Asia Pacific Education Review
2008, Vol. 9, No.3, 355-366.

Democratization during the Transformative Times and the Role of Popular Education in the Philippines and Korea

Sung-Sang Yoo
Hankuk University of Foreign Studies
Korea

Comparing popular education in the Philippines and South Korea, it is clear that a number of similarities and differences exist regarding the characteristics, methods, and main fields in which popular education has operated. 'Church-related practices,' 'uniting with CO movements,' 'an elite-led tendency,' and 'a disregard for the Left' have all occurred in similar ways in both countries. While introducing the socio-political situation during 1970s and 1980s of these two countries, this paper discusses the theories and practices of popular education. Our findings indicate how popular education in both countries has played a significant role in raising the levels consciousness in the powerless and transforming societies and enabled them to establish a better community. Moreover, each country developed different concepts, initiatives and methods in relation to popular education. In addition, popular educators have been asked to play different roles in each popular education field while most methods were in fact heavily dependent upon elite-led practices.

Key words: popular education, South Korea, Philippines, democratization

Introduction

Popular education has played a significant role in 'arousing,' 'mobilizing,' and 'organizing' people with the goal of social transformation in both the Philippines and South Korea. In the Philippines, a radical popular movement resulted in the People Power Revolution (also known as the EDSA) that provided the momentum for democratization in the 1970s and 1980s. Popular education had been employed as a means of empowering people and in undermining President Marcos' oppressive dictatorship (Garcia, 1999). Popular educators realized that a more diverse, more practical, and more humane transformation could come from people's empowerment through 'conscientization' (Alejo, 2001). Thus, popular education has provided the theoretical, methodological, and practical base upon which the discourses of democratic social transformation have evolved.

South Korea shows very similar tendencies in the relationship between popular education and the popular movements which arose during this same time period. From the critical perspectives applied in relation to General Park's military regime, the claims of ordinary people for socio-political democratization resulted in the demise of continuous military dictatorships before the '6.29 Democracy Declaration' in 1987. [1] As examined above, popular education was an essential foundation which provided the philosophy, methods, and regular opportunities for dialogue by those participating in the popular movements.

Thus, popular education was namely a symbolic space in which to practice democracy and a concrete basis for

Sung-Sang Yoo, College of Education, Hankuk University of Foreign Studies, Korea.

Correspondence concerning this article should be addressed to Sung-Sang Yoo, 270-1 Imun2dong Dongdaemungu Seoul 130-791, Korea. E-mail: sungsang@hufs.ac.kr

educational practice to proceed toward democratization (Gaerlan, 1999; Synott, 2002). While social activists as popular educators dedicated themselves to 'community organization,' 'labor struggles,' managing 'night classes,' serving the marginalized, and attempting to change people's political circumstances, they attempted to eradicate structural exclusion, systemic alienation, and various forms of discrimination. Through popular education, people challenged the dominant classes who wished to reproduce and maintain hierarchical power relations.

The General Situation of the Two Countries during the 1970s and 1980s

The Historical Background

The contexts of the two countries will be discussed in terms of their respective historical, cultural, social, and political situations. To begin, both countries have experienced very similar historical events. Both went through colonization by Great Powers: the Philippines suffered 400 years of colonization by Spain (1965-1898), the United States (1898-1941 and 1944-1946), and Japan (1941-1944), while the Korean peninsula was occupied and ruled for 35 years by Japan(1910-1945). The experiences of colonization by foreign forces in modern times basically undermined the collective self-esteem and the sense of independence (Constantino, 1978). Besides this, the colonizers, during the colonial period, exploited the resources of labor, natural materials, the cultural heritage, and spiritual legacies of both countries. To make matters worse, the colonial legacies left a tremendous gap between those who benefited from the occupation and those who did not (Guerrero, 1999; Guillermo, 2002; Rosca, 1990; San Juan, 1998).

The similar historical legacies of colonization experienced by both countries impacted upon the social, cultural, and political structures, while maintaining systematic hierarchies and stalling social transformation (Stauffer, 1990). However, the history of the Philippines is replete with the legacies of colonialism, resulting in great difficulties when it comes to reflecting upon the past and restoring its identity when compared to South Korea. For example, the language of the Philippines is Filipino or Tagalog. The vocabulary of this language was influenced tremendously by both Spanish and English, while aboriginal 'Tagalog' continues to provide the basic structure of grammar and vocabulary. Moreover, the manorial system of agriculture and Philippine Catholicism are also both based on colonial legacies (Petierra, 1988). The manorial system of agricultural production has made for slow progress in terms of the improvement of people's socio-economic status. On the other hand, Philippine Catholicism has played a role in justifying hierarchical power relations between the oppressors and the oppressed in the name of God. Both systems have provided a firm foundation for elitism, one of the major national problems confronting the Philippines.

