced view, adapting both Western and Eastern knowledge and methods and opposing neither progressive modernism nor India's freedom, has been given various names, including "universal humanism" (Bhattacharya, 2013; Chakraborti, 2019), "synthesis" (Kumar, 2015), and a "pan-India" or "pan-Asia" approach (Lahari, 2018). For Hu Shih, his impressive oeuvre of published writings consistently reminds us of two essential aspects: (1) the urgent need to break from an arguably old-fashioned mindset for construction of a new China (Hu, 2016b, 2016c) and (2) recognition of the perennial relevance of studying practically, scientifically, and internationally for the extended intellectual growth (Hu, 2015a, 2015b).

Hu believed that students should learn from Chinese classical tradition because its wisdom and experience were a valuable heritage, but that modern knowledge was also needed to build further on the accumulation of empirical facts and scientific improvement (Li, 2012). In order to resist cultural colonization by the West, Tagore encouraged teachers to focus on local Indian culture to strengthen the unique voice and cultural confidence of their students and established his own schools to introduce a balanced approach to knowledge (Jha, 1994). Similarly, to prevent blind obedience to conservative tradition, Hu Shih encouraged Chinese students to explore the outside world and become open-minded to receive critical thoughts and unfamiliar scientific facts. However, while promoting the "good" from the West, he also documented Chinese historical events and stories in Western journal articles and presented speeches in English for the Western public to understand development in China, and constantly reminded his students to remember their Chinese national identity and maintain cultural confidence (Hu, 2015b).

Accordingly, instead of going to either extreme as a Westernist fanatic or an indigenous-preservation reactionary, both Tagore and Hu Shih maintained a balanced attitude toward learning from both nation-based Eastern traditions and international-based Western modernity. Their respective promotion of a balanced West–East educational perspective is easily identified in their educational publications, as noted in previous literature (Bhattacharya, 2013; Chakraborti, 2019; Lahiri, 2018; Lei, 2020).

Individual and Society

A second layer of understanding the educational intention and beliefs of Tagore and Hu Shih is from the individual intellectual development and its connection to related national/social construction. A fervent belief that a reformed and de-colonized new country would be of benefit to its people's daily life can be seen in Tagore and Hu Shih's practical activities. Recall that Tagore lived in a period in which the British government controlled Indian society, while Hu Shih lived in a transitional period in which most people blindly followed the conservative Chinese government. Both men were heavily influenced by their patriotic families and gradually realized the intricacy of social issues and sought to contribute to education. It is therefore helpful to consider their actions as a balance between individual and social aspects: bringing the "outside in" through the introduction of Western modernity, while taking the "inside out" by preserving indigenous culture.

For Tagore, individuals are "living personalities" who need to contribute their "self-expression" and "distinctive creations" to the nation. From his writing, "literature, art, social symbols and ceremonials" are like different dishes that individuals must bring together "at one common feast" to create meaning for life and the world (Tagore, 2007, p. 37). Similarly, Hu Shih argued that the abandonment of conservative traditions, such as the mere memorization of Confucius's and Mencius's theories, did not mean that the Chinese should deny traditional culture and morals.

During a complex social period featuring a changing government, Hu Shih encouraged students to exhibit "individualism with social constructional responsibility." He considered individuals with a liberal and independent personality to have the "soundest personality," and argued that the most powerful and independent individuals should know how to use their talents to benefit society by "casting materials into weapons" (Hu, 2016c, p. 163). Hu Shih advocated that a person who could rationally critique the past and present could also thereby strengthen the development of a society that allows its people to seek scientific truth and engage in democratic expression. Therefore, both Tagore and Hu Shih showed their beliefs in action that a stable society requires its people to have knowledge and awareness; in turn, people should support, trust, and contribute to their nation and to the world for long-term development.

Singular Nation and Global Society

The third layer for understanding these two philosophers' educational beliefs is from an even broader perspective. It goes beyond merely balancing the relationship between self and society within one nation, toward generating a much broader (and more meaningful) picture, by placing a singular nation/culture into a world perspective, and together building up an integrated culture and global community, a dynamic and universal collaboration with various nations contributing to the entire world.

Tagore described how India, with its unique Asian cultural background, should connect with other cultures and further contribute to world civilization, and based on this point, he explained:

> India has her renaissance. She is preparing to make her contribution to the world of the future. In the past, she produced her great culture, and in the present age she has an equally important contribution to make to the culture of the New World which is emerging from the wreckage of the Old. (Tagore, 2007, p. 47)

By emphasizing the development of understanding beyond a single nation to encompass a global view, Tagore also emphasized the importance of "coordination" and "cooperation" between regions and especially the mutual understanding between the Western and Eastern worlds. For Tagore,

> There was a time when the great countries of Asia had, each of them, to nurture its own civilization apart in comparative seclusion. Now has come the age of co-ordination and co-operation… When taking her [Asia] stand on such a culture, she turns toward the West, she will take, with a confident sense of mental freedom, her own view of truth, from her own vantage-ground, and open a new vista of thought to the world. (Tagore, 2007, p. 44)

Additionally, Tagore stated the following:

> It is my hope that in this school a nucleus has been formed, round which an indigenous University of our own land will find its natural growth—a University which will help India's mind to concentrate and to be fully conscious of itself; free to seek the truth and make this truth is own wherever found, to judge by its own standard, give expression to its own creative

> genius, and offer its wisdom to the guests who come from other parts of the world. (Tagore, 2007, p. 45)

Accordingly, Tagore's personal statements showed a strong intention in connecting each independent nation and culture together to build up a shared global community. As he mentioned, people should be empowered with opportunities to recognize the differences between one and the other, to balance out their respect, value, and manner for each other, and collaborate for a sustainable harmonious global society (Tagore, 2007, 2003).

A similar vision of the significance of connecting a singular nation/society to the global society has also been found in Hu Shih's speeches and writings. In his article, *The Road We Should Go*, Hu Shih explained the reason for insisting on China's "New Cultural Movement" (1910s–1920s) and encouraging Chinese people to be educated intellectuals was "xiuji erhou keyi airen" (修己而后可以爱人), which means to take responsibility for yourself and then to share what you have with others (Hu, 2016b, p. 18). To Hu Shih, each singular nation's social and political issues are connected with the entire world. Similarly, each splendid civilization also nurtured global society with its uniqueness and cultural diversity (Hu, 2016b).

In order to explain the importance of world civilization and its developmental process, Hu Shih further summarized his thoughts on a common synthesized world community as follows:

> Several major directions for transforming the world have become the common goals of civilized countries. To sum up, there are three: 1. to address human suffering with scientific achievements; 2. to improve human life with socialized economic systems; and 3. to emancipate the human mind, develop human talent, and create free and independent personalities with a democratic political system. (Hu, 2016b, p. 167)

Hu Shih argued that world culture has a gradual trend of development, including each unique culture and its heritage, and proceeding in a unified direction toward shared goals (Hu, 2016b). In other words, both Tagore and Hu Shih presented their hope of seeing the world enter an "age of coordination and cooperation," and they maintained a positive attitude toward any nation with educated people contributing value to the world. Throughout Tagore and Hu Shih's educational efforts, we can see a progressive transition from being well-educated to the aim of passing along intellectual knowledge to others and then cultivating people to create a peaceful and harmonious society. They sought to move education beyond teaching and training to accomplish both individual and social development. Ultimately, they spent their lives advocating self-cultivation, national reconstruction, and contributions to world civilization.

Conclusion

This chapter has compared the personal background, educational practices, and political standpoints of two Asian philosophers, Rabindranath Tagore and Hu Shih, on

how education can be used to cultivate individual, social, and global development. As students with both Western and Eastern learning experiences, they advocated for education to maintain both cultural values in indigenous tradition and to explore scientific truths with objective and critical queries. As Asian reformers who combined nationalist and cosmopolitanist political standpoints, each kept an open-minded attitude toward introducing the value and growth of Asian cultures to the west through publications and bringing European knowledge to their local people by contributing to educational work. Embedded in their educational philosophies are appeals for balanced relationships between Western and Eastern knowledge, self-cultivation, and social construction, as well as independent national heritage connected to development of a sustainable global civilization, all of which aligns in various ways with recent trends of today's globalization in education, yet arose a century in the past.

Today, globalization is a reality, and the objective of cultivating people for a balanced and harmonious society is more commonly recognized internationally. In OECD (2018), the shared vision for education in 2030 is about developing every learner to become a whole person who helps to shape a shared future in cooperation with individuals, communities, and the environment of planet earth. In UNESCO (2015), a similar vision of fostering well-qualified learners to solve local and global challenges and further support sustainable global development was also raised. In other words, the value of education has become even more obvious in the twenty-first century, with enhanced educational achievement turning into a common goal for most countries in the world.

Today the challenges are different from what India and China faced back in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, when they suffered from not only their own local political issues but also a challenging path toward recovery from colonization by foreign countries as well as a struggle against outdated belief systems. Education as a foundational vehicle for personal cultivation and social development was pioneered in Asia by Tagore and Hu Shih, and their keen desire for world harmony and civilizational collaboration is now passed on to new generations who must accept an important responsibility to continue in the directions they established.

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Lessons from Ubuntu for Moral Education

Pip Bennett

Introduction

By way of preamble, it is helpful to outline the origins of this piece as well as my positionality. The chapter originated in a PhD course *Non-Western Educational Philosophy & Policy* completed at Western Norway University of Applied Sciences. Students from a wide range of backgrounds took part in the course, all with a view to learning more about philosophies of education with which they may have had only a passing acquaintance. My own position had been shaped by educational experiences in England and familiarity with what is commonly known as the "Western" Philosophical Tradition. Thus, I came to the content of the course as an eager outsider, mindful of the frequently unedifying history of my home nation and those other groups coming under the umbrella term "Western". In due course I will comment on the use of "Western", at which point the quotation marks will be removed. My focus towards the end of the course was on the compelling philosophy of ubuntu, common to Sub-Saharan Africa. However, I recognised that in exploring this concept further I needed to navigate the treacherous waters between the Scylla of appropriation and the Charybdis of presumption. I did not want to repeat the evils of colonisation or to fall prey to arrogant explanation. If I have failed in my aims I can only apologise.

The use of dichotomous geographic labels such as "Western" and "African" can seem fraught with risk. Such labels inevitably essentialise about the area and people so labelled. In a paper comparing Western and African philosophies of education, Thaddeus Metz makes a case for how geographic labels may be construed in a way that resists negative connotations. For Metz, geographical labels "refer to features that are *salient* in a locale, at least over a substantial amount of time. They pick out properties that have for a long while been recurrent in a place in a way they have tended not to be elsewhere" (Metz, 2015, p. 1176 emphasis in original). Anticipating

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objections, Metz argues *contra* the constructivist and the essentialist who may each take issue with his claims. To the constructivist who maintains that "meaning is determined merely by the properties that those in a group mentally associate with them" he replies that it is often the case that there is a "mind-independent fact of the matter about the frequency with which certain properties are present in places, about which one or one's group could be mistaken" (Metz, 2015, p. 1176). To the essentialist who claims that all views from these locales are of a particular sort or that people living in these places must necessarily hold such views he says that "it does not imply that the relevant properties are to be found only in a certain location, throughout that location or invariably in it" (Metz, 2015, p. 1176). Thus, Metz argues, "the combination of markets, science and constitutionalism is Western" and "it is African to hold a belief in the need to respect ancestors, wise progenitors of a clan who have survived the death of their bodies and now live in an invisible form on earth" (Metz, 2015, p. 1177). Metz's point is that to use a geographical term such as "African" is not to make the claim that it is picking out something unique in that part of the world.[1] For example, reverence for ancestors is also found in the East and the combination of markets and so on is clearly also found outside Europe and America. He thinks that people do not use geographical labels in this way, they ought to do so. This is preferable because it resists the many ills of essentialism and the speaking past each other which commonly happens under constructivist readings (Metz, 2015, p. 1177). In this chapter, I will follow Metz's use of African and Western and their cognates. Now I turn to the introduction proper where I mark out the contours of the chapter, which aims to identify some lessons for moral education from ubuntu.

It is an uncontroversial claim that all societies or communities find *some* sort of moral education desirable. Perhaps moral education is made explicit through the public articulation and maintenance of rules. Or it might be more implicit in the modelling of the desired behaviours throughout society. Most likely moral education will be a combination of the explicit and implicit.[2] This chapter considers what might be meant by moral education as it instantiates in formal institutions and what lessons might be gleaned from ubuntu. The focus will be on primary and secondary schools in the West. However, in anticipation of my later conclusions, it will become clear that the lessons for moral education here articulated would also be fitting for institutions of higher education. The paper begins by considering differing conceptions of moral education. This section concludes that while there may be a place for moral education as part of the explicit curriculum in the same way that mathematics is commonly included, a preferable conceptualisation would actively promote moral education through the very culture of the institution. All institutions, whether consciously or inadvertently, promulgate ways of being and behaving. I am advocating for a moral

[1] Pascah Mungwini also remarks "it has become conventional to speak of an African culture each time one refers to the culture of these indigenous peoples [the Bantu speaking people of Africa South of the Sahara] always as a way of distinguishing it from Western culture brought into the continent through colonialisation" (Mungwini, 2011, p. 774).

[2] On moral education, moral upbringing, and moral development see Barrow (2007, pp. 180–193).

education that at least tends towards some of the ideas in ubuntu. Given this conclusion, it is argued that a philosophy is needed that sheds light on the salient features of a morally educative institutional culture. Ubuntu is here proposed as a philosophy to inform the culture of Western educational institutions. The final section of the paper responds to criticisms directed at ubuntu. It concludes by using these arguments to flesh out lessons from ubuntu that could inform moral education.

Conceptions of Moral Education

The scope of this chapter will be limited to a discussion of moral education in formal educational institutions, rather than other sites of learning, such as the home, places of worship, sports clubs, and so on, which also qualify as sites of moral education. In England, formal educational institutions usually take the form of primary schools, for pupils aged 5–11, and secondary schools, for pupils aged 11–18. Since young people are required by law to be in education or training until the age of 18, thus strengthening the sense of the formal nature of the institutions in which these younger members of a society typically find themselves during their formative years. Where does moral education sit in a formal curriculum where English, mathematics, creative arts, humanities and sciences all compete for space? A question, for this chapter, is whether and to what extent general education and moral education are to be distinguished from each other. Graham Haydon observes that education generally and moral education specifically are variously conceived as one and the same, or, entirely distinct, with numerous positions between such extremes (Haydon, 2003, p. 320). Thus, two poles are identified. At one end there is no distinction between moral education and education and at the other extreme they are entirely separate.

I will start by considering the latter position, namely that moral education is separate from the rest of education.[3] Under the educational structure in contemporary England, this would mean that moral education would feature as one subject among many in the curriculum. The view that moral education ought to have an explicit place in the school curriculum is superficially attractive. Why might moral education not stand alongside history education or art education? It stands to reason that if one of the aims of schools is, for example, to develop in the student a facility for mathematics, then *mutatis mutandis* this would also follow for the moral domain. In the study of mathematics, a subset of the discipline's domain is that which is studied at school. Teachers are appointed who are able to teach this material and they go on to do so with greater or lesser success. From the individual student's perspective, their degree of success in the mathematical domain may have repercussions for later stages of life. Perhaps success in certain examinations is a prerequisite for admission to a subsequent educational phase. Arguments have been advanced against this sort of hurdle (Illich, 2019 [1970]), but nonetheless in the current system in England and across much of the world, academic requirements of this sort are commonplace.

[3] For a book length argument to this effect see Wilson (1990).

Perhaps being able to understand a government-mandated tax return and other such activities is predicated on some facility with mathematics. What of the student who is not so successful? The ramifications can be significant. The mathematically illiterate, for example, might make poor decisions when incurring financial debt, perhaps not understanding the interest rates common to predatory credit card schemes (Peters, 2020). In the domain of moral education, however, the consequences of success and failure seem rather different. Indeed, moral education illuminates what it is to live well as a human. If *this* goes well or badly, the consequences, although more difficult to pin down with precise examples, are profound, both for the individual involved and, vitally, for others in their community. To limit moral education to "just" another part of the curriculum is to miss its importance. The existence of a journal such as the *Journal of Moral Education* suggests that there is sizable support, in academic circles, for taking moral education as a significant part of education, whether or not it is isolable. It is hoped that this chapter adds weight to the argument that a wider view of moral education is preferable. Robin Barrow echoes my sentiment when he says "the way to produce moral thinkers or people who tend towards the moral is to teach them by emphasizing the moral aspects of everything they study and do" (Barrow, 2007, p. 190). It seems, then, that Barrow and I share the view that moral education is better understood as pervading the culture of an institution. It is a feature of every decision, behaviour, and action in that institution.

There are many scholars who make the case that all education is in fact moral education. The views of Michael Oakeshott and Iris Murdoch are examples of this perspective.[4] For Oakeshott "Every form of the moral life…depends upon education…We acquire habits of conduct, not by constructing a way of living upon rules or precepts learned by heart and subsequently practised, but by living with people who habitually behave in a certain manner" (Oakeshott, 1962, p. 62). Here, Oakeshott has identified that it is immersion in a sort of life that is more likely to promote a moral outlook rather than attending to moral rules isolated from that life. While there may be a place for the explicit engagement with particular moral theories, this cannot be the end of the story, for the reasons already discussed above. Similarly, for Murdoch, as education alters the way in which the world is understood and since the moral life, as she articulates it, is contingent on the extent that the world is properly perceived, then education just is moral education (Murdoch, 2003 [1993], p. 175). It is vital and inescapable. Returning to Haydon: he observes that moral education, when not viewed as identical with education generally, can still be understood in two compatible ways. These are moral education as "picking out some range within the totality of the aims of education…[and] as picking out some range of content or process within the totality of teaching and learning" (Haydon, 2003, p. 321). Haydon makes this distinction to show that moral education is separate from moral development, something empirically investigable (pp. 321–322). However, when conceived in terms of aims, there is a stronger resemblance to my favoured version of moral education, that it is inextricably bound up with all education. The advantages to this

[4] The views of Oakeshott and Murdoch came to my attention on reading Susan Hekman's work (Hekman, 1995, p. 134).

approach are twofold. First, there remains scope for the deliberate attempt to morally educate students. That is to say, specific time could still be set aside in the curriculum for explicit moral education whose content is likely to be determined by the society in which it is conducted. Second, it makes salient that "values go all the way down", thus recognising that *all* choices amount to a claim about value. This is another way of saying that facts and values are not so easily distinguishable (Murdoch, 2003 [1993], pp. 25–57, 384; Standish, 2016, pp. 628–633). Examples of these choices include the content of the curriculum, systems of rewards and sanctions, and how members of the school community actually interact with each other as well as how they are expected to do so. This second point also reflects what is often called the "hidden curriculum", those things young people might encounter at school which are not explicitly included on the curriculum, elements of their school lives which can be nonetheless formative. Just how do teaching staff behave towards each other? Are they polite and professional or brusque and overbearing, for example? Clearly, the hidden curriculum is not necessarily "filled" with positive experiences.[5] However, those in positions of responsibility in educational establishments should strive to be aware of the behaviours promulgated in their educational community.

This section has considered the case for moral education as distinct from general education and the contrasting view that moral and general education completely overlap. I am more sympathetic to the latter characterisation, informed by the insights of Oakeshott and Murdoch. However, even if it is the case that, as Haydon avers, without any further references to other parts of the literature, "in accordance with the thinking that is dominant in the modern world in both practice and theory... moral education is but one aspect of education" (Haydon, 2003, p. 321), the chapter's contribution does not rest on conclusively refuting this claim. It is enough to say that education as generally conceived is inevitably implicated in the moral education of its participants. If they recognise this, members of an institution must consider how they conduct their educative endeavours within the prevailing culture. Such considerations, I suggest, are well-informed by ubuntu.

A Broader Account of Moral Education—Ubuntu

I concluded the previous section by suggesting that looking to the prevailing culture of an educational institution is a preferable way of understanding moral education. Before examining why ubuntu might profitably inform such a culture, it is useful to reflect on the current moral educational climate. Haydon observes that in the West, at any rate, the approach to moral education has focussed on the *rationalistic* and more recently the *virtue ethical* orientations. In short, the former can be understood as how a person might select and use some set of moral principles. The latter, partly as a response to perceived shortcomings of the former, seeks to develop the virtues

[5] Some pertinent works on the hidden curriculum include: Jackson (1990 [1968], pp. 1–38), Portelli (1993), Martin (1994, pp. 154–169), and Higgs (2016).

and determine how teachers might support their development in pupils (Haydon, 2003, pp. 322–325). The direction and emphasis of research in moral education typically reflect work conducted in moral philosophy more generally (Noddings & Slote, 2003, p. 341).[6] It is thus understandable that the regnant moral theories of Kantian ethics, consequentialism, and virtue ethics dominate the discussion of moral education as well as moral philosophy. However, towards the end of the last century, feminist scholars expressed dissatisfaction with what they saw as an unacceptable masculine bias in these moral theories, this was largely due to the way proponents of these theories had conceived human nature.[7] Whereas those dominant moral theories focus on the properties of the individual, there is now increasing interest in theories which could be described as relational, that is those implying that "moral status is constituted by some kind of interactive property between one entity and another, which property warrants being realized or prized" (Metz & Miller, 2016, p. 2).[8]

Christian Gade's research indicates that there are written references to ubuntu going back to the middle of the nineteenth Century. He also found that the Nguni proverb "*umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu* (often translated as 'a person is a person through other persons')" is first used to describe ubuntu in the 1990s (Gade, 2011, p. 303 emphasis and parenthesis in original).[9] Just over a decade ago, Thaddeus Metz and Joseph Gaie produced an article suggesting how the rest of the world might be able to learn something from ideas about morality common to sub-Saharan Africa (Metz & Gaie, 2010, p. 274). It is this precise concern that will form the core of my explication of ubuntu. Moreover, I envisage this chapter as one way in which the West might adopt the lessons offered by Metz and Gaie.