The Cultural Domain

In the cultural domain of both the Philippines and South Korea, differences are much more apparent than similarities. The Philippines is a nation composed of diverse ethnic groups using different languages, divided into many local dialects. In addition, the archipelagic retains peculiar cultural divisions determined by geographical region; its geo-economic location enabled the archipelago to become a center for international trade; and the tropical climate allowed the Philippines to produce sugar cane (Andres & Ilada-Andres, 1987; Encarnacion & Radem, 1993; Rood, 1998). In short, 'diversity' in geographic socio and cultural spheres is the perfect word to describe the Philippines.

South Korea, on the other hand, is a nation whose culture is said to be homogeneous. The geopolitical location of the Korean Peninsula between China and Japan forced an established state to struggle for national independence. In fact, the Korean tradition has been formed mainly under the influence of Chinese culture and Confucianism, which emphasizes patriarchy at the familial, social, and state levels. Homogeneity of ethnicity and language is part of this tradition, and it is inherently built into the way the country was formed (Abao, 1999).

Anti-communism, following the division of the Korean Peninsula into North and South Korea, is another key characteristic. In contrast, a long tradition of communist-inspired organizations in the Philippines continues to guide popular movements. However, the influence of these organizations has never overcome the socio-economic structures inherited from colonialism. This is why the Communists' Party of the Philippines' [hereinafter CPP]

agenda still sees Philippine society as feudal and colonial (Tornquist, 1990). Moreover, conflicts among diverse religious groups in Southern Mindanao have become a factor in diluting the forces of the Left in the Philippines. In short, this has resulted in changes to the agenda and has also influenced aspects of social transformation as a political force and has ended up supporting the oligarchy.[2]

In contrast, the existence in North Korea of a socialist country was considered a threat to the people of South Korea, a country under capitalism. Every activity undertaken by the government in the South was compared to one in North Korea. Furthermore, national development has been the most important issue on the national agenda, and was also the primary means by which the South sought to prevail over North Korea. Such a national mood never allowed people the luxury of having divergent goals. Different ideas and diversified ideologies were rare on both sides of the divided Korean peninsula. In South Korea, socialism or communism has never been accepted as an ideology or a legitimate system of political thought; rather, it has always represented the highest form of treason against the state.[3]

The Socioeconomic Dimension

In the socio-economic dimension, the two countries exhibit important differences today. While South Korea has stepped up to become one of the leading industrial countries, the Philippines can be categorized as somewhere between a less developed and a developing country (Acedo & Uemura, 1999). It is interesting to see such a difference between both countries. According to a report published before the 1970s, the Philippines was a leading country in Asia in respect to economic growth (Leyco-Reyes, 1985), while South Korea had only begun to generate a long-term vision of industrialization. Considering the fact that both countries were ruled by authoritarian governments, the movement from a state-led economy to a democratic and market-led one in two decades can be said to be surprising in the least (Miranda, 1997).

Many studies have continued to closely examine the causes of poverty and social inequality in the Philippines. Regarding the issue of poverty in the Philippines, David (1989) pays attention to the social structures that reproduce poverty, and demonstrates the futility of current government efforts to improve the living conditions of those who are regarded as the underclass. He argues that the sixty percent of Filipinos living in absolute poverty are poor because their incomes are kept low, and avenues for improving their status in life are virtually closed because of the inability of the government to equalize life changes and opportunities through meaningful social intervention programs.

South Korea has taken a number of very different paths than the Philippines. Rapid economic growth has been achieved since the late 1960s. South Korea became one of NICs (New Industrial Countries) or four “Tigers” along with Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Singapore (Guerrero, 1999). Rapid economic progress enabled South Korea to become a member of the OECD in 1995. Economic development was possible because of government support for an economic environment in which export-driven policies and heavy-industries are emphasized (McGaw, 2005). Such changes were also possible due to the continuity in policy resulting from the fact that President Park Jung-Hee stayed in power for 18 years during which he maintained consistent policies aimed at economic growth. Compared to the Philippines, the level of poverty and degree of social inequality is quite low, even though they remain as critical social problems in both countries.

Guerro (1999, p. 89) has argued that the formation of a middle class in South Korea continues to affect economic development. “As everywhere else, the middle class’s insecurity regarding its political and economic status has strengthened support for development projects. Middle class motivations spring from two concerns: the country's growth chances and the benefits to be derived from such growth.” Interestingly, Magno’s argument for re-democratization in the Philippines provides the same cause in terms of the Philippines’s procrastination in economic development. He argues that “the social conditions of poverty, inequality, and underdevelopment which are the characteristic traits of peripheral or dependent capitalism have remained firmly implanted in the group” (Magno, 1988, p. 10).

According to studies by Tornquist (1990, 1996), inequality in the Philippines has been based on the apparent order of politics and the economy mainly being controlled by a few elites. According to him, “[G]iven the inequality in the distribution of wealth, only the able are capable of providing political muscle and the poor, the ‘invisible majority’ remains invisible and thus inconsequential to policy making” (1990, p. 42). Thus, the character of

economic policy reveals the indomitable strength of traditional forces in restoring an old political and economic order most evident in the government's debt negotiations and land reform programs. However, the question of "why Filipino people remain in poverty" remains unresolved.