According to Metz and Gaie, the aphorism quoted above—"a person is a person through other persons"—carries with it important normative implications. Under this ethic, the ultimate goal is to become *fully* human, something realisable solely *with* other people, not against them or apart from them (p. 275).[10] Someone lacking ubuntu would thus not be a person: "If one harms others, e.g. by being exploitive, deceptive or unfaithful, or even if one is merely indifferent to others and fails to share oneself with them" (p. 275). In order to relate to others in accordance with

[6] For the changing relationship between philosophy and philosophy of education see *The Monist* (1968), Carr (2004), and Hirst and Carr (2005).

[7] For an extensive account of the masculine bias in Western philosophy see Antony (1998), and for theories of human nature see Stevenson et al. (2018).

[8] Although relational ethics finds articulation in a number of forms, it is ubuntu that is the focus of this chapter. For the Confucian tradition and moral education see Fengyan (2004), and for feminist ethics of care and moral education see Noddings (2005 [1992]). The connection or otherwise between the ethics of care, African ethics including ubuntu, and the Confucian tradition have also been explored (Harding, 1987; Li, 1994, 2002; Metz, 2013; Star, 2002; Waghid & Smeyers, 2012; Yuan, 2002). For a recent, detailed, articulation of an African relational ethic see Metz (2021).

[9] I see similarities between this aphorism and ideas found in conceptions of Western feminist self and identity, for example Baier (1981), Meyers (2018 [1997]), and Alcoff (2021).

[10] Relatedly, Mogobe Ramose: "One is enjoined…to actually become a human being. What is decisive then is to prove oneself to be the embodiment of *ubu-ntu* (*bo-tho*) because the fundamental ethical, social and legal judgement of human worth and conduct is based upon *ubu-ntu*" (Ramose, 2005, p. 37).

ubuntu, people are "to seek out community or to live in harmony with them" (p. 275). Harmony, or community, is clarified as not being simply the will of the majority or the maintenance of current norms. Rather, the moral obligations are twofold: solidarity and identification. The first is the obligation to look to the good of others. The second is the obligation to consider oneself inextricably bound up with others in one's community (pp. 275–276).[11] Thus, the authors contend, a moral education along these lines has as its goal the development of

> the personhood of students, which means facilitating their capacity to prize community. Since that, in turn, means giving some moral weight to *existing* communal relationships, it would indeed be incumbent on a moral educator not only to inform students of their duty not to radically upset norms central to the community's self-conception, but also to focus on transmitting these values. (p. 280 emphasis in original)

Importantly, it is recognised that ubuntu is not something that a person simply has; rather, it is something developed throughout a person's life. This underscores the vital role of education "in transferring the African philosophy of life" (Venter, 2004, p. 156).[12] In sum, ubuntu's encompassing purview, the possibility of its development, its orientation to humanness, and its commitment to community make it a superlative candidate for informing moral education in formal institutions.[13] This especially holds true when moral education is understood as being the totality of educational endeavours. It follows that an initial lesson for moral education is the emphasis on personhood through caring communities; the recognition that all members gain through a focus on what is generated through being in relation rather than striving alone for whatever they can gain for themselves.[14]

Commentary and Critique

In my earlier section "Conceptions of moral education" I concluded that an account of moral education that recognises the inextricably immersive nature of the moral life in *all that is done in educational institutions* is more compelling than an account of moral education as a subset of the general formal educational endeavour. Ubuntu as a philosophy of life (Venter, 2004, p. 159), offers an enlightening approach to understanding the culture of educational institutions and moral education in schools.

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[11] Western communitarians would likely agree, seeing also the self as constituted by one's community. For discussion of communitarianism see Avineri and de-Shalit (1992) and Mulhall and Swift (1996).

[12] Venter draws on Letseka (2000, p. 186).

[13] This is not to say that there are not other related candidates such as the ethics of care or ideas in communitarianism.

[14] This runs counter to the Hobbesian state of nature that is a constant battle of all against all. The individually competitive element in many Western educational institutions may not be necessarily aimed for by these institutions but appears to be prevalent. See, for example Mungwini (2011, p. 782) who discusses Masschelein and Simons' work on the entrepreneurial self (Masschelein & Simons, 2002, 2006).

As with any philosophy, however, there are a number of potential objections to consider. In making an attempt to respond to these objections I hope to clarify how salient ubuntu is for moral education. Objections to claims made on behalf of ubuntu include the following: that it is insufficiently cognisant of the African context; it is conceptually vague; it is ambiguous in terms of action guidance, it is unduly conservative, and it is parochial in outlook.[15] These objections will be considered in turn.

Objection 1: Ubuntu as Incognisant of African Context

Eliza Venter reports on Maluleke's comments that ubuntu has its roots in a certain way of life in Africa that needs careful interrogation if it is to be appealed to today in very different sociohistorical circumstances (Venter, 2004, p. 150). Maluleke points out that contemporary societies would not want to emulate certain features of communities in which ubuntu flourished, such as feudalism based around a clan leader[16] or extremely rigid gender roles.[17] This is not to say, however, that ubuntu is a pernicious philosophy, fort many of its ideas appear to be unequivocally positive. However, it does serve as a reminder that ideas always have their own histories, and that ignoring these can come at great cost. In the educational context, the notion of "policy borrowing" is commonplace, often as a response to successive iterations of international assessment exercises (Winstanley, 2013).[18] Although as seen above, an animating feature of Metz and Gaie's work, is to share ubuntu with the wider world, perhaps there are local factors which make ubuntu more meaningful in its original context.[19] Just as imported policies from other jurisdictions can fail thanks to differences in culture, so too educational philosophies must be applied with caution. An explanation for the overlap between relational ethics in Africa, of which ubuntu is an exemplar, and relational ethics in the West, of which feminist ethics of care is a prime candidate, is that in both contexts the ethics were born of oppression by the same group of people, namely European men (Harding, 1987, pp. 311–312).[20] The

[15] See also objections discussed in Enslin and Horsthemke (2004).

[16] See Maluleke (1999) for further remarks. Also, consider Horsthemke and Enslin's warnings that an isolationist approach may be harmful for an African philosophy of education (Horsthemke & Enslin, 2009) and a response (Letseka, 2012).

[17] Amanda Gouws and Mikki van Zyl offer a feminist rehabilitation of ubuntu in Gouws and van Zyl (2015).

[18] Of course, further research may reveal that there are some contexts where policy borrowing flourishes.

[19] Consider also the way in which colonial education rode roughshod over the traditions it both derided and quashed (Mungwini, 2011, p. 778). Moreover, in the same paper Mungwini questions whether ubuntu is practical or desirable in countries still reeling from the ravages of colonialism that are concurrently feeling their way through rampant globalisation.

[20] Recall that many aspects of ubuntu predate colonialism (Mungwini, 2011). I thank Penny Enslin for this point.

ongoing problems of patriarchy in the West have been amply reported elsewhere[21] but patriarchy's continued dominance lends support to the idea that lessons could be taken from ubuntu into the Western context. Namely, that a focus on community rather than emphasis on the individual may contribute to a better, more just, and caring society. Recognising this point shores up the argument advanced at the end of the previous section.

Objection 2: Ubuntu as Conceptually Vague

Although ubuntu has been gaining currency in the popular media, it is often unclear what exactly the term means, and as such its use in practice can be underwhelming if not harmful (Venter, 2004, p. 150). In education, this criticism is similar to those levied against such "western" concepts as "21st Century Skills" "Creativity", and "Critical Thinking". While undoubtedly *en vogue*, these concepts are used in a wide variety of ways, often lacking accompanying critical evaluation or substantive supporting arguments.[22] Anyone hoping to bring lessons from ubuntu into Western moral education would do well to learn from the mistakes of advocates of these diffuse concepts. For example, quite often these concepts have been discussed breathlessly as if they were each a panacea for educational or societal ills.[23] In order to guard against this problem and the inevitable disappointment when it transpires that there is no such panacea, advocates for ubuntu moral education must draw upon its lessons with care, avoiding the hope that it can be implemented as yet another intervention.[24] Moreover, since Venter highlighted the issue of conceptual vagueness there has been much scholarly work on ubuntu. Of particular note is the exchange between Metz and a number of colleagues, animated by his paper "Toward an African Moral Theory" (Metz, 2007a).[25] Further examples include: scholars drawing on Cavell to further articulate the person in ubuntu (Waghid & Smeyers, 2012); conceiving of ubuntu as character education (Etieyibo, 2017); connecting ubuntu and care ethics (Gouws & van Zyl, 2015, p. 177); and exploring ubuntu in higher education (Waghid, 2019). All this suggests that ubuntu is only growing in conceptual clarity and there is good reason to expect such progress to continue. Recall Oakeshott's claim above that morality tending to be learned by immersion in behaviours not precepts. Aspects of ubuntu are undoubtedly being refined in academic circles. However, the finer details

[21] See for example Gilligan and Snider (2018).

[22] For philosophical discussion of this concern see, for example Cigman and Davis (2009). At the 2022 Philosophy of Education Conference Great Britain I discovered that ubuntu also is finding popularity in Western philosophy of education. Thus, there is all the more reason to be sensitive and prudent when drawing on its lessons.

[23] I am thinking here of Ken Robinson's claims about creativity (Robinson & Aronica, 2016).

[24] Faddism in education is unfortunately commonplace. For discussion see Winch (2022, pp. 238–258).

[25] Some of the exchange can be found in Metz (2007b, 2014), Matolino and Kwindingwi (2013), Matolino (2015), and Molefe (2017).

are not necessary for using ubuntu to inform behaviour and attitudes in educational institutions, since its central tenets provide sufficient guidance.

Objection 3: Ubuntu as Ambiguous

A related criticism is that ubuntu could be taken as ambiguous with respect to action guidance. Unlike those moral theories such as Kantian deontology or consequentialism, for example, ubuntu, a critic might claim does not offer moral directives in any solid way. On the face of it, this is a powerful objection, for if a moral theory cannot inform human action and behaviour, is it really worthy of the name? It is certainly the case that moral theories with well-defined principles at least appear to inform the moral agent about what they ought to do, how they ought to be, or how their actions should be evaluated. What these theories lack, however, is enough attention to the particularity of the context in which the moral question is raised. Ubuntu, because it is a philosophy of life, an ideal, tells the moral agent to what end their behaviour should be directed. It acknowledges that the agent may fall short but fallibility does not mean that the agent should not endeavour to maintain the ubuntu way of life that "positively contributes to the sustenance of the well-being of a people" (Venter, 2004, p. 159). Ubuntu does not allow the moral agent to abdicate responsibility but it does recognise that moral action can rarely, be legislated for in advance of immersion in life's contingencies. Philip Kitcher's discussion of ideals in education is pertinent here, namely that people ought to "[v]iew ideals not as descriptions of states we might ultimately realize but as diagnostic tools for discerning the difficulties of the current situation" (Kitcher, 2022, p. 91). In considering lessons from ubuntu for formal educational institutions, leaders might compare the ideals of *community* espoused by ubuntu with the often prevalent individualist approach.[26] This exercise might prompt realignment of institutional structures to promote collaborative efforts for the benefit of *all* members of an institution.

Objection 4: Ubuntu as Unduly Conservative

The maintenance of existing communities and the relationships within those communities is morally significant under ubuntu as a moral philosophy. Any dogmatic upholding of the *status quo,* can be an indication that critical reflection within the community is eschewed, resulting in potentially oppressive and exploitative practices going unchecked.[27] Aware of this objection, Metz and Gaie offer three responses,

[26] See, however, Martha Nussbaum's work on the possibility of a feminist liberalism and the place of the individual (Nussbaum, 2000).

[27] This was certainly an early concern in the intellectual history of care ethics. See for example Card (1990), Hoagland (1990, and Houston (1990).

maintaining that ubuntu is not straightforwardly conservative and that this objection is therefore unconvincing. First, the globalised nature of contemporary existence necessitates an openness on the part of the moral educator to criticism of current mores. Given the connectedness of the planet via the internet, any modern polity would struggle to take an isolationist approach to any idea.[28] Second, a life properly shared must be based on its being freely chosen, not maintained through threats or indoctrination. It would be difficult to claim that actions, culture, or behaviour are properly educative if in fact they were the product of substantial coercion or unreflective forced absorption. Third, one aspect of becoming a person as exhorted by ubuntu is found in caring for others and themselves; such a capacity demands its development in a moral educator's students (Metz & Gaie, 2010, p. 280). In order to care well for others and themselves, students need to appreciate that what someone else might need is not necessarily what they themselves take to be of value. This direction of attention serves to limit the potential conservatism in ubuntu. These responses and the work in extending the obligations individuals and the community have under ubuntu seen in, for example, Le Grange's arguments below suggest that ubuntu is not necessarily inflexible or unwilling to respond to contemporary pressures. I interpret Metz and Gaie as advocating for the possibility of change conducted sensitively with due respect to the established community. Further, and connected to the responses in the previous sections, it is lessons from ubuntu that are being argued for in moral education, not their blunt application wholesale. There is a presumption that if educators were in fact going to draw on such a philosophy, they would need to patiently work out how to shift the emphasis in their educational institution towards the behaviours advocated by ubuntu. This would increase the likelihood of these lessons having a lasting positive effect.

Objection 5: Ubuntu as Parochial

The final objection I will consider is that ubuntu is parochial in its outlook. Having developed in small human communities, is ubuntu at risk of being too limited in terms of who comes under its compass? Perhaps ubuntu accounts well for proximate intimates, such as friends and relatives, but it is of limited use for distant strangers. Similarly, what of the non-human world? In Gade's research about how ubuntu is understood by South Africans of African descent, he found differing views of who qualifies as a person under ubuntu (Gade, 2012, pp. 494 ff.). Some did not necessarily consider all members of *homo sapiens* to be persons, as possessing the moral quality of ubuntu, and as such were not interconnected with those who do have this quality. Gade argues that this exclusivistic view is not ethically legitimate in post-apartheid

[28] This is not to say that some states do not at least attempt to retreat from being globally connected, or at least heavily censor that which is outside their geographical boundaries.

South Africa (Gade, 2012, p. 501).[29] It should not be a problematic extension seeing all members of the species as falling under ubuntu. Further, Lesley Le Grange builds on Metz and Gaie's work by arguing that ubuntu moral education can legitimately be extended to the non-human world:

> Personhood cannot be developed independently of human communities and the natural world. Just as it is incumbent on the moral educator to inform students of their responsibility to not upset norms central to a community's self-conception so, too, the moral educator should inform students of their responsibility not to upset dynamic interactions between living and non-living components of ecosystems. (Le Grange, 2012, pp. 335–336)

And shortly thereafter:

> Moral education should involve the *enactment* of moral responsibility——getting students involved in actions for (in the interest of) human and non-human communities. Moreover, moral education guided by *ubuntu* is not so much concerned with the *essence* or nature of the human being but the *being* of the human being, how the human being *exists* in the world. (p. 336 emphasis and parenthesis in original)

More recently, Le Grange situates ubuntu in the wider concept of Ukama to show the extension to the non-human world: "The self, community and nature are inextricably bound up with one another – healing/development in one results in healing in all dimensions and so suffering too is transversally witnessed in all three dimensions" (Le Grange, 2018, p. 47). Ubuntu seems to admit to degrees of attention to others, with those nearest demanding the most, but it does not entail limiting moral behaviour to one's immediate community, human or otherwise. In fact, ubuntu "sees caring as continuous from individual to stranger" (Gouws & van Zyl, 2015, p. 177), which rather undermines the claim of parochialism.[30] A common structure of a secondary school in England might find a pupil in a form group for administrative purposes, a class group for curricular purposes, and a year group for leadership purposes. Additionally, the school may be but one of several in the local environs. Thus, the pupil can be brought to understand their situatedness in nested communities and to realise that, though they may be expected to be more attentive to their immediate community members, this need not be the end of where their attention falls. Neither does it preclude attention to the rest of the natural world.

Concluding Lessons for Moral Education

At the outset of this chapter I considered two conceptions of moral education. On the one hand there is moral education as synonymous with education, that is, as

[29] I have continued with examples and scholarship from the African context as this is apt for the subject under discussion. This is not to repeat the objection based on incognisance of the African context.

[30] See also Teffo (1998, p. 3) and Le Roux (2000, p. 43) cited by Venter (2004, pp. 151, 159 respectively).

inseparable from any educative endeavour. On the other hand there is moral education seen as a distinct subset of education, much in the same way as 'traditional' subjects in a formal institution find their place in the curriculum. I argued that the former conception was more compelling and should therefore be informed by a philosophy of education that encompasses all of life. I then went on to outline one such philosophy, ubuntu, as presented by Metz and Gaie and extended by Le Grange. This articulation hightlights the many positive features of ubuntu moral education, namely its encompassing nature, its emphasis on the interconnectedness of individuals and their community, and how humans are not, under ubuntu, permitted to limit their moral consideration to the human world.[31] These headline features comprise a general and important lesson for moral education. They direct the educational practitioner towards ways of thinking and behaviour that I propose would positively affect institutional culture.[32] The final substantive section of the paper sought to address some of the objections levelled against ubuntu as a moral theory and hence as a philosophy of education. Consideration of these objections highlighted some further lessons for moral education. These were that while the minutiae of ubuntu continue to be refined and re-envisioned, the thrust of its moral philosophy remains strong and attractive. Next, that the ideals espoused by ubuntu may not purport to be precisely action guiding but they do serve as a foil against which to consider current educational structures. While I advocate for aspects of ubuntu to contribute to moral education in schools, I am not suggesting that it is adopted overnight. Meaningful change is better realised by judiciously moving in the direction of ubuntu's tenets, not by their authoritative and wholesale imposition. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, I have emphasisedubuntu's call for looking beyond the self, beyond the immediate to personhood through the care of the immediate and perhaps more distant other, human or otherwise. The lessons imparted are, I submit, worthy of serious consideration by all those involved in educational institutions. The culture of these institutions matters and ubuntu's lessons may serve to send these cultures in the right moral direction.

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[31] Though the extension to the non-human world is relatively recent and is not commonly taken to be a defining feature of ubuntu, I take it to be important enough nonetheless for inclusion at this point.

[32] In Western societies that see the normative import of resisting the negative aspects of an undue focus on the individual rather than the individual as constituted by their community.

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Pip Bennett's main research interests lie at the intersection of feminist moral philosophy and philosophies of education. Before his current course of study, a PhD in Education at University College London, he worked as a school teacher for over a decade. During that time, he also completed a part-time PhD in Philosophy at the University of Bristol and taught Mathematics to pupils across a wide age range. Presently he is assisting the teaching of a Master-level course "Rights and Education." He hopes that his varied experiences will be fruitfully brought to bear on pressing educational problems.

Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah Philosophies: Afro-Arabian Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policy in Nigeria

Abass Bolaji Isiaka

Introduction

> When I entered the university, I didn't have any friends to talk with or to ask questions, I felt alone and isolated. It was a new world for me. One day I went to a lecture... being the first visually impaired student in my department, students didn't really know there were people like me coming to the school. After the class, I stood outside seeking someone to help me to my hostel. I was calling them, they were reluctant to move toward me. I am not shy about using my guide cane, I brought out my cane and started to move, and the cane gave them awareness that I am visually impaired. Someone asked me, Sister! what do you want? and I told them that I am going to the hostel…. (Interview excerpt with a visually impaired Nigerian university student)

The access, participation and outcome of students with disabilities (SWDs) in higher education institutions in Nigeria is being mediated by lack of baseline accessibility features, such as ramps and elevators (Ijadunola et al., 2019) and the attendant shortage of trained sign language interpreters and note-takers (Eleweke and Ebenso, 2016). Attending classes and participating in the university life has become almost impossible due to a lack of awareness and understanding of disability among university staff and students ultimately shaping the the experiences and success of SWDs in higher education. While education has been a critical instrument for social change, it can also amplify existing tensions by exacerbating inequalities through the exclusion of underrepresented and underserved groups like SWDs. Thus, repositioning the role of educational policies and practices to forge an inclusive society requires a scrutiny of the philosophical foundations on which the education system is built.

Armstrong et al. (2011) raised practical questions about what it means to have an education system that is "inclusive". Who needs inclusion, and why were they excluded? If education should be inclusive, what practices is it contesting, what

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shared values is it advocating, and by what criteria should its successes be judged? Although, nation-states and policy researchers have attempted to address these questions through different policies, practices, and research on inclusion, there has been a rise in what Armstrong et al., described as "inclusive rhetoric" whereby inclusion means different things to different people and may end up meaning everything and nothing at the same time (Armstrong et al., 2011, p. 31). This also raises the question of what the practice of "inclusion" might entail in non-western educational settings, which may operate according to visions of education that profoundly differ from western models (Davids & Waghid, 2022; Reagan, 2004). Within a subfield such as inclusive education, broadening awareness of not only differing practices in diverse cultural contexts, but also the philosophies that undergird them, promises to contribute to the objective of 'conceptual decolonization' (Wiredu, 2002, 2008). Indeed, decolonization aims to transform curriculum and methodologies in ways that are especially likely to have a profound and lasting impact on education in Africa (Chilisa, 2019; Manthalu & Waghid, 2019). This chapter will illustrate such issues and processes by focusing on how conceptualizations of inclusive education may be interpreted in relation to Indigenous theories.

Nigeria's National Policy on Education (NPE) loosely defines inclusive education as providing basic education to the children of the country's disadvantaged and marginalized nomadic populations (FGN, 2013). This definition sits in tandem with the evolved understanding of inclusive education policy as an Education for All plan. Education for all, and inclusive education, as themes of UNESCO are rather similar in terms of their scope and rationale. While debates on inclusive education have been pursued with the United Nations 'Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities' and the Social Model of Disability, disability plays a less important role in UNESCO's current programmes than some decades ago (Kiuppis, 2014). In UNESCO's *Global Monitoring Report on Inclusion and Education* (2020), the Committee on the Rights of People with Disabilities characterize everyday inequalities in education to include gender, remoteness, wealth, disability, ethnicity, language, migration, displacement, incarceration, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, religion, and other beliefs and attitudes. The Committee defines inclusion in education as:

> a transformation in culture, policy and practice in all formal and informal educational environments to accommodate the differing requirements and identities of individual students, together with a commitment to remove the barriers that impede that possibility. It involves strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners. It focuses on the full and effective participation, accessibility, attendance and achievement of all students, especially those who, for different reasons, are excluded or at risk of being marginalized. Inclusion involves access to and progress in high-quality formal and informal education without discrimination. (UNESCO 2020, p. 13)

The key takeaway from this definition, and recent statements from the United Nations and UNESCO on education globally, is that inclusive education is broad in scope and instrumental in achieving social cohesion and inclusion. Moreover, it embodies the principles of dialogue, participation, and openness, bringing all

stakeholders together to resolve emerging tensions and dilemmas (UNESCO, 2020, p. 14).

While seeking to address some of the questions raised by Armstrong et al. (2011) and other inclusivity scholars in Africa (e.g. Dei, 2016; Phasha et al., 2017), across this chapter, I discuss some of the inclusive education policy reforms in the Nigerian National Policy on Education. I then situate an analysis of inclusive education policy within the broader *decolonial* turn before broaching the intersections and contradictions of the African and Arabian philosophical canons as I discuss the morphologies of Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah-informed perspectives on inclusion. Finally, the concluding section contributes to the communitarian pedagogy thesis by highlighting how the 'thinking' and 'doing' of inclusive education in Nigeria may benefit from these non-western philosophies, as illustrated by drawing on interview excerpts from my ethnographic fieldwork on disability inclusion in Nigeria.

Inclusive Education and Nigerian National Policy on Education

The curriculum conference of September 1969 was said to have given a philosophical direction to the Nigerian education system (Fafunwa, 1971). This conference led to the first National Policy on Education, published in 1977. The 1969 meeting, which people from all walks of life were reported to have attended, amplified the national objectives of a free, just, democratic, and egalitarian society full of bright and dynamic opportunities for all citizens. However, many education historians have been silent about the ominous implications of a civil war that was ongoing in Nigeria when this so-called "National" conference was held in Lagos. The economic, political, and cultural tensions that instigated the war in 1967 had been fuelling an unabated spike of secessionist agitations in the Southeast region of Nigeria. The factional leadership of this region felt they could no longer coexist with the federal government dominated by the interests of the Muslim Hausa-Fulanis of Northern Nigeria even though this region is not ethnically or religiously homogenous.

The conference, however, went on to propound the philosophy and objectives of Nigerian Education:

> Nigeria's national philosophy of education must be based on the development of the individual into a sound and effective citizen by providing equal educational opportunities for all nation citizens at the primary, secondary and tertiary levels both inside and outside the formal school system. (FGN, 2013, p. 1)

The policy document adopted the philosophy to serve self-realization, effective citizenship, and national unity through the 6-3-3-4 system of education proposed by the conference, comprising a complete six-year primary education, followed by a three-year junior education and senior secondary education, ending with a four-year university course (Fafunwa, 1971). The Federal Government of Nigeria inaugurated the Universal Basic Education (UBE) programme on 30th September 1999

as a reform policy to replace the Universal Primary Education (UPE) programme in Nigeria. It was designed to be universal, free, and compulsory to ensure uninterrupted access to nine-year formal basic education for Nigerian children culminating in the 9-3-4 system of education in Nigeria (Ojo, 2015). The scope of the UBE scheme encompasses three strategic areas of education: formal basic education, nomadic education, and non-formal education. The formal basic education stipulates nine years of schooling (i.e. six years in primary and three years in junior secondary education). Literacy and non-formal education are meant for out-of-school children and illiterate adults, while nomadic education is for school-age children of migrant fishers and pastoral farmers (Universal Basic Education Commision, 2005).

Out of the estimated 10.4 million migrant groups in Nigeria comprising pastoralists, migrant fishermen, and migrant farmers, about 5.1 million children are school age. Only 578,374 are currently enrolled in schools (National Commission for Nomadic Education, n.d.). With the low participation of migrant children, the Nomadic Education Programme (NEP) within the National Policy on Education was created to provide nomads with relevant and fundamental basic education and improve their survival skills by providing them with appropriate knowledge and skills. The broader purpose is to develop programmes on nomadic education and provide equipment, instructional materials, construction of classrooms, and other facilities for mobile education.

Section 7 of the National Education Policy also provides policy guidance for the education of children with disabilities while recognizing their roles in the nation's development and developing skills of the exceptionally gifted to foster economic and technological advancements of the country (FGN, 2013). However, the provisions within the national policy have been characterized by ambiguities and lack of accountability at all levels, and is plagued by endemic problems of cultural, socioeconomic, and political instabilities. Moreover, recent evaluations of the policy have concluded that it lacks a pragmatic implementation (Akanmu & Isiaka, 2016; Eleweke, 1999; Michael et al., 2012; Oluremi, 2012; Osokoya & Junaid, 2015). While these studies fail to shift from the singular focus on disability inclusion service delivery in accordance with the intentions of policies and laws, it has also reinforced the perpetuation of the medical and charity models of disabilities which see SWDs as persons to be fixed and need material and financial assistance rather than promoting their rights and equal participation. To challenge this dominant and reified discourse of the lived experience of the persons with disabilities from the periphery, a decolonial alternative thinking of disability inclusion that unearths the relational and cultural understanding of disability-related inequalities is crucial for inclusive education policies and practices in Nigeria.

Inclusive Education Policy and the Decolonial Turn

It will be foolhardy to attempt to offer here a comprehensive global history of inclusive education policy. However, it is helpful to at least provide a brief foray into

how globalization and coloniality have shaped the conceptualization of education, disability, and inclusion in Africa. In her *Decolonising 'Through' Inclusive Education*, Elizabeth Walton (2018) among others critiqued the philosophies underpinning global inclusive education policy, described as a "neo-colonial project" (p. 34). Walton argues that countries in the global South might be regarded as "second-generation countries of inclusive education" in that policy is often divorced from the philosophical and epistemic realities of the people for which it is implemented (p. 34). Armstrong et al. (2011) even suggest it may be "idealistic" for first-world countries and donor agencies to expect countries in the developing world to "adopt inclusive education as a policy prescription to address system failure and individual disadvantage" (p. 33). With small classes and the availability of specialized resources being prescribed for the effective implementation of inclusive education, the reality in many developing countries is that of large classes and a lack of essential resources (Phasha et al., 2017).

A shift from the view of inclusive education as a reactive mechanism to individual 'support needs' as seen in the Nigerian national policy to one that demands responsiveness to diversity in its many forms is necessary. It is essential to address educational exclusion as the main source of social exclusion in Nigeria, recognizing the conceptualization and operationalization of inclusive education as a systemic reform issue, with implications for whole school development. Such a broader view includes restructuring culture, policy, and practices in schools to grant the participation and learning of all children liable to the pressures of exclusion, those who supposedly have special educational needs.

Such deconstruction suggests the possibility and hope of a world of true equality of knowledge, philosophy, and thought, where human rights are globally affirmed. Scholars have shown the pivotal role of education as a socializing, liberatory and developmental force (Freire, 2000) in which an acceptable "right to education" is complemented with "rights in education" (Babaci-Wilhite et al., 2012), which includes protection and respect for learners' cultures, needs, and languages. However, as argued by Ghanaian sociologist George Dei, decolonizing the academy through a reframed school curriculum and philosophy requires that we adopt a critical gaze towards educational policy, delivery structures, and processes (Dei, 2016). This implies that we must begin to see race, ethnicity, class, gender, class, religion, language, and (dis)ability as features interconnected with essential identities that learners inevitably bring to the classroom. That is because having communities in which "others" do not belong presents a threat to our identities and masks differences as the source of our strengths (Dei, 2005). By acknowledging education as a fundamental right, we must bring a reading to inclusion that values us all as part of a single humanity. Phasha et al. (2017) highlighted the need to engage in critical questions of creating inclusive pedagogies for schools in Africa, while Walton (2018) and Ndlovu (2019) also touched on the need for an Afrocentric conceptualization of inclusive education based on traditional African ways of being.

The African philosophies of Ubuntu, Ọmọlúàbí, and Ujaama emphasize humanness, good character, interdependence, and communalism. To translate these philosophies into policy and practice in education within the ambience of neo-liberal and

globalization regimes remains a significant challenge. One way to do this is by re-considering the potentiality of African philosophies such as Omoluabi to understand the African people's communal practice as the basis for the conception of their knowledge culture (Shanyanana & Waghid, 2016). On the other hand, Kwasi Wiredu argued that while our colonial history and contemporary experience of coloniality—the invisible and constitutive side of 'modernity' (Quijano, 2007)—has brought us in contact with the over-valuation of foreign philosophical thoughts, we must begin to engage in 'critical reconstruction' of philosophy suited to our present-day existence (Wiredu, 2002, p. 54). On this note of coevality, Wiredu suggested that any African synthesis for "modern" living would include critical assessment of indigenous, Western and Eastern elements. This 'catholicity' that I pursue in the next sections, is important because of our "historically peculiar situation" as Africans (ibid., p. 55).

African and Arabic Philosophies: Embracing Southern Epistemologies

In 2015, Hamid Dabashi published a critique of the canonical privileges of Western epistemology, rhetorically asking *Can Non-Europeans Think?* In the foreword to that book, Walter D. Mignolo also introduced the work of Kishore Mahbubani, a Singaporean diplomat who asked in his own book *Can Asians Think?* Mignolo maintains that the questions that Dabashi and Mahbubani raise are not "whether non-Europeans can do *philosophy*, but whether they/we can *think*" (2015, p. 13). Notably, Mignolo rejects the universalization of philosophy as the only way of thinking, and that "Greek thinkers named their singular way of thinking *philosophy*, and by so doing were appointed as *philosophers* – those who do philosophy" (emphasis mine). The stake here is that philosophy is quite an aberration that has been used as a universal standard to judge and classify knowledge production and inquiry, and this might be true when we contend that Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah could be dismissed as not "philosophies" *stricto censu.* To Mignolo, "philosophy is a regional and historical endeavour and whether we can engage in philosophy or not is irrelevant; what all human beings do is not philosophy, which is not a necessity, but thinking, which is unavoidable" (Dabashi, 2015, p. 13). What Dabashi, Mahbubani, and Mignolo are emphasizing is that disciplinary normativity operates on assumed geopolitics of knowledge and there is a need to 'delink' from the 'disciplinarity' of philosophy (Mignolo, 2007), the racial and gender normativity it evokes and our ideological acceptance of its norms as *the* truth (Spivak, 2003). This "border thinking" of philosophy and social theory is also evident in Timothy Regan's *Non-Western Educational Traditions* (2004), Raewyn Connell's *Southern Theory* (2013), Boaventura De Sousa Santos's *Epistemologies of the South* (2016) and *Sociological Theory Beyond the Canon* (2017) by Syed Farid Alatas and Vineeta Sinha.

According to Santos (2018), Epistemologies of the South concern the production and validation of knowledges anchored in the experiences of resistance of those social groups that have systematically suffered different forms of injustice, oppression, and destruction caused by capitalism, colonialism, and patriarchy. He contends that the epistemological South is not the same as the geographical South, although there is partial overlap. This is because some epistemologies of the South, he argues, have also been emerging from the social and political struggles of the colonized Other in the geographical North. Santos criticized fundamental dualisms of the Western philosophical enterprise even though his own Southern thesis is complicit in what he describes as the 'danger of mirror imaging' of contrasting the epistemologies of the South and the epistemologies of the North (p. 157). To achieve global cognitive justice, we must unsettle the limits of the Western canons by acknowledging that we do not only need alternatives, but also somewhat alternative ways of thinking about alternatives (Santos, 2018, p. 159). In the search for alternative paths to achieve global social justice, Yusef Waghid reminds us that we must situate local African knowledge culture within a global citizenship education anchored on inclusive and equitable human engagement that undermines colonialism, dehumanization, and exclusion (Waghid, 2018).

This philosophical situatedness is what Ayo G. Bello, a Nigerian Philosopher, addressed by tracing the origins of Islamic philosophy and its challenges to African Philosophy. Bello, yet again, emphasizes the insufficiencies of 'naming' the philosophies of non-European origins, especially that of the Middle East and North Africa. He asserts that the names 'Arab philosophy,' Islamic philosophy, or philosophy of the Muslim world may be inappropriate and controversial. Many of the contributors to this philosophical tradition are non-Arab, and not all are Muslims or profess Islam as a religion (Bello, 2017). Nevertheless, the name Arabic philosophy might also arguably be appropriate since all the philosophers who contributed to the philosophies of the Islamic world were competent in the Arabic language. Bello highlighted that while the Qur'an is not a book of philosophy, it was a fertile source from where the earliest Islamic thinkers drew knowledge and inspiration. These philosophers were also influenced by contacts they had with the Greek and Greco-Roman philosophies of Plato and Aristotle (ibid., p. 225). As a result, they made original contributions to various philosophical disciplines, medicine, and education. Among these Islamic thinkers who were reported to have followed the Greek tradition in philosophy are Ibn Sina "Avicenna" (980–1037), Al-Ghazali (1058–1111), Ibn Rushd (Averroes) (1126–1198) Ibn Taymiyyah (1262–1328), and Ibn Khaldun (1332–1404).

On the other hand, Bello maintains that philosophy is only said to be "African" if it addresses an issue of vital concern to Africans, whoever or wherever the author may be. This description highlights the problems discussed by Kwasi Wiredu (2008) as the self-defining struggle of "what is an African philosophy", who can be an African philosopher, and of what essence is doing philosophy on and in Africa? On this note, Bello argues that the issue of self-identity is essential and that philosophers like Ibn Khaldun and St Augustine may not identify themselves as African philosophers even though they were of African origin. While Bello's definition of African philosophy is not unproblematic, he recognizes that the philosophical enterprise as

done in universities of higher learning was a colonial import. Arguably, with the possible exception of Ethiopia and Mali, the earliest philosophers in Africa were either westerners or western-trained locals, corroborating Wiredu's assertions on the postcolonial evolution of philosophy in Africa. The problem of African philosophy is actually beyond the struggle for self-definition, as Bello contends that it also has the multi-layered problem of language due to the pluralistic nature of most African states (Bello, 2017, p. 227) and what Ngugi Wa Thiong'o described as the endangerment of African languages through the ruling relations of coloniality (Wa Thiong'o, 1992).

Ọmọlúàbí and the Yoruba Worldview of an 'Ideal' Being

Having established this background, it is now useful to proceed to consideration of a case of educational philosophy in relation to schooling in Nigeria, my home country. The Hausa, Fulani, Igbo, and Yoruba are the major ethnic groups in Nigeria. The Yoruba are the second-largest ethnic group spread across the Southwest region of the country. They revere Oduduwa as their ancestors and Ile-Ife as their ancestral home, speaking numerous dialects of the Yoruba language. They created kingdoms governed by an *Oba* (king) and a council representing distinct city lineages. A typical Yoruba community includes several compounds consisting of a male head, wife/wives, children, and relatives. A village may include both natives and foreigners, but the Yoruba village chief is usually the eldest man, adjudicating problems and maintaining communal cohesion (Falola, 2001).

Yoruba traditional education is based on the concept of "*Ọmọlúàbí*", loosely translated as "ideal being" (Akinyemi, 2003, p. 162). The term *Ọmọlúàbí* is made up of three morphemes of *ọmọ* (which means child), olu-iwà (or oluwà, chief of character), and *bí* (meaning give birth to), which could be directly translated to the 'child whom the chief of character begets' (Fayemi, 2009). Within the concept of *Ọmọlúàbí*, one's Iwà or character, occupies a central position, for an *Ọmọlúàbí* is a good, virtuous, or morally upright person who possesses all the 'character excellences' required for goodliness in the community (Oyinloye, 2021). To put it differently, the virtues of *Ọmọlúàbí* are desirable not only for individual benefit but also for the benefit of one's family and society (Olanipekun, 2017). The ultimate goal of Yoruba traditional education is to make every individual an "Ọmọlúàbí", by fostering strong character and preparing each individual to become a valuable member of society. However, Fayemi (2009) cautions that an "*Ọmọlúàbí*" is not a person of flawless character. This is because the Yoruba believe "humans can only, and ought to, strive towards the ideal, because perfection is illusory" (Fayemi, 2009, p. 47). The fundamental principles of Omoluabi as developed by Wande Abimbola (1975) cited in Ayandele et al. (2020) and further illustrated by Bukola Oyinloye (2021) include, good use of language (ọ̀rọ̀ sísọ); humility and respect (ìtẹ́ríba); goodwill (inú rere); truthfulness and honesty (òtítọ́); good character (ìwa rere); bravery and courage (akínkanjú); hard work (isé síse); intelligence (ọpọlọ́ pípé), moderation (ìwọ̀n tún wọ̀nsì), and patience

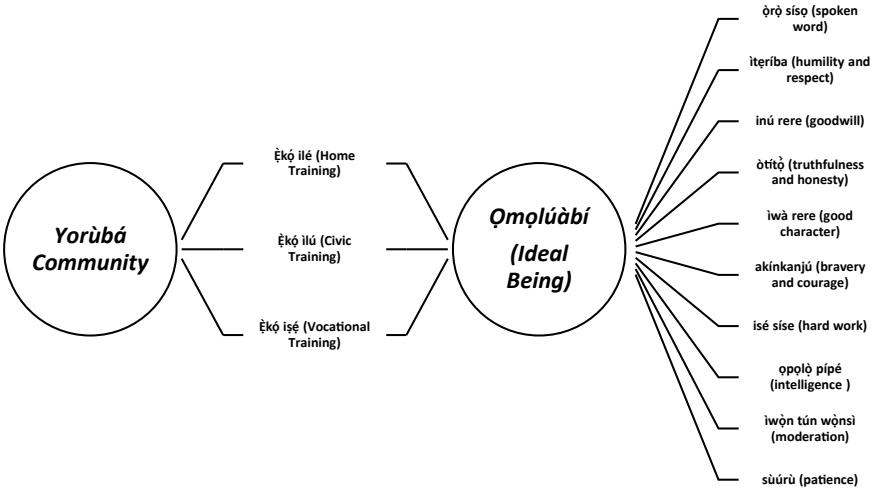

Fig. 1 Ọmọlúàbí educational framework

(sùúrù). An important addition to these principles is ẹ̀kọ́ (education/training) as education plays a significant role in the development of an ethically and morally stable mature human person (Akanbi & Jekayinfa, 2016; Dada, 2018). As identified by Olaiya (2017), there are three aspects to the traditional Yorùbá education essential in assessing whether an individual is an *ọmọlúàbí*, namely, ẹ̀kọ́ ilé (home training), ẹ̀kọ́ iṣẹ́ (vocational training) and ẹ̀kọ́ ìlú (civic training). See Fig. 1 for an illustration of an educational framework of Omoluabi.

To cement these values, the entire Yoruba community is regarded as the 'school,' and the primary teachers are the parents and other responsible community members. Which explains the Yoruba proverb that says "oju´me´rin ni´i´bi´mo˙, igba ni´i´wo'o´(only two individuals—represented by four eyes— are involved in the conception and birth of a child, but everyone in the society—represented by two hundred eyes – participates in the child's training)" (Akinyemi, 2003, p. 163) Thus, education for the Yoruba is an all-inclusive process that entails character-building and accumulating cultural knowledge and skills to participate in the community's life (Fayemi, 2009). As a result, whether persons are labelled as Ọmọlúàbí (cultured) or Ọmọlasan (uncultured)—depending on the context—this denotes whether a person is socially integrated or regarded as a misfit or cultural deviant within a particular social milieu or social organization.

Fayemi further draws on the communitarian philosophy of personhood to explain why in the African conception of personhood, as a contrast to a typical Western understanding, the community takes priority both ontologically and epistemologically over the individual. This is because, in the African community, it is the community that defines a person as a *person* emphasizing the ubuntu philosophy "*Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu*" that is "I am because we are, and since we are, therefore I am" (see also Chapter 7).

Then, to reach personhood or become an ideal being, one must undergo cultural absorption, which Menkiti defines as "social and ritual transformation until one achieves the entire complement of excellence". The community determines this transformation to Menkiti by introducing certain norms (Menkiti, 1984). In this context, a community is defined as a social-political arrangement that is based on the social being and belongingness of people who share communal values, rather than a social-political arrangement made up of people or groups linked together by biological and non-biological interpersonal bonds. Advocates of the radical communitarian theory argue that the community determines an individual's social, religious, political, and moral existence. Representative scholars with this orientation include Edward Blyden, John Mbiti, Jomo Kenyetta, Julius Nyerere, Kwame Nkrumah, Leopold Senghor, Bolaji Idowu, and lfeanyi Menkiti (Oyeshile, 2006). However, in some cases their position on the radical communal thesis arguably threatens the agency of the individual, since they assert that community values take precedence over individual values, and that the individual's welfare must be viewed through the lens of the community's welfare, because the individual cannot exist without the community (Fayemi, 2009). These values serve as the foundational basis of communalism which define and guide social relations in the form of attitudes and behaviour that should exist between individuals living together in a community who not only share a social life but also a sense of common good (Gyekye, 1996: as cited in Oyeshile, 2006, p. 104). Some of the values shared within this community might include sharing resources, burden, social responsibility, caring for others, interdependence, solidarity, reciprocal obligation, social harmony, and mutual trust (Oyeshile, 2006). Whether there is a presence of dissonance or an absence of social cohesion, a value-based democratic citizenship education such as the Omoluabi educational framework becomes instrumental in achieving a global citizenship education that offers the opportunity to recognize rights, mutual respect, and responsibilities of individuals within the community (Waghid, 2018). In the next section, I will elaborate on why social cohesion is also critical for the rise and fall of a community.

Asabiyyah: A Khaldunic Worldview for Social Cohesion

Another relevant philosophical position was developed centuries ago by Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406). As a foremost ethnographer of the Bedouin, Ibn Khaldun (also discussed in Chapter 10) occupies a pivotal position in Arab, Islamic, and Western cultures, exemplifying what Ali Mazrui (1986) would call a "triple heritage". He made significant contributions in anthropology, politics, economics, sociology, socialization, and education. Ibn Khaldun, born in Tunisia in 1332, was named Abdul-Rahman Ibn Muhammed Ibn Khaldun after one of his grandfathers. Before he was born, his family, originally from Yemen, had for many centuries settled in Seville, Al Andalus (modern day Spain), which remained under an Islamic rule until Ferdinand III conquered it in 1248. At the age of 20, he had memorized the Qur'an and went on to excel in Islamic Jurisprudence, business, education, and philosophy.

Ibn Khaldun ultimately produced extensive scholarly writings—most notably, his *Muqaddimah*—and died in Egypt in 1406 after being repeatedly appointed as a Maliki Chief Judge.

Ibn Khaldun preoccupied himself with study of internal *(batin)* and external *(zahir)* elements of the Bedouin society (Alatas & Sinha, 2017) by questioning why a cohesive society had become elusive. To Ibn Khaldun, there are two types of societies: "nomadic society (*'umran badawi*) and sedentary society (*'umran hadhrari*)". Outlying regions and mountains, pastureland, wasteland regions, and desert fringes are examples of the former, while cities, towns, villages, and small communities are examples of the latter. Ibn Khaldun's new science identified economic and urban institutions, the state, and solidarity ('asabiyyah) as the fundamental elements of society (ibid., p. 22). Ibn Khaldun introduced the concept of asabiyyah as a key concept in the science of society, which is loosely translated as "group feeling", in his *Muqaddimah*– a multi-layered historiographical analysis of 'universal' history (Alatas, 2020; Santos, 2018). Alatas (2017) describes asabiyyah as a form of solidarity of a group that is premised on the knowledge of its members that they share a common ancestry. He explains further that:

> Ibn Khaldun believed that the form of group feeling or solidarity based on 'asabiyyah was far more influential than other forms of solidarity. The stronger the 'asabiyyah, the tighter the group and the greater the degree of mutual support and assistance. The 'asabiyyah of the Bedouin was more stable than that of the townspeople. This enabled them a greater degree of mutual cooperation and courage. However, 'asabiyyah tends to decrease over time owing to certain policies employed by a leader as well as the characteristics of settled, urban life. The relatively more opulent nature of urban life has the effect of reducing 'asabiyyah' to the point that it separates the rich from the poor. (Alatas, 2017, p. 30)

However, Syed Farid Alatas (2017), further categorized three types of relationships capable of forming 'asabiyyah.' These include blood ties (*silat al-rahim*), clientship (*wala*) and alliance (*hilf*). The type of 'asabiyyah is dependent on the predominance of each element in the group. For instance, 'asabiyyah' that is founded largely on blood ties is most influential and reliable and establishes the strongest feelings of solidarity.

Asabiyyah has also been described as a civilizational framework that promotes social inclusion and solidarity through education (tarbiyah), teaching, and refinement in the Muqaddimah (Khaldun, 1967; Meftah, 2011). The literal meaning of Tarbiyah is embedded in the Khaldunic view of education, which means to raise, cultivate, and socialize people and things. According to Ibn Khaldun, education is a tool for socialization obtained from those related to the ruler through common descent, common upbringing (al-tarbiyah), or old ties to the dynasty. Teaching, according to Khaldun, is a craft as well as a social organization phenomenon (Khaldun, 1967, p. 411). Ibn Khaldun maintained that a human being is naturally driven to satisfy his thinking needs by learning and gaining knowledge; however, this satisfaction cannot be achieved alone or in isolation, but rather through cooperation between individuals (Meftah, 2011).

To Ibn Khaldun (1967, p. 417), a single human being cannot live by themself and can only live a complete life in association with their fellow beings. As a result,

teaching that fully meets human needs can only be accomplished through collaboration, which only occurs in the context of urbanization. Ibn Khaldun believed that refinement refers to proper habits and courteous manners, which is consistent with the literal meaning of 'adab' (good manners), from which refinement (ta'dib) is derived (Meftah, 2011, p. 6). Refinement (ta'dib) is an act of teaching (ta'lim) for Khaldun, but not every act of teaching is a refinement.

The work of Ibn Khaldun is devoted to the examination of the notion that turbulence, political instabilities, and a lack of social cohesiveness or inclusion have nothing to do with religion but rather with the ways people organize their lives, construct societies, and keep them running (Santos, 2018). Durkheim's concept of social solidarity may be traced back to Ibn Khaldun's asabiyyah. Santos (2018) and (Alatas, 2020) draw our attention to the ubiquitous risk of North-centric arrogance as they designated Ibn Khaldun as the "unacknowledged" pioneer of social science. They characterize Ibn Khaldun as a contributor to the arts, rhetoric, logic, language, and education, centuries before Marx and Weber, born long before the establishment of modern academic disciplines. However, when the West 'discovered' Khaldun, he was 'pigeonholed, and his ideas were interpreted in a way that served European interests' (Santos, 2018, p. 302).

Unlike Ibn Khaldun, Durkheim distinguished between two types of solidarity: social orders are kept together either by shared cultural homogeneity (mechanical solidarity) or by the functional interdependence of their constituent elements (organic solidarity). While these sociological concepts were useful in traditional cultures where Durkheim and Ibn Khaldun theorized, *modern* societies, constructed on intricate relationships between individuals with diverse origins, interests, and values, necessitate a new sort of social glue (Malešević, 2022). The complicated division of labour that fosters an environment of mutual interdependence, according to Durkheim, is where this new social adhesive can be found: a social order emerges because individuals are dependent on one another.

Thinking with Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah Perspectives for Inclusive Higher Education

What do the concepts *Ọmọlúàbí* and Asabiyyah mean for inclusion in the context of African schooling? How might these philosophies either implicitly or explicitly influence teachers' and students' perceptions of disability and the inclusion of students with disabilities or other markers of difference that students bring to class? In 2021, as part of my PhD research, I conducted ethnographic fieldwork in Nigeria to explore how universities enact the policy of disability inclusion in higher education. I immersed myself on campus following the daily (and nightly) activities of university students with disabilities (SWDs). During this study, I engaged with the question of how social, political, cultural, and textual relations of some key actors in the university coordinate their daily activities and shape the institution's culture.

Using interviews, participant observation, and documents analysis as ethnographic tools, I examined the "relations of ruling" (Smith, 2005) of the local and extra-local settings of disability inclusion policies within the university. This was done by mapping the experiences of 'entry-level informants' (students with disabilities) and relating their experiences to what institutional ethnographers describe as 'level two informants' which consists of SWDs' classmates, support staff, lecturers, counsellors, academic managers, and other interlocutors engaging in a 'work process' with the entry-level participants. I co-led a focus group discussion with two disability support staff during one of my observation sessions. I asked a group of undergraduate pre-service teachers to describe how an inclusive higher education should look based on their personal experiences with disabilities inside and outside the classroom. The students were given 25 min to write down their opinions, and their comments were compiled and analyzed thematically. Although my research adopts a decolonial approach to analyzing the conceptualisation of disability and inclusion in Nigerian universities, I had not outrightly set out to use Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah as theoretical frameworks. I was already in the field working with the host institution for my study when writing the first version of this chapter. The host institution for my study has a huge Yoruba community and a strong islamic environment. While doing a preliminary analysis of my relations with students and staff in the field, I began to reflect about my sociological understanding of these two concepts and what they mean for my research.

I paid attention to the situational application of *Iwà* as the unwritten constitution for the everyday running of both public and private affairs of the Yorùbá communities. It is the moral yardstick by which the Yoruba measure a person, for everyone has a set of rules to follow at home, at work, in school, and in any relationship, even in simple greetings (Falola & Afolayan, 2017).

As related to me in the excerpt below, one of the informants' relational understandings of disability began at home before their classroom interaction with students with visual and hearing impairments. It actuated their understanding of the need for a 'working' classroom atmosphere where all students do not have barriers to learning. The informant displayed a sense of solidarity with their colleagues who are lacking the necessary support to participate in class By requesting that the university do more for their colleagues, students are aware of the institutional narratives around disability inclusion and have received training on making their classes inclusive, leaving few surprises in what they learn at the university as pre-service teachers in training.

> Before entering the university, I have always had an idea of what disability is because my grandmother was a blind woman and she stayed with us before she died. On getting to the university and… meeting few classmates who are visually impaired was a beautiful thing to behold. It was in school I learned that those who are visually impaired make use of typewriter to write during exams, and the fact that they record in class when lectures are going on. Also, they are not always segregated in class and everyone communicates with them so well.
>
> Personally, inclusive education is a good thing because it brings the people who are visually impaired and hearing impaired together with those that do not have any of these. Inclusive higher education should be done in a way that everybody in class is carried along

> together. But most times it does not work because when lecturers are in class and the interpreter for the person with hearing impairment does not come in time. The hearing-impaired person is missing out a lot and it can be quite hard for the person to understand. So, I feel like most times before the class begins and the interpreter is not around, they should wait for the interpreter before the class begins. Also, school should have enough funding to help those who are physically challenged so as to provide enough materials for them.

Students thus demonstrate their understanding of the role of language and ideology in social relations and the moderation of their uses for power, control, and patience. For them, inclusive higher education should mirror the society where everyone belongs and have the resources to participate equally. Another Informant said the following:

> Inclusive higher education has helped me a lot in understanding of the term disability. This is because it involved educating both the normal (sic) children and children with disabilities by helping them develop a feeling of belongingness and security and would make them not to feel inferior to others.

Ibn Khaldun argued that social cohesion, or "asabiyyah", has a biological foundation in common descent. While studying the rise and fall of political rulership, he combined psychological, cultural, and material factors to understand group feelings. He also linked general social phenomena to fundamental characteristics of human behaviour influenced by kinship, reciprocity expectations, and empathic emotions. This seems directly related to the following explanation by one of my informants:

> We have about three to four disabled students and interacting with them almost daily has helped my relational and communication skills. I have been able to witness how they act and react to things which I can say have helped a lot of my reasoning…it has therefore shown me how they carry out their daily activities and how they participate in school activities. This may as well give them a sense of belonging with other students.

Although these students have a positive disposition towards inclusive education in both philosophy and pedagogical practice, some still feel the approach is less beneficial to students with disabilities due to the neglect and lack of resources they arguably face. Their positive attitudes as pre-service teachers may have been informed not only by the values of Ọmọlúàbí or Ibn Khaldun's social solidarity but also by the country's legislation and school factors (Adigun, 2021). Moreover, as Adigun rightly suggests, it might have stemmed from personal experiences gathered in support of underprivileged individuals. In particular, this would include those who were internally displaced or had sustained disabilities as a result of experiencing various communal clashes and insurgencies in Nigeria (Adigun, 2021, p. 14). My argument here is that these two philosophies are not ends in themselves in any given society, especially in the classroom where other coercive factors accompany learning as social change.

The two excerpts below capture the collapse of students' sense of solidarity for their counterparts with disabilities. As much as they want them to enjoy a great sense of security and belongingness, they also feel students with disabilities should be educated in special classrooms:

> Based on my thoughts and inclusive higher education is not conducive or appropriate for the impaired or disabled. This is because they might feel absurd or not comfortable taking lectures with the non-disabled or impaired students, but when they are around their fellow disabled students, they might feel a bit more comfortable knowing well that they are not the only ones with the disability sitting in the class. Therefore, a special class should be used for the disabled, for the lecturer to be able to fully focus on them as well… We don't need to lie to ourselves that these people get everything that they need or the amounts of understanding and access to their need, both in their relationship with the lecturers, students and even in classroom or lecture rooms.

Another student said:

> I'm totally against an inclusive education because people with special needs in this class don't get the required help and assistance that they need. It involves both the academic aspects relating with the fellow classmates and basic amenities needed. Basically, inclusive education does not focus on the welfare of the people with disability because …it does not help to foster the academic success of the persons with disability, rather special school or special institution that focuses on them will meet their needs.

I will turn to Santos (2018) to interpret how Ibn Khaldun described this decline of group feelings of alliance, as he emphasized that asabiyyah (group feeling) can either raise or raze down a tribe. He offered a dialectical argument that the reasons that cause a given tribe or society to constitute a State are the same reasons that lead to its decline. As Santos explains, when a cohesive society is formed, it creates the conditions that will destroy its cohesion (Santos, 2018, p. 297). In the excerpts above, students are seen as agitating for an improved classroom environment for the colleagues they have bonded with as a group, since otherwise the university loses its ability to deliver an inclusive higher education. The pedagogical practice of disability inclusion created this group's feeling of social solidarity as developed by these students, and the practice, in turn, created some of the internal and external conditions capable of destroying that same asabiyyah. In such a case, Santos makes a connection between Ibn Khaldun and Durkheim, by noting that "asabiyyah is Durkheim's mechanic social solidarity: urban societies are created and then solidarity stops; what does Durkheim say? He says it must be rebuilt as he introduced the concept of organic solidarity" (Santos, 2018, p. 299).

Concluding Thoughts

The future of philosophy is global philosophy, and philosophy must be unbound in order to embrace ideas and thoughts from the periphery (Brooks, 2013). The idea of global philosophy is that different philosophical approaches must engage more substantially to solve philosophical problems, including for improved educational policies. While using available resources within one intellectual tradition may be convenient, understanding other philosophical traditions requires a significant transactional cost. What I have done in this chapter, without assuming expertise on the philosophical depth and breadth of Ibn Khaldun's work nor Yoruba cosmologies,

is to join other thinkers in this book and elsewhere (e.g. Bhambra, 2014; Connell, 2013) to search for new horizons to improve our clarity about philosophical and sociological issues at the heart of global education.

I have shown in this chapter what the philosophies of Omoluabi and Asabiyyah in educational policy can offer towards achieving and promoting community cohesiveness for inclusion and development, and how these concepts may be especially relevant in Nigeria today where resources to implement and sustain inclusive higher education is lacking. While communities must maintain local knowledge, support inclusive processes, and strengthen the legitimacy of cultural institutions through situational awareness and education—a level of cooperation and solidarity, according to Ibn Khaldun, is a prerequisite for a community's well-being. Khaldun's view of education was first a social function, because it represents the nation's worldview, and the framework on which societal institutions must be built. The socialization function of education as a tool for social cohesion is the second function of education. A child is moulded to adopt and act following society's norms through the dual function of education (Khaldun, 1967) to achieve a 'refined' individual or an *Ọmọlúàbí*.

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The "Happy Island" of Polish Music Education: Self-Orientalization of Educational Philosophies in Post-Soviet Europe

Adam Switala and Piotr Majewski

Abstract Polish and international scholars have frequently made use of the postcolonial lens as a presumably valid tool to examine conditions in post-soviet Europe. The mutual Orientalization of the "other" during the Cold War period in both democratic and communist camps appears to have occasioned prevailing after-effects in the field of Polish music education. This chapter discusses the above thesis in relation to the writings of three highly influential representatives of postcolonial thought: Edward Said, Alexander Kiossev, and Rabindranath Tagore, as well as the conceptual frameworks of Pierre Bourdieu and Antonio Gramsci. Sections one and two explain the use of the concepts of Orientalism and self-colonization as an analytical framework for the chapter, and briefly discuss the rationale for viewing Poland as a postcolonial country. Next, selected articles by Polish scholars are analyzed with regard to the historical context of music education in Poland and a broader international perspective. The contemporary discourse of Polish educational policymakers is discussed with regard to the underlying philosophical and ideological approaches. Finally, the chapter emphasizes some of the main issues preventing the system of general music education in Poland from acquiring a more inclusive and democratic framework and proposes possible future directions for sustainable change.

Keywords Music education · Orientalism · Poland · Eastern Europe · Postcolonial theory

Orientalism as an Analytical Framework

This article discusses some of the dilemmas of the debate around music education in Poland in the context of Edward Said's concept of Orientalism and the pedagogical

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thought of Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941). Although Edward Said (1935–2003), the founder of postcolonial studies as an academic field, did not directly address education in most of his writings, his ideas remain highly relevant through his critique of the general sociopolitical constructs in which education is situated. An accomplished classical pianist himself, Said made significant contributions to the field of music education in particular, as co-founder, together with Daniel Barenboim, of the West-Eastern Divan Orchestra of young Israeli and Palestinian musicians. The Barenboim–Said Foundation also supported many educational projects, including the Early Childhood Musical Education Project in Andalusia (Barenboim–Said Foundation, n.d.). Said (1978) introduced the concept of Orientalism, addressing general issues such as "the representation of other cultures, societies, histories; the relationship between power and knowledge; the role of relationships between different kinds of texts, between text and context, between text and history" (Said, 1985). Said's *Orientalism* immediately became both popular and controversial among scholars and was subject to critique, some of which Said comprehensively addressed in his later lectures and publications. Orientalism as a concept, however, originally used with reference to Western depictions of the Orient, has become a popular framework for analyzing different forms of "othering" in an increasingly multicultural world.

There are at least two reasons why Said's concept of orientalism should be considered a relevant tool for educational studies: firstly, education is always part of a broader socioeconomic puzzle, and as such, it is inevitably political. Every aspect of education, from *curriculum* content to teaching methods, is interpreted through a lens constituted by a set of values specific to a particular country, time, and political system. School education is subject to various cultural wars—disputes about its aims and contents. This concern is of particular importance in Poland, considering the context of the current political agenda, often described as nationalistic or even authoritarian (Jaskułowski et al., 2022). As Said (1985) observes, "Even so relatively inert an object as a literary text is commonly supposed to gain some of its identity from its historical moment interacting with the attentions, judgements, scholarship, and performances of its readers". Secondly, education is indeed an essential tool, either for or against a change of the sociopolitical *status quo,* the forefront of all political friction. While it might appear obvious that analyzing a country's educational model without being aware of the broader historical and sociopolitical context can hardly produce valid conclusions, this alone might not be sufficient to understand the complex nature of relationships between education and politics. Said emphasizes the fundamental meaning of discourse for imposing and preserving doctrines and power structures. In the light of Said's writing it seems apparent that as much as the vibrant societal context is what keeps ideas and doctrines alive, it can also be what prevents them from evolving. A change in doctrines not supported by a corresponding change in the discourse is unlikely to result in sustainable societal change. Education as a device is both shaped by political discourse and capable of transforming it. That is why power structures within education are often disguised, hidden behind facades of slogans and seemingly innovative ideas which cunningly avoid a disclosure of the underlying philosophies and sets of values upon which the system is funded. A deep understanding of the local educational discourse in relation to its historical and

contemporary sociopolitical context is therefore essential for drawing meaningful conclusions when analyzing the goals, challenges, and issues of every educational system.

Polish music education seems to be stuck in a vicious cycle of dissatisfaction, shared by most stakeholders, and reflected in many alarming studies indicating low musical literacy among compulsory school pupils (Weiner & Waluga, 2016), problems related to teachers' motivation and competence in both general education and music schools (Chmurzynska, 2012; Krajewski & Schmidt, 2014), and low social status of music-related professions (Walczak et al., 2016). Nevertheless, many scholars agree that numerous attempts at introducing sustainable change in the field have had a limited impact on the classroom reality in Polish schools (Łabanow-Jastrząb & Białkowski, 2020; Przychodzińska, 2001; Rakowski, 2010). We propose the postcolonial lens as a potential tool to overcome this impasse through broadening the scope of the investigation beyond a narrow view of education. Said (1985) explains: "there is no such fixed and non-trivial object as Shakespeare independent of his editors, the actors who played his roles, the translators who put him in other languages, the hundreds of millions of readers who have read him or watched performances of his plays since the sixteenth century". Indeed, problems in education do not originate from within the classroom, and they cannot be solved within one.

Critique influenced by postcolonial discourse can serve as a helpful lens in the process of exploring underlying issues in pedagogy, but it can also be a sobering mirror. In order to be able to see the invisible, look through the surface and notice what lies beneath, we often need to remain deeply rooted in the local context with one foot, while stepping into a new refreshing paradigm with the other. At first, such a move is likely to feel uncomfortable, yet it may be essential for achieving a novel critical point of view. Said himself openly stated, he had experienced inner tensions related to his multi-facade cultural identity, i.e. when noting, that some of his "cultural heroes" were prejudiced against Arabs (Mishra, 2021). Those tensions and identity clashes are likely to have been among the foundational stones of postcolonial studies. Utilizing a plurality of competing or even contradictory philosophical paradigms for the foundation of a novel approach is not unique for the case of Orientalism. Rabindranath Tagore, one of the most influential educational philosophers of the early twentieth century, naturally fits into this framework as a thinker deeply involved in education who developed his pedagogical concept by balancing between Indian national heritage and the institutional *status quo* of the British schooling system. Both Said and Tagore made fundamental contributions to postcolonial critique. Moreover, both were also renowned musicians. Another reason for mentioning Tagore in this chapter is the apparent similarity of some of his ideas to the pedagogical approach developed by the Polish physician, pedagogue, and writer Janusz Korczak (1878–1942) who together with Maria "Maryna" Rogowska-Falska (1877–1944) and Stefania Wilczyńska (1886–1942) started implementing a new philosophy of education in Poland in the early twentieth century. Both Korczak and Tagore were influenced by the thought of American philosopher John Dewey and both emphasized the importance of child-centered education. Korczak remains a key figure in Polish pedagogical thought, however, his progressive concepts, while admirable, increasingly seem

disconnected from actual classroom practices. In the field of Polish post-war *music* education, they hardly gained any recognition.

The Absent Deity. Self-Colonization as an Analytical Framework

Over the past few decades, Polish and international scholars frequently reached out for the postcolonial lens as an arguably valid tool to examine post-soviet Europe after the political re-orientation of the region initiated by the rise of the Solidarity movement in Poland and sealed by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. The fall of communism, as well as the political aftermath of the wars in the former Yugoslavia, drew significant attention in scholarly writing (Kovačević, 2008), marking an end to the ideological framework established after the Second World War. Some scholars claim that the mutual orientalization (Kovačević, 2008; Said, 1985) of the "other" during the Cold War period in the democratic and communist camps has prevailing after-effects. A highly antagonizing discourse helped justify the political transition, at a cost of perpetuating the dependence of post-Soviet countries from the West as part of their new identity. This process was later reinforced by native anti-communist narratives, leading to Eastern Europe's particular form of "self-orientalization" (Kovačević, 2008; Kiossev 2011, 1995). However, looking at the Polish political and socioeconomic situation through a postcolonial lens can also be problematic. After appearing to become a trend about a decade ago, the interest of Polish scholars in this epistemological framework decreased. Some scholars presented the postcolonial paradigm as an important and valid tool for interpreting contemporary events in Poland (Carey & Raciborski, 2004; Thompson, 2010, 2014), while others seemed to be more skeptical, emphasizing the possible misuse of postcolonial theory in the Eastern European context (Borkowska-Arciuch, 2010).

Nevertheless, the postcolonial lens, if applied with care, promises in some ways to shed new light on certain issues of Polish music education and its particular isolation. This becomes explicit if elements of various postcolonial theories are applied to problematize the notion of system transformation in the context of its impact on Polish music education. The political transformation, which began in 1989, is often presented in the form of a simplified narrative, as a transition from authoritarian communism toward liberal democracy, understood as individual freedom, and capitalism represented by a free market (Buden, 2012, pp. 28–31). Drawing on postcolonial theory allows us to challenge this notion. As Boris Buden (2005, p. 113) argues, the nature of Eastern European capitalism, which broke free from the forms of social solidarity institutionalized in the welfare state and became "even more capitalist" than its Western original, shows that the concept of authoritarianism cannot be unequivocally and solely attributed to the communist system. It is only when the discourses of transformation are freed from the Cold War opposition of Eastern totalitarianism and Western democracy, which orientalizes Eastern European

societies, that it becomes possible to reject the narrative, still influential in post-communist countries, according to which capitalism is synonymous with democracy and freedom and a natural, desirable, and inevitable organization of social life. Paradoxically, as Buden (2005, p. 116) notes, the subject of the post-socialist transformation was not at all, as Eastern European liberals would have it, the "free individual of an emerging democracy", but rather an anti-individualistic and collective nation. In many post-communist societies, this resulted in the domination of ethno-nationalist ideologies in the public-political sphere. Those ideologies offered illusionary notions of community, care, and belonging at the very moment when previous forms of societal solidarity, belonging to the status quo before 1989, were being invalidated and destroyed by the capitalist system (Porter-Szücs, 2014, pp. 421–444).

The question of the nature of Eastern European political transformation in the context of postcolonial theory can also be viewed as a question about the dominant discourse used to analyze and describe the persistence and disintegration of the socialist. Alexander Kiossev (1995, 2011) emphasizes yet another, often overlooked dimension of the ongoing debate: the process of political transformation in Eastern Europe did not consist solely of the decolonization of post-soviet countries, which involved among other things the rejection of Soviet cultural, educational, economic, and political ideas and practices—but also of what he calls a process of "self-colonisation" by the newly emerging national elites, looking up to "imagined Western patterns". This process of self-colonization, the origins of which can be found in ideas and modernizing practices of the nineteenth-century elites of European semi-peripheral societies, indicates, according to Kiossev, that also after the fall of communism the new elites succumbed to the political, cultural, and economic power of the West. This process "transformed them into […] lateral viewers […] in a situation where they had to recognize self-evidently the foreign cultural dominance and voluntarily absorb the basic values and categories" of western world (Kiossev 2011, p. 5).

The adoption of a postcolonial perspective, therefore, allows for fundamental changes in the key concepts defining the identity of the model of education in place in Poland since the 1990s—and music education in particular. This new identity can be characterized, as we aim to prove in the following sections of this article, by the privileging of a certain kind of discourse, the constitutive element of which consists in defining what education "is" and what it "is not", and what, consequently, should become part of the teaching process and what should be left out. The dominance of this discourse can be observed in the presence of two characteristic phenomena. The first is what can be described as combining the seemingly contradictory sense of inferiority of the self-colonizing post-socialist elites with their sense of their own positively valorized exceptionality, expressed in their ambivalent attitude toward contemporary Western educational models. On one hand, the new Polish elites do feel a deep connection to the historical model of Western education—as imagined by them; on the other, they identify its various contemporary expressions as threatening to the unique identity of Polish national education. Within this conservative, compensatory, and even megalomaniacal discourse, power structures are reproduced through a myth of "proper" Western education to be practiced in Poland, which

had already ceased to function in the contemporary West. Contemporary Western European educational models are presented as corrupt: they have departed from the canonical paradigms that constitute Western cultural heritage, such as objective good, objective beauty, and objective truth; they are infected by various corrupt ideologies, associated—within this discourse—above all with the cultural revolution of 1968, such as relativism, nihilism, cultural Marxism, postmodernism, anti-humanism, or cosmopolitanism. Thus, instead of serving the purpose of shaping new generations of Europeans in the spirit of universal values, rather vaguely defined here as "Greek-Judeo-Christian heritage", they in fact promote what is viewed as a rejection of the axiology on which the traditional Western model of education was supposed to be built (Jaskułowski et al., 2022). Polish education has therefore become the archetypal model of "classically Western" education, and needs to be preserved "as is" in order to eventually play a key role in the revival of "truly European" education. According to Kiossev (2011), it is clear though, that the perception of contemporary Western Europe among the self-colonized post-soviet societies still retains the tinge of something sacred. Despite the heavy critique, there is still a transcendent aura of its civilizational superiority shining above the West, an absent deity, the "main signifier" that cannot be rejected outright. The West remains above all a "civilisational superego", i.e. the only entity that can provide the self-colonizing society of the European periphery with subjective recognition.

A direct expression of the second phenomena is the superior social position of the protagonists of this specific conservative, nationalistic discourse depicted above. Their prevailing strong political position, despite turbulent sociopolitical changes, appears to be both reflected and constituted by the fact that, after 1989, many key positions in various national institutions are continuously occupied by representatives of those new elites, endorsing the model of post-socialist, self-colonized education. As a result, the nationalistic, conservative educational philosophy aiming at preventing students from the exposure to "corrupt" contemporary ideologies of "anti-values" often wears a disguise of a reformatory and pro-European movement.

Happy Island with Issues

In her article "Music Education in Poland—a Solitary Island or Integral Element of the Land of Education", Zofia Konaszkiewicz (2008), who for years chaired the Music Education Department of the Fryderyk Chopin Music University in Warsaw, draws a specific picture of the Polish music education system. In this picture, communist Poland is a "happy island", where "high culture" and inclusive music education are doing great to such an extent that the whole world envies them. Unfortunately, the island's high prosperity is brutally terminated by political changes in 1989. The island was allegedly "crushed" against the mentality of the young generation and spoiled by the ideas of the 1968 cultural revolution. Young people, driven by pop culture, reject the three fundamental values of European heritage: objective truth, objective good, and objective beauty, replacing them with relativism, nihilism, and

hedonism (Konaszkiewicz, 2008). According to Konaszkiewicz, the attitude of the young generation was a product of political change rather than a strong expression of a previously suppressed voice. As a result, Poland had to face the same issues with which the West had already been struggling for decades (Konaszkiewicz, 2008).

Konaszkiewicz's article is relevant here for several reasons. Firstly, it reflects the predominant attitude toward popular culture among the people holding key positions in many state institutions responsible for music education in Poland. A characteristic feature of this particular perception of pop culture is, above all, a strong reluctance toward gaining a genuine understanding of it, and a patronizing approach rooted in a rigorous definition of what "true culture" is supposed to be (Krajewski, 2003, pp. 18–19). Hence, popular music is depicted as a medium of vulgar, superficial, and ephemeral content, created mostly by and for youth masses, people marked by "folk aesthetics" and "barbaric taste"—as opposed to the "privileged aristocracy of spirit and good taste", i.e. individuals with the appropriate formal training, knowledge, aesthetic competence, and appropriate "pure taste" (Bourdieu, 2005, pp. 43–45). Understood this way, popular music, as opposed to "serious" or "contemporary classical" music, is portrayed as a genre within which true Western values cannot be expressed and promoted. This discourse draws an image of popular music as an expression of pseudo-creativity that constitutes one of the greatest threats to art music. Popular music is threatening because it is in fact a tool of the multidimensional hegemony of the contemporary West, which after 1968 has abandoned its historical identity by dissociating itself from its Greek-Judeo-Christian roots and its artistic and philosophic heritage. Considering the above paradigm, it becomes clear why Konaszkiewicz persistently defends Polish music education, even its communist period, against what can be seen as the aggression of popular music.

The above approach toward popular music, and more broadly—toward pop culture, has a long tradition in Poland. Its most important co-creator and propagator was Antonina Kłoskowska, the author of "Mass culture. Critique and defence" (1980), a highly influential book in which the process of emergence of mass culture and its specific features in Western countries and in socialist Poland is being reconstructed. Although the term "popular culture" is absent from Kłoskowska's work, she examines mass culture not through the lens of the transmitted content and its ideological functions, but rather by focusing on the variety of its forms (Majewski, 2021). Concluding that mass culture is inherently related to its transmitters—the mass media, Kłoskowska (1980, p. 79) notices that the consumer-receivers of pop-cultural products have the ability to interpret them in accordance with their own cultural competences and discursive resources. However, at the same time she refers to mass culture primarily as the "phenomena of contemporary transmission to great masses of recipients of identical or analogous content coming from few sources" and "uniform forms of amusing, entertaining activity of great masses of people" (Kłoskowska, 1980, p. 95). Moreover, in her analysis of the role of culture in the formation of modern national communities, Kłoskowska (1996) unilaterally identifies "national culture" with "higher culture", viewing the latter as a relatively autotelic and permanent form of "national culture", which is to constitute its "canon".

The earlier depicted expressions of what clearly bears the signs of Bourdieusian elitism combined with Kłoskowska's highly influential endorsement of the concept of a national canon inherently combined with and constituted by a so-called "higher culture", resulted in far-reaching implications for several generations of researchers, academics, educators, cultural workers, and curriculum developers, who tend to identify Kłoskowska's concept of mass culture with contemporary popular culture (Majewski, 2021). These have prevailing impact on discourse, methodology, and educational philosophy in Poland: alternative interpretations of the concept of popular culture have been marginalized—especially those originating in the thought of Antonio Gramsci (1999), which in their most mature form have highly influenced many notable representatives of British cultural studies (Hall, 1958). Within this neglected paradigm, popular culture is above all a space for texts, images, ideas, symbols, meanings, and artifacts—a long-lasting positional war for cultural hegemony (Kellner, 1995). At any given historical moment, the dominant social strata seeks to impose its own definitions of the political and cultural system on subordinated groups, and justify it through the corresponding ideology. According to Gramsci and his followers, it is cultural hegemony that ensures political power, and the struggle for the latter consists in imposing a legitimated form of culture on society, as the valid interpretation of the social, economic, political, and legal status quo. Within the framework of positional war, the subordinated groups who use pop culture to express their resistance and rebellion stand on one side of the barricade, while the other side is occupied by the groups wielding cultural and political power, who fill the shared cultural space with images intended to justify the lower political, economic, and social position of the subordinated and to consolidate domination. Hence, hegemonic narratives are primarily used to convince the subordinate groups that the status quo is, if not the best, then certainly the right one at a given historical moment: a result of objective circumstances rather than imposed power structures (Majewski, 2021).

Konaszkiewicz's judgment regarding the existence of legitimate and illegitimate musical cultures should be perceived precisely as a tool serving a particular ideology and maintaining cultural hegemony by groups represented by the author, characterized by "cultural nobility" (Bourdieu, 2005, pp. 43–48). In the field of music education, understood in the terms of Pierre Bourdieu, such discourse legitimizes a particular system of cultural power and is being used as a tool of differentiation and segregation, by means of which demarcation lines are created between groups with different cultural capitals, translating into class divisions (Bourdieu, 2005). As indicated by Bourdieu's (2005, p. 55) theory of distinctions, the practices of reinforcing social, economic, and political inequalities are most clearly revealed in the mechanisms of discrediting the cultural practices of subordinated classes by the dominant class. Konaszkiewicz's attitude to popular music, an expression of what could be defined as "entitled good taste", is thus an expression of identity politics, responsible for constructing and sustaining mechanisms of social recognition and labeling: class categories are transformed into cultural categories to justify and explain the dominance of economically and culturally privileged social groups and their values on which social stratification is based (Bourdieu, 2005). The rejection of valid aesthetic

choices and cultural practices made by particular social groups, wrongly identified exclusively with popular culture, serves here as a tool for discrimination and is supposed to justify the maintenance of a new class hierarchy (Bourdieu, 2004). According to Bourdieu, musical taste is precisely the cultural space with the greatest potential for imposing exclusionary social hierarchies and for the reproduction of collective identities that shape them (Bourdieu 2005, p. 27). Hence, there is hardly a better way of justifying social inequality based on class belonging, than highlighting someone's, so-called, poor taste in music.

Konaszkiewicz's article does not provide a more in-depth explanation to link the 1968 cultural revolution across a two-decade-long gap to the political and aesthetic changes in Eastern Europe in the 1990s, nor does it specify how "fundamental European values" should be placed with regard to contemporary philosophical thought. Rather, it seems to be rooted in a pre-Geertzian understanding of cultural relativism (Cohen, 1989; Geertz, 1984). It is also unclear what evidence might support the author's claims regarding the putative worldwide acclaim of communist Poland's music education. Polish scholars of that time did make a notable contribution to international educational debates published in renowned journals (Manturzewska, 1978, 1979), however, there does not seem to be much Western scholarly writing about the Polish music education system before 1989, and some of the comparative studies made by foreign scholars are rather critical, describing it then already as highly exclusive (Cykler, 1971).[1] It is also worth noting that prominent Polish publicists used the term "deaf generation" with regard to the younger generation's music culture already in the 1960' (Szwarcman, 2010), which contradicts claims of a dramatic change happening three decades later. Furthermore, Poland never was much of an isolated island, as Konaszkiewicz depicts in her essay: the Polish section of the International Society for Music Education (ISME) was established back in 1965 (Przychodzińska-Kaciczak, 1987), and popular music in the educational context was discussed on international symposia held in Poland already in the early 1980s (Denisiuk, 1980). The idyllic landscape suggested by Konaszkiewicz is in reality neither idyllic nor a continuum based on unanimous consent. Nevertheless, today's classroom reality of Polish schools is still greatly informed by pedagogical approaches emphasizing competitive aspects of music teaching and learning, offering little space for pupils' creativity and self-expression (Chmurzynska, 2012; Krajewski & Schmidt, 2014).

[1] Despite opposing scholarly opinions regarding the status of general music education in communist Poland, there is sufficient evidence to justify the claim that particular forms of amateur music making were indeed highly popular and supported by the state (Nowak, 2017; Witkowska-Nowicka, 1978) and early childhood music education was given significant attention (Konaszkiewicz, 2008; Witkowska-Nowicka, 1978), as well as music training programs for schoolteachers (Denisiuk, 1980).

Child-Centered?

A holistic approach to education was essential to Rabindranath Tagore's pedagogical thought (Samuel, 2010). In his attempt to empower Indian national education, Tagore's philosophical perspective highlights the shortcomings of the British-imposed schooling system rather than making politics his apparent point of departure. The framework proposed by Tagore was individual- and community-centered at the same time, presenting individual growth and the development of society as intrinsically connected (Cenkner, 1976; Samuel, 2010). Similar to Korczak (1919), Tagore approached education from a child's perspective (Samuel, 2010). He emphasized the importance of the learning environment and was a strong advocate for creativity, spontaneity, and freedom in education, as well as for the importance of learning through experience (Samuel, 2010; Tagore, 1980). Stressing the importance of the national heritage and local language, in particular, Tagore was also well aware of the approaching challenges for education related to cultural diversity and globalization (Samuel, 2010).

In post-war communist Poland, the designers of the new music education system chose to take a radically different approach than the one endorsed by Tagore. Music education was rebuilt according to a nineteenth-century model and both conceptually and formally detached from other pedagogical fields (Rakowski, 2010). Maria Przychodzińska, one of the most significant Polish music pedagogists of the twentieth century—who authored the "Contemporary Polish Pluralistic Concept of Music Education", a central text for general Polish music education after 1970 (Kalarus & Konkol, 2017)—emphasizes the significant role of classical composers, i.e. Karol Szymanowski, and the philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau in shaping the theoretical framework for Polish music education in the late nineteenth century (Przychodzińska, 2001). Several attempts were made to introduce a more egalitarian educational model in Polish schools (Kalarus & Konkol, 2017; Kołodziejski, 2014; Przychodzińska, 2001; Rakowski, 2010). The first major new concept was introduced in the early 1960s, vastly influenced by the work of Kodaly, Orff, Mursell, Freinet, and Kobalevsky (Kalarus & Konkol, 2017; Kołodziejski, 2014). Eventually, neither Kodaly nor Orff were granted a strong position in the Polish general music education system, as opposed to for example Estonia which at that time was part of the Soviet Union (Sepp et al., 2019). In the 1970s, Przychodzińska, formulating the basics of her New Pedagogy (Kołodziejski, 2014) alongside Burowska, made a clear attempt to revive the connection between Polish and Western pedagogic thought, referring to John Dewey's philosophy of education and proposing a child-centered, well-informed yet original pedagogical framework. Przychodzińska's approach emphasizes the child's free expression and creativity, as well as the importance of integration of music, visual arts, literature, movement, film, and theater (Kalarus & Konkol, 2017). This experiment, although formally accepted by the communist government as a theoretical framework, suffered from severe incoherence when implemented in practice. The utilitarian approach toward music as a purely aesthetic tool typically endorsed by the communist government (Przychodzińska, 2001) was contradictory

to the notion of dialogue and a child's freedom of artistic expression proposed by Przychodzińska and Burowska. In the field of music education, the talent-focused, highly competitive teaching approach was hardly subject to serious debate. Consecutive generations of music schoolteachers originating from the traditional teacher training system in Poland seem to preserve a strong tendency for imposing this strict teaching model, based to a great extent on regular criticism toward the students rather than praising their achievements and fostering their self-esteem. A study conducted in 2012 by Chmurzyńska among piano teachers in Polish primary music schools showed that teachers lack pedagogical knowledge and awareness regarding how their own behavior influences the students' motivation. Chmurzyńska (2012) found that "it was obvious that constant criticism, highlighting mistakes, and underestimating the pupils' effort did not encourage them to work harder. Yet the teachers continued to base their pedagogical strategies on pointing out mistakes". General and arts education in Poland appear to be, in the above context, "two flipsides" of the same coin, two crooked mirrors facing one another.

The Self-Colonization of Music Education in Post-War Poland

Arts education and general education in communist Poland were separated and remain within jurisdictions of separate ministries until the present day (Rakowski, 2010).[2] Przychodzińska, in tune with Rakowski, claimed that in communist Poland a strong distinction between offering *exclusive arts education* that provides high-quality teaching to a very small part of the population, and *general education* where art and music are highly neglected, was established and has persisted over decades. Moreover, she highlights a significant phenomenon: the pre-war pedagogical concept for music education developed by Mikketa merged in the post-war period with the strict and equally exclusive Soviet educational model. As a result of this unfortunate and unintentional fusion, this historically important part of the Polish educational legacy became in many ways indistinguishable from the framework endorsed by the country's oppressive neighbor (Przychodzińska, 2001). In the above context, questioning the very authoritarian educational model without making it a highly controversial and ambivalent political statement has become nearly impossible.[3]

[2] Maria Przychodzińska (2001) in her historical analysis of Polish music education emphasizes the significant role of classical composers, Karol Szymanowski i.e. and the philosophy of Jean-Jacques Rousseau in shaping the theoretical framework for Polish music education in the late nineteenth century.

[3] It needs to be clarified at this point that particular kinds of community music activities, amateur ensembles i.e. active in municipal cultural centers, were highly popular in communist Poland, and faced a serious crisis after the political transformation, indeed. Those informal musical activities often presented high artistic and educational value and were by nature inclusive and accessible for a large part of the population (Michalski, 1983; Tworkowska, 1992). However, the distinction

In Poland, the shift toward more inclusive and diverse music education, as observed in most Western European and Nordic countries, has not yet occurred. While in the Scandinavian countries it is becoming an important part of the scholarly debate whether the shift toward popular music as a core ingredient of general music education has not gone too far (Hebert & Hauge, 2019), in Poland the problems connected to a highly exclusive and conservative educational model have not been fully recognized and acknowledged and are hardly part of a genuine debate between policymakers, although the situation is alarming on many levels. The outcome of general music education is described as dramatically bad by many scholars (Krajewski & Schmidt, 2014; Waluga et al., 2017; Weiner & Waluga, 2016) and less than 2% of all schoolchildren nationwide are granted access to music schools. Meanwhile, the social status of professional musicians is extremely low (Walczak et al., 2016). The responsibility for teacher training is split between music academies and universities that are not specialized in music. Practice has shown that students of pedagogical departments at music academies are reluctant to become teachers in general compulsory schools, and often lack pedagogical skills required for crowded classrooms. For many of them, teacher training programs are a second choice if they fail to be granted admission to selective instrumental music departments. This can be interpreted as one of the consequences of the very low status of the music teacher's profession among all music-related fields—which already have low social prestige (Walczak et al., 2016). Universities on the other hand, as institutions with a mainly academic focus, seem to be struggling with providing quality training in music-related subjects to their students, such as musical performance, singing, conducting, and ensemble leadership. The main burden of responsibility for music teacher training for both music and general education lies on music academies, which remain within the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Culture and National Heritage. The Ministry of Education, in charge of general compulsory schools, has to rely on teachers provided by this talent-focused, competitive system to a great extent. As a result, both in music and general education, the needs of pupils perceived by teachers as "talented" are being prioritized, while the "not talented" majority remains neglected and often becomes discouraged in music (Krajewski & Schmidt, 2014; Rakowski, 2010). Moreover, many music teachers in compulsory schools report severe alienation from other members of pedagogical staff (Krajewski & Schmidt, 2014). In recent decades, there have been several more attempts to reform the music education system in Poland, two of which were initiated by the Polish Music Council (Białkowski et al., 2010; Kalarus & Konkol, 2017; Kołodziejski, 2014; Rakowski, 2010; Socha et al., 2020), but classroom practice remains rather conservative with very little music-making (Krajewski & Schmidt, 2014; Socha et al., 2020). Rakowski (2010) in his essay "General Music Education—a History of National Failure"[4] presents a rather grim

between the elitist music school system, representing the world of art music, and those amateur ensembles, was emphasized.

[4] First published in 2007.

image of Polish general music education.[5] Przychodzińska and Rakowski agree in their diagnosis, that the separation of arts and general education is the main reason for most of the above issues (Przychodzińska, 2001; Rakowski, 2010).

The fact that the above diagnosis, suggested by Rakowski already more than a decade ago, has had very little if any impact on the music education system in Poland up to the present day, and the wildly criticized *status quo*, which survived several changes in *curriculum* and even severe political shifts, justifies the assumption that there are important underlying reasons for this stagnation other than merely lack of agreement around the methodical aspects of classroom practice. Those reasons are related to power structures and social paradigms passed on from generation to generation, in an act of remaking a particular citizenship regime.

In the presented context, we argue that music education in Poland has been colonized in two ways: firstly, by absorbing an isolated, elitist, and irrelevant teaching model into the vault of national values and choosing it repeatedly over other concepts, much more representative for the Polish pedagogical thought of the twentieth century and just as well connected to Polish national heritage; secondly, by creating and nourishing a gap between highly exclusive music schools and general music education, and by doing so—imposing the superior position of a particular aspiring social class. Western art music (Moraczewski, 2016, 2019a, 2019b) transmitted via a soviet teaching model has become a monumental tool to "preserve" Polish national heritage and "protect" it against the *noble savage* of popular music. The reluctance of different stakeholders to change is attributable to various motivations, but it is important to recognize that all these reasons are inherently political (Said, 1985).

Discourse Shapes Reality

Said (1985) emphasizes the fundamental importance of cultural context, understood as "perpetual flux", for a meaningful interpretation of current events in any particular region in the world. He does so by comparing the above to the process of reading literary texts, which are subject to constant re-interpretation not because *they* change, but because pretty much *everything around* them does. National differences have a profound impact on both educational practices and research in every country (Hargreaves & North, 2001). Mapping the competing educational concepts in Polish music education is a challenging task. Historical analysis of the development of educational philosophy in this specific field provides a picture of ongoing attempts to change the *status quo* rather than a continuous evolutionary process, and therefore seems to suggest the existence of a long-lasting predominant approach immune to the impact

[5] *General* music education is a particularly neglected field in Poland. Overall, Poland scores high in PISA tests (OECD, 2018). Music schools unlike general schools offer a high educational standard and are fully subsidized by the state, offering free music education, however, remain accessible to only less than 0.02 of the population of schoolchildren.

of newly emerging concepts. However, no such approach has officially been stated in the past few decades.

Poland now has a rather progressive *curriculum* for general music education (Kołodziejski et al., 2017) and there seems to be agreement among stakeholders about the urgent need to support music education in general compulsory education. While a clear depiction of this assumed underlying agenda is nowhere to be found, it seems possible to get a rather clear view of it by studying the discourse concerning what music education is *not* supposed to be, according to some of the major stakeholders. Some of the substantial concerns regarding opening up to a more diverse and inclusive educational model are the presumed compromise on the quality of the artistic outcome and the decay of traditional values (Konaszkiewicz, 2012; Krąpiec, 1996) and lowering the status of "art music" by presenting it on equal terms with other music genres (Ciesielski, 2010). The concern about diversity being contradictory with quality seems to be shared by policymakers, schoolteachers who tend to give more attention to "talented" pupils (Krajewski & Schmidt, 2014), and even some stakeholders in the informal music education sector (Sarnowska et al., 2017).[6]

In his lecture "The Role of Art Schools in the XXI Century" Bylicki (2017), at that time Advisor to the Minister of Culture and National Heritage and future head of the Institute of Music and Dance in Warsaw, pointed out clearly what an art school is *not* supposed to be: "another general (primary/secondary) school; a cultural/afterschool center; a club for sensitive children". Bylicki was referring to art schools, traditionally highly profiled and competitive in Poland. Paradoxically, from an outsider's perspective, this statement could be easily interpreted as an apotheosis of neoliberal values: quality musicians are a product of the extremely competitive market of classical music and the state should focus on supporting the best and already most privileged, as they are most likely to succeed and bring profit. Research and critique of paradoxes like this are essential for understanding the situation of Polish music education. Research has shown that the above approach is widely shared among art teachers in general compulsory schools: 40% of them consider supporting the individual growth of "talented" children one of the main goals of their work, while only 25% acknowledge the importance of giving attention to pupils described as not gifted.[7] In this context, it seems justified to claim that policymakers should be

[6] Notably, several Polish scholars associated with other academic fields related to music do present a different approach, acknowledging that fundamental terms like *classical music*, *serious music*, *musical canon* – have been proven incoherent and highly problematic (Moraczewski, 2016) and the very term *popular music* also does not "name any coherent historical reality or any recognizable social locus" (Moraczewski, 2016, p. 47). Krzysztof Moraczewski, a widely cited Polish scholar and philosopher, points out, refraining Robert Walser's essay from the early 1990s, that there is "supposedly no convincing way to defend constructs like *serious music* etc." (Moraczewski, 2016, p. 46; Walser, 1992). In contrast to the above, the debate between Polish music education stakeholders remains a heartland of discourse in which *serious music* is still being presented as clearly superior to all other music genres in terms of artistic and educational value.

[7] Furthermore, only 11% of all Art teachers in general education give supporting the children's skills related to self-expression a high priority among educational goals (Krajewski & Schmidt, 2014). The social status of a music teacher is extremely low (Walczak et al., 2016).

mindful of the impact of persistently favoring a highly competitive teaching model not just on art schools, but on the whole of the educational landscape.

In early 2020, a 14-year-old student of one of the most renowned music schools in Warsaw committed suicide. A journalistic investigation initiated by the parents of other children attending the school revealed disturbing facts: half of the pupils in the class admitted to having been illegally purchasing Xanax in order to deal with stress caused by the strict assessment system; several other adolescents also admitted to suicide attempts in the past (Szyłło, 2020b).[8] Moreover, even scholars who are critical toward the persisting approaches in Polish schooling tend to position their critics within a framework hardly challenging the *status quo* itself.

In the earlier quoted study, Chmurzyńska (2012) investigates pedagogical approaches of contemporary Polish teachers regarding methodical principles proposed by "outstanding musicians: master-teachers (Varro, Neuhaus, Flesch)". This is a highly relevant choice in the field of instrumental music teaching: Margit Varro, born in 1881, was a renowned Hungarian piano teacher, active in the USA after 1938; Heinrich Neuhaus, born in 1888, was a famous Russian pianist and pedagogue of Polish-German extraction, jury member of the International Fryderyk Chopin piano competition; Carl Flesch, born in 1873 in Hungary, was a violin virtuoso and one of the most influential teachers of the early twentieth century. However, all of them belong to the same generation of virtuoso teachers, deeply rooted in the nineteenth-century schooling tradition. None of them, naturally, addressed the superiority of the one-to-one master-student teaching model in a challenging way, nor is their pedagogical thought being presented by Chmurzyńska in a way that could be read as a significant critique of the Polish educational system. The message seems clear: improvement needs to be made regarding particular aspects of teacher training, but the system, overall, is good. Moreover, the study does not mention a broader pedagogical context reaching out beyond music schooling in which the presented teaching principles were originally formulated as if indeed music education was an island, detached from the land of broader philosophical thought. Even considering the narrow focus of the study, it seems important to note that both Korczak's "How to Love a Child published already in 1919, and Dewey's "Art as Experience" published in 1934, presented the concept of child-centered pedagogy as an essential new paradigm and advocated for the necessity of change.

[8] The article, published in January 2020 by one of the major Polish magazines, resonated strongly among music school graduates, parents, and teachers, and resulted in a follow-up publication a few months later. Some critiques argued, that in this rather complex situation, schools are not solely to be blamed, and pressure from the side of the parents is also a significant factor (Szyłło, 2020a). One of the school principals interviewed for the article, who wished to remain anonymous, claimed that the procedures imposed by the Centre of Arts Education (CEA), the main supervising institution for art schools in Poland, deserve to be subject to an investigation by the Ombudsperson for Children's Rights. In response, the CEA posted a rather scanty comment claiming that the current assessment procedures are designed to ensure highest standards in teaching art subjects (Szyłło, 2020a).

Education of Mistrust

Paraphrasing Said's statement about the inherently political nature of any societal change, one might say that the relationship between education and politics is bidirectional: educational systems are always part of and subject to political agendas, and the political *status quo* in a particular country replicates power structures imposed through nationwide education. In this context, Polish music education can be considered a specific case study for issues affecting the country's political and socioeconomic reality. Poland's recent turn toward a more authoritarian government combined with the very low rates of social trust toward politicians in general, regardless of their affiliation (Szafraniec, 2011), seems to mirror on a larger scale the power structures present within the schooling system. In the above context, it is worth notice that music-related professions rank in Poland the second lowest among all existing professions in terms of social prestige, while politicians hold the bottom position in the ranking (Walczak et al., 2016). Studies in corresponding fields link issues related to economic and cultural development in Poland to low rates of social trust (Brzezińska & Czub, 2014), which are among the very lowest in Europe.

The music schooling system in Poland, trapped in a vicious cycle of self-orientalization, endorses a methodical framework based on competition between students and a strong, almost authoritarian position of the teacher. The student is expected to be passive rather than engage in dialogue and little space is given to creativity or improvisation. Korczak's child-centered approach, overlooked or ignored by the creators of the first *curriculum* for music education in post-war Poland, clearly proposed a very different educational philosophy. For Korczak (1998), each child was a unique individual. He strongly opposed labeling children as gifted and not gifted, claiming that every child is smart in its unique way, and this diversity is a core value for education. Korczak was even critical of the very use of the word "children", which he claimed was as a specific form of "othering" through addressing a diverse population of individuals with a single term—a potentially harmful unification based on age as the only criterion and reducing young individuals to non-adults. According to Korczak's pedagogical thought, the child is the only genuine expert in the subject of a child's education. The teacher is supposed to be a gentle guide and careful follower, always remaining attentive and open to dialogue. Mistrust toward a child is considered a pedagogical mistake (Kamińska, 2019).

Similarities to John Dewey's concept of educative experience are very apparent in Korczak's work, as well as the implicit understanding of democracy as a shared creative practice (Dewey, 1938, 1966). This recognition of a child's individuality is an interesting link between Korczak's pedagogy and Tagore's (1933) concept of "education of sympathy". Two years before Korczak's "How to Love a Child" was first published, Tagore stated that "fullness" in personal growth can only be attained through sympathy. The American philosopher Martha Nussbaum (2009) uses the philosophical thought of Tagore and Dewey as a framework for her critical analysis of what she diagnoses as an educational crisis. According to Nussbaum, in a world driven by the profit motive, some core abilities associated with humanities and arts,

crucial to the health of democracy, are at risk of getting "lost in the competitive flurry" (p. 55). The three abilities highlighted by Nussbaum are: "the capacity for Socratic self-criticism and critical thought about one's own traditions" (p. 55); "the ability to see oneself as a member of a heterogenous nation, and world, understanding something of the history and character of the diverse groups that inhabit it" (p. 56); "narrative imagination" understood as "the ability to think what it might be in the shoes of a person different from oneself, to be an intelligent reader of that person's story, and to understand the emotions and wishes and desires that someone so placed might have" (p. 57). The educational frameworks presented by Dewey, Tagore, and in Poland—Janusz Korczak, clearly served the purpose of educating pupils equipped with each of the above abilities. On the contrary, the exclusive Polish system of music education seems to represent and endorse very different attitudes. Again: we may only assume what they are by knowing what they are *not.*

The Parrot in a Cage

Over the last two decades, in most Western European and Nordic countries, the discourse around popular music in education has changed significantly. There seems to be an agreement between stakeholders that various genres, often labeled "popular music" or "rhythmic music", represent qualities such as virtuosity, technical and aesthetic refinement, and are therefore valid and necessary ingredients of music education. As the debate about the place and role of Western classical music in the *curriculum* is ongoing, it focuses rather on finding the right balance between different genres and pedagogical approaches than on re-establishing classical music's hegemony in education (Hebert et al., 2017). While music education in Western Europe and across the Nordic countries is shaped by the concepts of democracy and the German notion *Bildung* (Hebert & Hauge, 2019), on the other side, Russia models for the country a strikingly different, yet equally significant pedagogical and philosophical heritage. Poland after World War II has been "trapped" between these two worlds of East and West, isolated from the West, and naturally reluctant toward accepting educational models imposed by its powerful Eastern neighbor. The Soviet and Western European worlds of music pedagogy were never entirely separated of course, in particular, due to the work of renowned virtuoso performers who were more likely to maintain the freedom to travel across countries, learn and teach abroad. However, the destructive impact of the political division between Eastern and Western Europe on a free flow of pedagogical thought was severe. The concept of *Bildung* has significantly evolved over decades and Western music education and the *curriculum* were highly influenced by new concepts introduced by John Dewey, Bennett Reimer, or more recently David Elliott and Marissa Silverman, to name just a few. Nevertheless, the gate for dialogue between Polish and Western philosophers remained mostly closed, also due to the language barrier amplified by the Iron Curtain. Scholarly works of influential American scholars have remained unknown to most Polish educators up to the present day. The Russian educational system has also been developing and

changing significantly since the end of the Soviet era (Laritner, 1993; Pozhidayev, 1993; Vorozhko, 2018). Despite Poland being a member of the EU since 2004, Polish music education seems to remain very isolated, perhaps more now than ever before.

Discourse matters not only because its undebated inner incoherencies and contradictions obviously affect the outcome of discussions, but principally because it shapes the reality in which debates are held. Acceptance of a particular type of discourse and the *status quo* implied by it is indeed an implicit agreement on the *status quo* itself. Inclusive, socially sensitive music education is not likely to be the outcome of exclusive, conservative discourse, even if some of the presented ideas are progressive. New concepts will not transcend debates into actual classroom practice unless there is sufficient critical discussion of the discourse itself and the underlying worldview it represents.

In his anecdote "The Parrot's Training", Rabindranath Tagore describes the story of a Raja who decided to educate a parrot, as the bird was frivolously singing all day long but never recited scriptures (Chayan, 1994). Upon the Raja's call, noble pundits decide to build a magnificent golden cage for the bird to restrain its instincts diagnosed to be the cause of ignorance, and to feed the parrot leaves from textbooks. Soon, the whole crew was so busy maintaining the magnificent cage and praising the ingenious teaching method, that nobody noticed the bird had died. Nevertheless, the parrot's education is considered to have been completed successfully: the dead bird, stuffed with wise scriptures, does not engage in any frivolous behaviors anymore. Polish music education has been doing an excellent job so far in maintaining and showing off the cage. And the parrot… Has anyone seen the parrot?

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Advancing and Applying Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education

Pip Bennett, Dorothy Ferary, and David G. Hebert

Abstract In this concluding chapter we offer some reflections on the central themes that unify the book, with particular attention to how new knowledge presented by our contributors may be synthesized and applied to strengthen our understandings of the nature and value of education, as well as ways education may be improved upon in the future. Our Conclusion will be immediately followed by an Afterword by Yosef Waghid, a leading contemporary philosopher of education. As indicated in Chapter "Why Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education?," through this book we have sought to offer some unique contributions through new interpretations of educational philosophers whose orientation may be properly understood as coming at least partly from outside European traditions. The broader aim has been to contribute to a rejuvenated conceptualization of the foundations of education that develops global competence among students, an objective that inevitably requires the decolonization of curriculum and instruction.

Introduction

Education has long been a subject of deep interest to philosophers worldwide, many of whom develop arguments concerning what constitutes quality education, and how learning may be improved. As Lawrenz observed, "Confucius was inclined, no less than Aristotle, to prize the wisdom acquired through study higher than anything else" (Lawrenz, 2021, p. 153). The refinement of strategies for teaching and learning is clearly of interest to teachers of all kinds, but today it is the exception rather than the rule for teachers to show much interest in reading philosophical texts for stimulation. Academic authors may even face doubts about the usefulness of writing books for this audience, since such a small proportion of teachers seem willing to patiently

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examine them. Still, in many countries it is all too common for teachers to face a personal crisis of identity and purpose at some point in their careers, a "burnout" which ultimately causes some to even leave the profession. Studies in philosophy of education promise to illuminate inspiring ways of rethinking the nature and purpose of an array of educational endeavors, thereby helping teachers to reinvigorate by hearing their calling anew.

New approaches are needed in philosophy of education in order for its arguments to become more broadly relevant and to attract an increasingly diverse readership. This applies not only to specific concepts and claims concerning what matters in education, and what are ideal ways of facilitating meaningful learning, but also the ways in which the lives of philosophers are conveyed, since much can be learned even from stories of their life experiences. In this book we have sought to especially show connections between the ideas and lives of philosophers who in many cases lived in rather different times and places, circumstances that are likely to contrast with that of many of our readers. However, we have endeavored whenever possible to show the relevance to actual problems in educational practice. In this concluding chapter we offer some reflections on the central themes that unify the book, with particular attention to how new knowledge presented by our contributors may be synthesized and applied to strengthen understandings of the nature and value of education, as well as ways that education may be improved upon in the future.

Making Philosophy Tangible

We sense that a common challenge to the philosophy of education as a whole has been in how its relevance and applications are demonstrated to readers, particularly school teachers. We have endeavored in this book to "make philosophy tangible" by discussing what educators might learn from the lives and ideas of educational philosophers from various parts of the world. Still, it might seem dubious to some readers to suggest that a schoolteacher in Canada today, for instance, might gain useful insights by reading about the life and ideas of a philosopher from, say, centuries ago on the continent of Africa.

In fact, there is an insightful anecdote from nearly 400 years ago about the great Ethiopian philosopher Zera Yakob (1599–1692), in which he describes his early experiences with education. Yakob wrote near the beginning of his treatise *Hatata*, "after I had read the Psalms of David my teacher said to my father: 'This young son of yours is clever and has the patience to learn; if you send him to a [higher] school, he will be a master and a doctor.' After hearing this, my father sent me to study Zemya. But my voice was coarse and my throat was grating; so my schoolmaster used to laugh at me and tease me. I stayed there for three months, until I overcame my sadness and went to another master …" (Sumner, 1994). In this excerpt, Yakob recalls that his talents were discovered via reflections on the writings of one of the earliest known musicians and songwriters, King David (c.1010–970 BCE) of the ancient Hebrews. In order to gain higher education, Yakob was sent to study *Zemya*,

an Ethiopian sacred music tradition attributed to St. Yared (505–571), but he found the instruction to be ineffective, and most likely, uninspiring. Like many music students, Yakob reports that he struggled with technique and soon quit his studies.

This parable reminds educators of the importance of recognizing that students are physiologically diverse and face divergent challenges to learning, whatever the field of study, and our instruction potentially has a deep impact on students, with either positive or negative outcomes. In Yakob's case, it was ultimately possible to find other important means of expression, but who knows how different the outcome might have been, had his teacher better understood the physiology of voice and vocal technique, or been more patient and encouraging with him? We find even brief stories such as this one to be useful as stimulation for reflection on the part of educators in music or other subject areas (including "inclusive education," as discussed in Chapter "Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah Philosophies: Afro-Arabian Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policy in Nigeria"), but philosophy of education can go further. Its promise is to offer extensive development of foundational concepts and arguments to guide educational endeavors.

Indeed, what is arguably most important in the philosophy of education is how its concepts and claims may be applicable for rethinking educational problems faced today. Studies in the global history of ideas also enable us to better recognize various examples of erasures and significant omissions due to politically "whitewashed" interpretations from centuries past. By offering our interpretations of the significance and possible applications of the work of notable educational thinkers from outside the Western tradition we do not in this book necessarily seek to advocate a particular philosophical position or cohesive set of arguments regarding educational foundations. However, to the extent that there is philosophical agreement across the contributions to this book, it would be that the ultimate possibilities of education may be better apprehended through a more inclusive approach to recognition and understanding of thinkers from an array of contexts worldwide. If this may be interpreted as a kind of philosophical position, it is surely one connected with the values of diversity and inclusion, as well as arguments that undergird the notion of decolonization (Go, 2016).

Critical Thinking and Decolonization

Among philosophers of education from an array of different contexts we see universal recognition of the importance of fostering critical thinking skills in education. Ibn Khaldun (1332–1406) observed that "The easiest method of acquiring the scientific habit is through acquiring the ability to express oneself clearly through discussing and disputing scientific problems. This is what clarifies their import and makes them understandable" (Dawood, 2015, p. 504). We recognize that the notion of global competence (introduced in Chapter "Why Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education?") offers great potential to renew education through application of both a global perspective and critical thinking to encourage a creative approach to the challenging of preconceptions among students of all ages.

It is important for theorists to recognize that education is not a monolithic phenomenon, for different subject areas tend to require different pedagogical approaches due to characteristic challenges. For instance, the instructional demands of music education (see Chapter "The "Happy Island" of Polish Music Education: Self-Orientalization of Educational Philosophies in Post-Soviet Europe"), despite sharing some of the same objectives and challenges, can be totally different from fields like history or mathematics (Buchborn et al., 2022), and the same may be said of physical education or interdisciplinary subjects assumed to cut across various academic fields in schools, such as international education and moral education (see Chapter "Lessons from Ubuntu for Moral Education"). In other words, ideas from notable non-Western philosophers can be applied to specific educational concerns for rethinking common problems and the characteristic questions they raise. For instance, how can the notion of Orientalism and associated postcolonial critiques lead to new insights into music education in Eastern Europe (Chapter "The "Happy Island" of Polish Music Education: Self-Orientalization of Educational Philosophies in Post-Soviet Europe"), or how can the ideas of the leading Asian educational philosophers from a century ago—Rabindranath Tagore and Hu Shih—be applied to the challenges of internationalization and *glocalization* in education today (Chapter "Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies")? How can the ideas of Cai Yuanpei be applied in aesthetic education (Chapter "Cai Yuanpei's Vision of Aesthetic Education and His Legacy in China"), or the concepts of Filipino psychologist Virgilio Enriquez applied in intergenerational education (Chapter "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*: Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines"), and so on. The approach is thereby more precise and tangible than studies in which an ancient thinker is considered holistically in relation to all forms of education, as often seen in previous books. Earlier books on decolonization of education have also tended to emphasize general principles in the present day associated with inequities in specific locations (especially on the continents of Africa and Latin America), but this book applies such a decolonial view globally with an emphasis on how application of the ideas of specific thinkers can illuminate new approaches in specific educational subjects. Wiredu observed that "you might not even be aware of the likely neo-colonial aspects of your conceptual framework. This is one of the greatest impediments to conceptual decolonization in African philosophy" (Wiredu, 2002, p. 56). Such an approach to decolonization of epistemologies, in our estimation, has great potential to reinvigorate education, not only in Africa, but also on other continents that have much to learn from Africa.

To some extent such a project requires a rethinking of traditional academic fields through recognizing the roots of ideas in sources that have long been neglected (Goody, 2012). The recent rediscovery of Ibn Khaldun, and growing acknowledgment of his role as perhaps the world's first social scientist, is one such example (Alatas, 2014). Khaldun collected data among the Bedouin and developed a theory of social cohesion to explain observed behaviors in the fourteenth century. This occurred an entire century before the work of Franciscan friar Bernardino de Sahagún (c.1499–1590) who is sometimes credited as the first anthropologist, as well as many generations before Henri de Saint-Simone (1760–1825) and Auguste Comte (1798–1857)

who are commonly considered the founders of sociology in Europe. Ibn Khaldun is especially known for his conceptualization of *asabiyya*, or social cohesion essential to community development and civilization, advanced in his lengthy work *Muqaddimah* (completed in 1378).

Similarly, there is also growing recognition of the significance of the fact that Robert Grosseteste (1168–1253)—likely the first Chancellor of Oxford University—and influential philosopher Roger Bacon (c.1219–c.1292) both read Arabic and were educated in the classical Arabic sciences, including the works of Avicenna (Ibn Sina, 980–1037) and Averroes (Ibn Rushd, 1126–1198). This should be unsurprising in context, for it merely continues the tradition seen in the earlier example of Gerbert of Aurillac (later known as Pope Sylvester II, c.946–1003), who also read the Arabic works of notable Middle Eastern scholars, such as Al Farabi (c.872–c.950) and Al-Kindi (c.801–c.873), among others. The work of such scholars enabled Aristotle to be rediscovered by Europeans and ultimately led to the flourishing of science in higher education. Merely acknowledging such basic facts in historical and philosophical discussions encourages students to rethink their misattribution of globally important ideas and practices, such as scientific methods and their mathematical foundations, to uniquely European origins. While much of this book necessarily consists of descriptions of philosophies, rather than original examples of *philosophizing*, we nevertheless hope to inspire some readers to become philosophers of education—to whatever extent possible, according to their individual capabilities and specializations—in recognition that this field can be open to people from diverse backgrounds with a wide array of experiences and perspectives.

A Few Caveats

Despite our best efforts, we must acknowledge that our work in this book may be merely "scratching the surface" of the field in which it seeks to contribute, for as we investigate further it only becomes clearer that much more remains to be developed. Still, the major thinkers we profile here have hitherto remained unknown to many who take traditional courses in philosophy of education in Western countries. Remarkably, this tendency applies even to Nobel prize-winners such as Rabindranath Tagore, the most renowned Chinese intellectuals of the past century (such as Hu Shih and Cai Yuanpei) as well as the most prominent educational philosopher from the nation with the world's largest Islamic population, Indonesia (Dewantara).

Each of the philosophers profiled in this book was either important across centuries or indisputably influential across at least the last half of the twentieth century. Still, there are others who would surely also need to be included if we were to aim for a more comprehensive approach, including some who are rather well known in western countries relative to those featured here. Caribbean psychologist Frantz Fanon (1925–1961), for instance, offered unique insights into racialized experience that have proven to be influential in education (Dei & Simmons, 2010). Brazilian educationist Paulo Freire (1921–1997) is another notable prominent example, credited for developing the field of *Critical Pedagogy* (Kohan, 2021). Moreover, prolific

African-American sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois (1868–1963) is yet another example, whose significance for education seems to still be increasing more than 50 years after his death (Grant, 2018). While the label "non-western" may have questionable relevance to such cases, the foundations of postcolonial and even *decolonial* thought are evident in the contributions of these theorists.

The twenty-first century is now being shaped by an unprecedentedly diverse group of educational philosophers, particularly when it comes to both gender diversity and Indigenous and minority voices. It surely becomes clearer in hindsight which scholars have been impactful, but there are already some early indications regarding living individuals who would most likely be featured in a future book of this kind. Māori scholar Linda Tuhiwai Smith (b.1950) has been mentioned at multiple points in this volume, and her scholarship offers powerful insights into how Indigenous-oriented pedagogies and research can be more appropriately pursued (McKinley & Smith, 2019; Smith et al., 2018; Smith, 1999). Much of the oeuvre of James A. Banks (b.1941) also addresses concerns closely related to decolonization, albeit with attention to educational inequalities and related injustices faced by an array of diverse minority peoples in the United States, rather than exclusively those from an Indigenous background (Banks, 2015, 2020). Scholars associated with the field of *transnational feminism* have also produced writings that may be relevant for rethinking philosophy of education to account for a more global and inclusive perspective, including Amrita Basu (2018), Chandra Talpade Mohanty (2003), Uma Narayan (2013), Oyeronke Oyewumi (2010), and Chizuko Ueno (2020). As far as notable centers for contemporary scholarship in non-western and decolonizing philosophies of education, one that catches attention is Stellenbosch University. There, in Western Cape, South Africa, such prolific scholars as Yusef Waghid and Nuraan Davids are making unique contributions, arguably at the cutting edge of this field (Davids, 2013; Davids & Waghid, 2016, 2018, 2019, 2022; Waghid & Davids, 2017, 2020). We can only hope that this book, despite its inevitable omissions, has stimulated some readers to contribute to further cultivation of this promising field. With these caveats in mind, how may the collective contributions to this volume be summarized and understood as a cohesive whole?

Common Themes

Among the central themes to emerge from this book is that Western and Eastern philosophical traditions need not necessarily be seen as two opposing approaches, but rather, different ways of thinking (a recurring theme in Chapters "Cai Yuanpei's Vision of Aesthetic Education and His Legacy in China," "Comparison of Self-Reflection in Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School: Rethinking Assumptions on "Reflection" in *OECD Education 2030*," "A Philosophical Perspective on the Purpose of Education in Indonesia," "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*: Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines" and "Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies"). At times,

these ways of thinking show similar characteristics; therefore, they do not always contradict each other despite being commonly taken to represent a dichotomy. Thus, looking empathetically at both perspectives may lead to a more critical and complete understanding, as particularly seen in the first half of this book.

Recall that in Chapter "Cai Yuanpei's Vision of Aesthetic Education and His Legacy in China," **Luo and Guan** examine Yuanpei Cai's vision of aesthetic education based on both Eastern and Western philosophies. Cai was educated in the Confucian tradition but moved to Germany (1907–1912) to further his studies, where he became more invested in the works of Immanuel Kant and Friedrich Schiller. Cai attempted to synthesize traditional Chinese philosophy with modern Western ideology through aesthetic education. He believed aesthetic education could link the spiritual world to the physical world and build moral behaviors, as suggested by Confucian thinking and German philosophers.

In Chapter "Comparison of Self-Reflection in Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School: Rethinking Assumptions on "Reflection" in *OECD Education 2030*," **Miwa Chiba** distinguishes between the perspective of Kyoto School philosopher Kitaro Nishida and the Humboldtian notion of *Bildung* in terms of reflective experiences in education. Nishida grew up during the Meiji restoration period, an era of significant changes that brought about the modernization and Westernization of the country. He developed an original perspective that stood between Western philosophy of *being* and the *Zen* Buddhism conception of *nothingness*.

In Chapter "A Philosophical Perspective on the Purpose of Education in Indonesia," **Dorothy Ferary** looks at the philosophy of Ki Hajar Dewantara, the father of Indonesian education. Dewantara opposed the Dutch colonial education system but shared similar views with Western and Eastern thinkers such as Friedrich Fröbel, Maria Montessori, and Rabindranath Tagore. Dewantara, born into the Javanese royal house of Paku Alam, was exiled to the Netherlands, where he learned the works of Fröbel and Montessori and met with Tagore. His attention to the financing of education is a unique factor that sets him apart from his intellectual influences and indicates a genuine concern for social justice.

In Chapter "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*: Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines," **Czarecah Oropilla et al.** introduce *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (Filipino psychology), as proposed by Dr. Virgilio Enriquez. Enriquez was brought up with strong Filipino traditions and pursued Master and PhD studies in the United States. Upon returning to the Philippines, he brought back foreign theoretical and practical knowledge but did not impose these onto his students and colleagues. His *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* entails a culturally appropriate approach to the decolonization of psychology which has brought nuanced understanding and insights into learning and development in the distinctive contexts of Filipino culture.

In Chapter "Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies," **Zhang and Hebert** compare Rabindranath Tagore and Hu Shih's educational philosophies. Tagore was born into a religious family in India and spent some years studying in the United Kingdom. He witnessed the strict Indian caste system and the more pluralistic Western society. Although he was open to Western education and taught modern scientific subjects in his schools, he raised

concerns about the danger of Westernization to India's local languages and cultures. Thus, he advocated for the use of vernacular languages. Similarly, Hu Shih was raised in Chinese culture and continued his studies in the United States. While he promoted Western thought and proposed the construction of a new China, he strongly emphasized the importance of understanding Chinese local wisdom. This shows that both Tagore and Hu Shih maintained a balanced attitude toward learning from nation-based Eastern traditions and international-based Western modernity.

Another common theme this book presents is the importance of understanding vernacular language (see Chapters "Cai Yuanpei's Vision of Aesthetic Education and His Legacy in China," "A Philosophical Perspective on the Purpose of Education in Indonesia," "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*: Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines," and "Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies," by **Luo and Guan, Ferary, Oropilla et al., Zhang and Hebert**, respectively). The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) acknowledges the importance of preserving minority languages and celebrates International Mother Language Day each year on February 21. UNESCO asserts that diverse languages and multilingual policies can advance inclusion and move toward attainment of the Sustainable Development Goals, with the objective of leaving no one behind. In terms of education, UNESCO argues that engagement with the first language or mother tongue must begin from the early years as it is the foundation of learning (UNESCO, n.d. (a)). The UN goes further by proclaiming the period between 2022 and 2032 as the International Decade of Indigenous Languages, "to draw global attention to the critical situation of many indigenous languages and to mobilize stakeholders and resources for their preservation, revitalization and promotion" (UNESCO, n.d. (b)).

In addition to recognizing the value of preserving mother tongues, particularly in postcolonial contexts, it is also important to strive to understand local histories, cultures, and traditional knowledge (see Chapters "Cai Yuanpei's Vision of Aesthetic Education and His Legacy in China" and "A Philosophical Perspective on the Purpose of Education in Indonesia," "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*: Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines," "Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies," "Lessons from Ubuntu for Moral Education," "Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah Philosophies: Afro-Arabian Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policy in Nigeria" and "The "Happy Island" of Polish Music Education: Self-Orientalization of Educational Philosophies in Post-Soviet Europe," by **Luo and Guan, Ferary, Oropilla et al., Zhang and Hebert, Bennett, Isiaka, Switala and Majewski**). Western perspectives and cultures have continued to shape how we teach students to look at all manner of phenomena. Therefore, it is crucial to decolonize this knowledge and reconstruct our understanding to reflect more nuanced and multifaceted perspectives. Local histories, cultures, and wisdom enable a more sensitive understanding relevant to diverse local interests and needs. It is also worth noting that rather similar concepts may be identified in different contexts. For example, the core concept of ubuntu (interdependent nature of humanity; the ability to *relate* to each *other*) is also shared in the philosophies of Ki

Hajar Dewantara (Chapter "A Philosophical Perspective on the Purpose of Education in Indonesia") and Ibn Khaldun (Chapter "Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah Philosophies: Afro-Arabian Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policy in Nigeria"), among others.

Toward Synthesis

Various contributors noted the importance of applying hermeneutics to reconsider how a synthesis can be attained between different traditions, particularly as seen in postcolonial scholarship. This point arguably applies to the arguments of Tagore, Hu, Cai, Nishida, Dewantara, Enriquez, Wiredu, and others. Rather than seeing major philosophical traditions in opposition or competition, postcolonial thinkers tend to bring them either implicitly or explicitly into fruitful conversation, often in recognition that while the contents of education may be culturally specific, appreciation for its significance as a human endeavor is not.

For instance, there are different emphases on self and world (Humboldt/Nishida) in **Chiba**'s analysis (Chapter "Comparison of Self-Reflection in Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School: Rethinking Assumptions on "Reflection" in *OECD Education 2030*"), which reminds us that despite the OECD's efforts to look to the future with its "Education 2030" concept, we neglect the importance of continuity at our own peril. Much discussion of "21st Century Skills" overlooks the reality that such skills have always been the kind required for human flourishing. Technologies change: stone tools, crude shelters, farming, books, the internet; but being able to make the most of them *together* has not. Nevertheless, discourse surrounding the notion of "21st Century Skills" often implies a discontinuity that cannot actually exist. Time and human experience do not necessarily pass smoothly, but are nevertheless generally continuous despite all manner of disruptions.

The violent history of colonialism has meant many countries worldwide have needed to go to great lengths to see that local philosophies are properly heard (Chapters "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino*: Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines" and "Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah Philosophies: Afro-Arabian Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policy in Nigeria": **Oropilla, Isiaka**). As non-Western philosophies gain momentum and attention through development, those countries that were guilty of colonial expansion arguably ought to pay more attention to the outcomes they produce (Chapters "Lessons from Ubuntu for Moral Education" and "Ọmọlúàbí and Asabiyyah Philosophies: Afro-Arabian Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policy in Nigeria": **Bennett, Isiaka**). Further, there are fruitful comparisons to be made between the experiences of those nations coming to terms with a past that may be understood as either semi-colonized or at least constituting a form of intracontinental colonization that challenges conventional definitions (Chapter "The "Happy Island" of Polish Music Education: Self-Orientalization of Educational Philosophies in Post-Soviet Europe": **Switala and Majewski**). A dialectic approach seems less likely to become the fruitful project that a hermeneutic might be, as referred to above. However, there may also be a good case

for taking particular lessons from these philosophies as they stand. Sensitivity to the problems of both cultural appropriation and misplaced attempts at importing complex ideas will be needed. In the past, for example in England, much was made of the educational systems of Northern Europe without due heed being paid to major societal differences (e.g. demographics) and contrasting social structures (e.g. approach to taxation).

We are repeatedly reminded (e.g. Chapters "Comparison of Self-Reflection in Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School: Rethinking Assumptions on "Reflection" in *OECD Education 2030*" and "Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies": **Chiba**, **Zhang and Hebert**) that there are ongoing international efforts to advocate for education of the "whole person" (e.g. OECD, 2030). The use of more wide-ranging philosophies of education can serve as a lens to interrogate just what is meant by such a claim. How do these "whole people" relate to others, whether near or far, in a globalized world? Comparative philosophy of education lends additional resources to those seeking a corrective to the worst aspects of progressive education in the United States and England from the middle of the last century (allowing that often traditional/progressive are presented as unilluminating caricatures that occlude vital features of many formal educational efforts).

Hu Shih may even have predicted some of the excesses attributed to postmodernism (in terms of esoteric and often Eurocentric discourse) when he warned US university students in a commencement address in 1940 that "a trained mind is never merely negative or destructive. It does not doubt for the sake of doubting; nor does it think 'all words are suspect and all judgments phony.' It doubts in order to believe, in order to establish or re-establish belief on the firmer foundation of evidence and sound reasoning" (Chou, 2013, p. 132). More than 50 years later, postcolonial theorist and musician Edward Said (1993) wrote that despite the "tiresome playfulness of 'postmodern' criticism, with its repeated disclaimers of anything but local games and pastiches," we are living "still in the era of large narratives, of horrendous cultural clashes, and of appallingly destructive war—as witness the recent conflagration in the Gulf—and to say that we are against theory, or beyond literature, is to be blind and trivial" (p. 313). Along a similar vein, Raewyn Connell identified common postmodernist topics "reflexive modernity or shifting subjectivities" as examples of the kinds of theoretical concerns that are "marginal to the biggest issues" when it comes to producing research that is relevant in terms of addressing the tangible problems that have prompted calls for decolonization (Connell, 2018, p. 403). Waghid goes so far as to claim that "if decoloniality were to be aspired towards, *Ubuntu* justice might possibly manifest to give rise to a happiness that instigates teachers and students to exercise their equal intelligences" (2019a, p. 262).

Recommendations

Production of this book has only strengthened our conviction regarding the need to develop courses in philosophy of education (including the education of future teachers) that draw on authors from both Eastern and Western traditions, as well as the global south. Our analysis also suggests that comparative philosophy of education is at times best approached thematically rather than historically, or in terms of individual scholars. For example, it is worth noting that the power of relationships and community are a feature of not only Confucianism, but also *ubuntu* (**Bennett**), *omoluabi* (**Isiaka**), both feminist and African care ethics (Noddings, 2013; Waghid, 2019b; **Waghid**), as well as *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (**Oropilla et al.**). Another prospective pedagogical approach would be through careful historical analysis of a thinker's ideas, developed as they are in the context of particular socio-historical circumstances (**Zhang and Hebert, Isiaka**). This approach sheds light on why a particular thinker came up with their ideas, as well as how they may be meaningfully interpreted. Awareness of both the profound influences and limitations of contextual influences and individual agency may enable teachers to think more clearly about how it is the society in which they are acting shapes the ways in which they approach their pedagogical practice. It may also enable teachers to consider a critically important and even perennial question: How far should they accede or resist?

The continuity remarked on with respect to **Chiba** speaks to the importance of nuanced policy that delivers concrete effects with respect to carefully examined assumptions. The rhetoric of "21st Century Skills" must be backed up with how educational practice will actually look on the ground, in the daily inner workings of any formal institutions affected by policy. Further, such policy ought not to hold to the "shiny and new" without cautious consideration of whether or not it fully supports the ultimate aims of education to which it is directed.

A government's claims (typically *de jure*) and what actually happens (de facto) represent common tensions across the globe. Competing aims of education are to be expected but given their likelihood, such acknowledgment is necessary so as not to distort young people's education. One way of doing this might be to focus on Dewantara's insistence of continuity between home and school (**Ferary**). Yet, even with this connection, the tensions inherent in competing aims of education are not easily navigated. Nevertheless, how might this continuity be achieved? Perhaps it is the way in which a formal education establishes, maintains, and develops its relationships with its wider community. Do adults/parents/caretakers have any contact with the institution or is it a case of keeping discrete spheres "at the school gates"? Philip Kitcher's recent book *The Main Enterprise of the World* (Kitcher, 2022) offers a relevant vision of an education with more direct adult involvement, constituting another model worthy of consideration.

It is also clearly helpful for teachers to develop reflective class activities whereby students are encouraged to directly consider the position of *self* in the *world* (**Chiba**). How do the students position themselves regarding the values they learned in their community and foreign values that they may encounter while studying abroad or

interacting with foreigners, either in person or in the online world? How do these values change their way of thinking? Such exercises promise to help students become more open-minded and empathetic while also developing applied critical thinking skills. A balanced approach, fostering both openness and criticism through engagement with global thought, seems to be our best hope for developing a more just society worldwide through education.

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Afterword: Philosophical Remarks on Decolonizing Philosophy of Education

Yusef Waghid

Introduction

By way of introduction, I am grateful to the editor and astute American-Norwegian scholar, Professor David G. Hebert, of this illustrious volume titled, *Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education,* for the opportunity to humbly offer an Afterword in the context of decolonizing philosophy of education in the world today. My instantaneous response to Hebert's invitation and subsequent analysis of ten intertwined contributions to the volume is that any attempt at decolonizing philosophy of education today is both conceptually relevant and pragmatically pertinent as the discourse, by and large, had been misconstrued as hegemonically attuned to only western notions of education. In 2004, when the late Professor Kwasi Wiredu accepted an invitation to visit our department at Stellenbosch University in South Africa, and subsequently contributed a chapter to the edited volume, *African(a) Philosophy of Education: Reconstructions and Deconstructions* (Waghid, 2005), in which he argued for a reconstruction of an African philosophy of education on the basis of intellectual decolonization, he subtly initiated an epistemological revolution which had far reaching consequences for the study of (higher) education on the African continent. I remain indebted to Professor Wiredu for having encouraged scholars like myself (and I presume David too, as could be inferred from his Preface) to advance the notion of a decolonized philosophy of education that takes seriously the idea of culture and communalism in its advocacy for a defensible, cosmopolitan form of education. In this Afterword, I shall firstly (re)examine the idea of a decolonized philosophy of education. Secondly, I analyse why culture and communalism remain constitutive of any philosophy of education. Thirdly, I offer some remarks on

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cultivating cosmopolitan education to enhance decolonized philosophies of education in the world today—an idea that finds resonance in the seminal thoughts of Hebert and contributors to his volume.

On Decolonizing Philosophy of Education Again

To begin with, Adam Switala and Piotr Majewski (Chapter "The 'Happy Island' of Polish Music Education: Self-Orientalization of Educational Philosophies in Post-Soviet Europe") remind us that one cannot begin to think differently about a philosophy of (music) education if one does not adopt a particular conceptual lens according to which one will hopefully think differently about education. Quite correctly, they posit that if one endeavours to think about and practise education in a decolonized way, one must use postcolonial (educational) theory to do so. What this argument instantiates is a view that one cannot begin to decolonize education if one is remiss of educational theories that guide conceptual, more specifically, postcolonial change. Like Adam Switala and Piotr Majewski, I also consider a postcolonial, more specifically, poststructuralist philosophical lens in my (re)positioning of a decolonized philosophy of education. A decolonized philosophy of education, following Wiredu (2005, p. 17), is constituted by both universalist and particularist knowledge concerns. Regarding the complementary relationship between universal knowledge and situated knowledge, Wiredu (2005) posits that such knowledge interests provide more insight into moral truths than just forms of morality prejudiced by either only a universalist or a particularist perspective. So, a decolonized notion of truth would invariably be underscored by a complementary thesis of truth—that is, a universalist notion intertwined with a particularist one. Regarding philosophy of education, a universalist–particularist notion of education would be constituted by a notion that humans engage with one another in social actions guided by universalist–particularist presuppositions. And an understanding of such a philosophy of education would be to gain insight into what constitutes human encounters. For instance, if mutual respect were to be considered as constitutive of a universal understanding of human encounters and, gaining some understanding of the self's cultural situatedness in the encounter, then one would have practised a philosophy of education enframed by both a universalist and particularist action. Philosophy of education becomes decolonized when human encounters are clarified in terms of a dualist notion of universalism and particularism (Wiredu, 2005, p. 18). Consequently, Wiredu (2005, p. 18) reminds us that

> No form of Africanisation, however, can discover or recover knowledge that counts as knowledge for Africans alone, just as no knowledge discovered in Europe can count as knowledge in Europe alone. On these grounds African educators can inject as much of the sciences and the humanities into their teaching, irrespective of where they come from, provided that their acquisition is compatible with African priorities.

Such an understanding of a decolonized philosophy of education would be practised commensurate with a dualist notion of universalism and particularism. Here,

Ning Luo and Tao Guan (Chapter "Cai Yuanpei's Vision of Aesthetic Education and His Legacy in China") combine Kantian and Confucian aesthetics to proffer an understanding of philosophy of education in the mould of social reconstruction and citizenship in the pursuit of cultivating a form of Chinese education. It becomes quite apparent that for Ning Luo and Tao Guan a decolonized philosophy of education is aimed at cultivating socially oriented citizens who have the intellectual, moral, and aesthetic capacities to be responsive to developments in Chinese society. In this way, a decolonized philosophy of education seems to be a reconstructive discourse that uses dualist notions of human engagement concomitantly with a consideration of its implications for human reimagining and education (moral, aesthetic, and democratic). Similarly, Miwa Chiba (Chapter "Comparison of self-Reflection in Humboldtian *Bildung* and the Kyoto School: Rethinking Assumptions on Reflection in *OECD 2030*") integrates a Humboldtian notion of *Bildung* that recognizes the significance of self-cultivation in human development with a notion of denial of the self whereby humans encounter discomfort and disruption that would allow them to reflect on their (un)familiarities and to remain open to developments in their environment and what is still to come. Such a decolonized notion of philosophy of education would encourage educators and students to be reflective about themselves and remain open to their encounters with others in the world—in my view, a definitive move towards getting to engage with a cosmopolitan other. It is not that the self is abandoned in the context of a collectivity but rather that the self's position is resituated in relation to a collective other (More attention is given to this self–other relationship later on).

Opening Up to Culture and Communalism

Dorothy Ferary (Chapter "A Philosophical Perspective on the Purpose of Education in Indonesia") plausibly shows how culture and communalism interconnect to inform the purposes of education in Indonesian schools for more than a century. Ferary cogently points out how Ki Hajar Dewantara's educational philosophy seemed to have manifested through '*pendidikan karakter*' (character education) and '*merdeka belajar*' (independent learning) in the schooling system with its strong links to building a national identity, engaging with local culture, and establishing togetherness in promoting human flourishing as suggested by Dewantara. What is quite interesting is Ferary's claim that Dewantara's *tri pusat pendidikan* (three centres of education): family, school, and environment become the collective responsibility to educate a child, which implies that education does not rely on teachers alone but also on parents and the wider society—a clear indication of the influences of culture and communalism in human practices.

Similarly, Czarecah Tuppil Oropilla, Jean Canino Guadaña, Charla Rochella Santiago-Saamong (Chapter "*Sikolohiyang Pilipino:* Implications for Formal and Informal Learning Institutions and Settings in the Philippines") posit that 'culturally appropriate' and nuanced understandings and insights to education are necessary to situate educational research in Filipino thought and experience, grounded

in culture and history. For them, the development of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* (SP), also referred to as 'Sikolohiyang Mapagpalaya' (Liberation Psychology) should be considered as a response to local neocolonial formations linked to capitalist globalization from Western countries. Consequently, SP maps out the Filipino values system with cultural and historical roots manifested in practices, traditions, and behaviours in everyday lives as constitutive of the decolonization of psychology and education. As a decolonized philosophy of education, it advances the development of local identity and national consciousness; encourages social awareness and involvement; sustains national and ethnic cultures and languages; and engenders the development and implementation of culturally appropriate methodologies and strategies in fields that have been dominated by Western theories, such as health and medicine practices, mass media, art, education, agriculture, and religion, among others. What Oropilla and others accentuate is the relational and interactional nature of Filipinos through the concept of *kapwa*, which is considered the core concept of *Sikolohiyang Pilipino* in relation to a recognition of shared identity and 'the unity of self and others'. Such an understanding of *kapwa* clearly focuses on cultivating agreements, affinities, and other bonds of solidarity as a manifestation that culture and communalism cannot be ignored in the promotion of a decolonized philosophy of education. In this regard, Oropilla and others proffer that SP with its cultural and communal leanings has the potential to guide educational practices as a definitive non-Western and decolonized philosophy of education.

Towards a Renewed Decolonized Philosophy of Education

After having analysed Le-Xuan Zhang and David G. Hebert's contribution to the volume (Chapter "Beyond Education: A Comparison of Tagore and Hu Shih's Educational Philosophies"), it seems as if a decolonized philosophy of education is one that integrates both indigenous-cultural knowledge and critical-scientific knowledge. Such a balanced view of knowledge grounded in the educational and political positions of Rabindranath Tagore and Hu Shih accentuates the importance of individual, social, and global development. As stated by Zhang and Hebert (in this volume), Tagore and Hu advocated a fusion between cultural/indigenous knowledge and critical/scientific knowledge together with a synthesis between national and cosmopolitan open-mindedness in the pursuit of both self-cultivation and social (re)construction. In this way, a critical, culturally oriented philosophy of education has the potential to foster, what Zhang and Hebert refer to as an 'independent national heritage connected to development of a sustainable global civilization'. In my view, such a nationalist-cum-cosmopolitanist framework of educational and political action provides the premises of a decolonized philosophy of education. Inasmuch as educational theory guides social practices, so the latter equally (re)constitute renewed forms of educational theory.

This brings me to the question: What does a decolonized philosophy of education have to take into consideration to remain tenable? As has been alluded to earlier, I

would imagine that a decolonized philosophy of education cannot merely be attentive to a cosmopolitan other per se. Instead, drawing on the seminal thoughts of Marianna Papastephanou (2012), my contention is that a decolonized philosophy of education ought to be linked to a notion of cosmopolitanism that is eccentric—that is, a matter of decentring the self. More specifically, according to Papastephanou (2012, p. 1), cosmopolitanism that is 'eccentric' is a human capacity that 'decenters the self, cultivates centrifugal virtues, and questions the inflated concern for the globally enriched self'. This ability, she avers, is dependent on an individual's skill or capacity to engage critically with his or her own embedded values, beliefs, and particular worldview. What transpires through a cosmopolitanism that is eccentric is a transition from focusing only on the self to focusing on both the self and the other. Simply put, one could argue that the focus shifts from an individual perspective to that of a collective or communal perspective. For her, only by creating space within oneself by means of decentring the self, the possibility exists for individuals to become aware of, have concern for, and act ethically in response to recognized injustices. Simply put, only through challenging one's own values or motives is one able to change one's thinking about and treatment of those other than oneself (Papastephanou, 2012). Consequently, she (Papastephanou) opines that, irrespective of where one is in the world, being concerned about the effect of unethical and unjust practices against humanity, encapsulates the essence of decentring the self. In this way, space has been opened for the possible transformation of the individual and therefore for the becoming of a socially just world citizen. Therefore, a decolonized philosophy of education should be one that not merely concerns the self's own autonomous narcissistic interests but rather a self that supresses his or her own ethico-political aspirations to become more aware of injustices perpetrated against other selves.

Such a notion of a decentred self is central to David T. Hansen's (2011) depiction of a cosmopolitan-minded person who reflects on what is known to her and simultaneously remains reflexively open to that which is still to come. This reflexive openness to others is not just to tolerate them, 'but to learn from them, which means to permit them to influence one's life' (Hansen, 2011, p. 60). What is important in such a view of a cosmopolitan self to the practice of a decolonized philosophy of education is an understanding that a cosmopolitan-minded education assists people in moving closer and closer apart and further and further together (Hansen, 2011, p. 3). As the self begins to know the other more intimately, it is possible to recognize more clearly than before why the self and the other are distinctly different from each other. Therefore, even though the self and the other have grown in knowledge and appreciation of one another, they are now decisively aware of the disparities that remain between them—that is, they are further apart. Similarly, through educational practices, the self and the other share time and space and, as a result, through their shared experiences the self and the other are indeed moving further together (Hansen, 2011, p. 3)—that is, although being distant their shared experiences hold them together.

On having read Pip Bennett's (Chapter "Lessons from Ubuntu for Moral Education") contribution to the volume, I was encouraged to see how courageously he

defended the African ethic of *ubuntu* (literally human dignity and interdependence) as a conceptually necessary condition to cultivate a form of moral education that seems commensurate with an understanding of a decolonized philosophy of education espoused throughout the volume. What Bennett's fascinating analysis reminds us of is that a decolonized philosophy of education ought to (re)consider an individual as a moral subject concerned with 'the good of others' based on being inextricably bound up with them—a view that seems to resonate with an eccentric form of cosmopolitan education elucidated above. Like the case with an eccentric view of cosmopolitan education, people through *ubuntu* look beyond their individual selves towards the cultivation of communal actions to disrupt what Bennett refers to as the 'evils of colonization'. Inasmuch as the analysis of *ubuntu* and its implications for moral education are plausible, in my view, it falls somewhat short of offering renewed insights into what a decolonized philosophy of education will look like if it endorses an *ubuntu* perspective of education. The answer lies in Bennett's accentuation of being concerned with others.

Elsewhere, I have argued that *ubuntu* is intertwined with the notion of cosmopolitan justice (Waghid, 2014). The cultivation of cosmopolitan justice is a matter of recognizing our innate humanity towards other humans, which means 'engaging them hospitably, and enacting our responsibility towards them in their difference … [particularly] addressing the human rights injustices people encounter on the African continent [and elsewhere]' (Waghid, 2014, p. 95). In the pursuit of cultivating cosmopolitan justice, humans should at least do three things: 'to learn to forgive; to protect those who are helpless, both morally and epistemically; and to do the unexpected, even though it goes against the grain of one's own beliefs or actions' (Waghid, 2014, p. 101). In addition, treating humans hospitably does not mean that one cannot challenge them or take issue with them. When a colleague of mine disagrees with me on a particular understanding of *ubuntu* she does not hesitate to point out some flaws in my understanding of the concept. In this way, treating someone with respect means that one challenges that person (even with some hostility) when one thinks the person is wrong. Both individual and collective actions constitute the above understanding of *ubuntu*. Besides, being open, reflexivity and justice seem to be morally worthwhile actions that ensure the viability of any enactment of *ubuntu*. However, as an expansion of *ubuntu,* I would reckon that at least one aspect of human life seems missing. And, here, I would take us back to Friedrich Nietzsche's *Human, All Too Human,* in which he makes a case close to the end of the book for the wanderer (Nietzsche, 1997, p. 302).

According to Nietzsche (1997, p. 302),

> Anyone who has come even part of the way to the freedom of reason cannot feel himself to be anything other than a wanderer upon the earth – though not a traveller *toward* some final goal: for this does not exist. Yet he does want to observe and keep his eyes open for everything that really is going on in the world; hence, he dare not attach his heart too firmly to any individual thing; he must have something wandering within himself that finds its pleasure in change and ephemerality.

Firstly, wandering is associated with the endless pursuit of freedom of reason in everything a human does. To be continuously concerned with freedom of reason

is to recognize that one's endeavours are never towards some predetermined goal but rather always linked to the pursuit of something new and unimaginable. In this way, there seems to be no end to one's pursuit of just human living. Secondly, a wanderer is openly aware of everything that goes on around him and does not attach himself to one particular matter for too long. To be wide-awake about matters of public concern is to always work towards what is reasonable and just. The pursuit of justice is endless as moments of torture and humiliation might rise again. Thirdly, a wanderer's encounters with matters of public concern are transient so that she finds pleasure in the changes that surround her. A wanderer devotes herself incessantly to seeing good in the world for herself and others as she labours to suppress her inner desires that work against her aspirations for the good life. When I rethink the notion of *ubuntu* in line with wandering, humans' pursuit of cosmopolitan justice should be aligned with actions that are persistent, fleeting, and conscientious—that is, actions that are nomadic or meandering. Only when humans confront an educational dilemma in a meandering way, they do so with resolve, transience, and attentiveness. That is, their flourishing is linked to their actions of wandering whereby they act with resolve, determination, and commitment to address the societal dystopias of the day. In relation to the African continent and elsewhere, I am specifically thinking of how *ubuntu* becomes so important in resolving the crises of poverty, hunger, famine, human trafficking, domestic abuse, child labour, and ethnic conflict. The flourishing of humans is mostly about how the afore-mentioned social malaises can be eradicated on the grounds of *ubuntu*.

Consequently, exercising *ubuntu* should be extended beyond notions of respect, caring, and trust among humans (Waghid, 2014) towards fleeting moments of determination and attentiveness. In the Arabic literature, there is a short saying which reads as follows: *Kun fi al-dunya ka-annaka gharib au abrirun al-sabil*—Be in the world like a stranger or wanderer! If humans act meanderingly, there is always the possibility that they act resolutely, transiently, and attentively. Such are the virtues an extended notion of *ubuntu* brings to the discourse of dealing with an educational dilemma. In other words, it is not enough that one exercises respect, care, and trust in dealing with educational predicaments. To ensure that such debilitating educational events are short-lived, one should deal with it in a resolute, transient, and attentive way as well. Perhaps there will be light at the end of the proverbial tunnel. Thus, relooking the notion of *ubuntu* involves amending it in such a way that in addition to respect, caring, and trust, humans are also obliged to act with a sense of wandering or strangeness. When they do so, there is always the possibility that things will be seen anew. In this way, *ubuntu* seems to be both concerned with matters now—that is, of a temporal kind. But also, with matters that remain in becoming, as this is when wandering steps in (Waghid, 2022).

Towards a Conclusion

A decolonized philosophy of education as argued for throughout this Afterword is constituted by at least three features: Firstly, it transcends any attempt at dichotomizing forms of knowledge as particularist independent of universalist. Instead, it embraces an integrated or fused understanding of knowledge that looks beyond essentializing what is indigenous as separate from universal/global. In this regard, I have found Abass Isiaka's thesis (Chapter "Omoluabi and Asabiyah Philosophies: Afro-Arabian Perspectives on Inclusive Education Policy in Nigeria") as a reminder to be reflectively open to indigenous concepts such as *Ubuntu*, *Ọmọlúàbí*, and *Ujaama* (humanness, good character and interdependence, and communalism, respectively) to cultivate a non-dichotomous view of education. Secondly, it brings into association individual and collective actions through the agency of what it means to be human—that is, it connects the individual and collectivity according to which they can collectively/communally/deliberatively pursue virtuous actions towards human flourishing. Thirdly, a decolonized philosophy of education does not treat education as an institution that ought to adapt or respond to ongoing transformations in a globalized world, but rather, as an individual and collective journey to oppose undesirable practices (Papastephanou, 2012).

Finally, Pip Bennett, Dorothy Ferary, and David G. Hebert conclude the volume with a contribution titled, "Advancing and Applying Comparative and Decolonial Studies in Philosophy of Education". Contributors to this volume have been overwhelmingly concerned with the cultivation of a decolonized philosophy of education. Therefore, it would be appropriate to conclude with some thoughts on the implications of a decolonized philosophy of education. A decolonized philosophy of education allows people to proffer judgments, stake their diverse claims, and deliberatively and dissonantly engage with one another. How in any case would education be decolonized if an association of humans does not assert its perspectives, differences, and points of departure? And, what constitutes a decolonized philosophy of education is not so much that education is universalist–particularist, but rather that people from everywhere are unconstrained to advance theories and practices of education without prejudice and injustice to others. As cogently articulated by Bennett, Ferary, and Hebert in the concluding paragraph of their chapter, a renewed understanding of philosophy of education ought to endorse 'a balanced approach, fostering both openness and criticism through engagement with global thought [considered] … our best hope for developing a more just society worldwide through education'. A philosophy of education without prejudice and the doing of injustice to others cannot be other than an interminable (Agamben, 1985) philosophy of education that remains open to new paths. Firstly, remaining open to new paths implies that such a philosophy of education is without limits, thus, invoking a kind of radical openness to what is read and understood in the engagement with texts. Secondly, pursuing new paths on the part of the reader/studier implies an openness to never-ending possibilities, thus confirming that 'study ha[s] no rightful end' (Agamben, 1985, p. 64). My initial encounters with the chapters in this volume have been about being open to thoughts that would

'shock' (Agamben, 1985, p. 64) or surprise me as I make sense of such thoughts in the context of higher education in Africa. Simultaneously, I remained 'stupefied' (Agamben (1985, p. 64) about what has struck me, at times unable to initially grasp concepts but powerless to not engage with the new thoughts. In this way, my encounters with philosophy of education texts of the contributors to this volume seemed to have oscillated back and forth between a state of surprise or astonishment at what has been read and an incapacity to simply absorb or comprehend what I had been exposed to. Thus, my encounters in reading/studying philosophy of education texts again have been *rhythmic* in the sense that my shuttling between bewilderment and lucidity, discovery, and loss guided my engagement with texts. The contributions to this volume ought to be considered 'a point of contact with an external space that must remain empty' (Agamben, 1993, p. 66). These chapters are 'at the threshold' or 'at the door' of what lies 'outside' of these texts (Agamben, 1993, p. 67). In other words, there is still much to know and find out beyond the meanings espoused in these texts. This means that a practising philosopher of education is ongoingly concerned with 'being-within an outside' (Agamben, 1993, p. 67)—an 'outside' that remains open to new possibilities where 'new constellations of thinking about education [are] in the process' (Jasinski, 2018, p. 96). When this happens, philosophers of education engage in playful studying or living contemplation. I read this volume in the context of doing philosophy of education, which is not about proposing solutions to learning problems, advocating better learning methods, or otherwise helping further educational goals or outcomes. Instead, doing philosophy of education is a matter of sharpening one's consciousness and intellect—a matter of living contemplation—in the quest to study what is relevant and irrelevant, useful, useless, responsible, and irresponsible. This volume invites its readers to (re)consider concepts and practices within education differently!

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