Conclusively, different foundations of social class structures have caused different results in terms of economic growth in the two countries. Although elitism remains a force in South Korean civil society, a society which is mainly composed of self-described middle class people, there is a strong tendency among Korean people to resist it. On the contrary, elitism is apparent in every area of life in the Philippines. 'Elite democracy'[4] is a representative term to indicate how deep-rooted it remains.

In the same vein, consciousness of equality in South Korea is far stronger than in the Philippines. There is a very much stronger belief in a meritocracy which tends to enhance the importance (or perceived importance) of education and attracts people to public schools (Mendoza, 1996; Wilson et al., 1990). Without a doubt, Filipino people also place much emphasis on the same values. However, the difference lies in the South Korean social structure, which provides accessible stepping-stones. The pursuit of high levels of economic growth has operated alongside a parallel advancement and development of school education, with both progressing at the same rate. South Korea has served as a good example for many studies exploring the relationship between educational development and economic growth.[5]

Philippine society, however, with a deepening inequality between classes, ethnicities, and religions, has scarcely changed in social structure although 'democratizing' the educational system remains a key goal. The gap between private and public schooling has become wider; completion of public education does not guarantee students a successful life (PEPE, 2000; Segovia & Galang, 2002; Soriano, 2000; Synott, 2002). This is arguably why more graduates, year after year, are heading to foreign countries in order to make money. Interpersonal connections play a much stronger role than natural and innate ability. Political corruption is ubiquitous.

The Political Realm

Politically, the two countries share very similar tendencies. In the Philippines, Marcos maintained his presidential authority from 1965-1986. Before the 1986 EDSA uprising, he exercised power to expand his own political realm and to accumulate personal property. The 'successful' presidency of his first term in the late 1960s did not mean that he had become a benevolent and well intentioned politician. Martial Law was declared in 1972 in the name of protecting the nation from communists. Marcos ruled by developing antagonism among different social interest groups. Kidnapping, assassination, torture, state sponsored murder, and other inhumane means of manipulating political power, which occurred during the Marcos regime, are still prevalent in the Philippines (Igaya, 1999; Lusterio, 1996; Stauffer, 1990).

South Korea trod a very similar path. Regarding the political situation during the 1970s and 1980s, Park Jung-Hee and Chun Doo-Hwan were notorious for exercising presidential power in a militaristic way. In spite of their economic achievements, basic humanity and balanced development were neglected by both presidents. Through the 'Yu-Shin' constitution (1971), the era of Martial Law (1972-1979), and the Kwang-Ju Massacre (May, 1980), the military dictators attempted to prolong their power.

Transformative Times: Popular Movements in the Philippines and the 'Min-Joong' Movement in South Korea

Responding to this situation, popular movements played a significant role in democratization. In the Philippines and South Korea, people waged continuous struggles for a more humane society against power structures that lacked a full understanding of human development. While popular movements have proceeded in restoring basic standards, awareness of and respect for human rights by their actions, popular education has paid more attention to the process of the movements themselves as regards relationships among people, in particular, the oppressed.

In the Philippines, a socialist group called the National Democrat Front [hereafter 'NDF'] was at the center of the popular movement, which initially intended to overthrow the government. Under the slogan of the re-formation of the socialist party in the late 1960s, José Maria Sisson led the Communist Party of the Philippines to fight against the regime in an armed struggle by creating the 'National

People's Army [hereafter 'NPA']'(Sison, 1989). Because of the levels of violence employed by Marcos' repressive rule, resistance based upon the rule of law was futile and it was this which helps explain why the resistance movement was mainly clandestine. In addition to socialist leadership, radical Christian groups played a significant role in social transformation on an individual as well as a community level. Influenced by liberation theology in Latin America, radical Catholic priests participated in political struggles by preaching 'liberation' and organizing grassroots communities in which relationships aimed at liberation were forged (IPD, 1988; Tornquist, 1996; Wagner, 1997b).

In 1983, some changes occurred in Philippine politics. The assassination of opposition Senator Benigno Aquino Jr. that year signaled the beginning of the end of the Marcos regime. The massive demonstrations which erupted and the enormous economic crisis which unfolded in its wake, severely undermined the authoritarian regime's capacity to continuously reproduce itself. The masses rallied behind the united opposition's presidential candidate, Corazón Aquino, and found in her the perfect symbol of protest against the dictatorship (Magno, 1988, p. 7). "The people's peaceful and effective assertion of their power during the presidential election and EDSA revolution in 1986, in ending the dictatorship and restoring democracy, was a high point in the evolution of Filipino democracy and the world's 'decade of democratization'"(Abueva, 1998, p. 23).

As Philippine society went through the EDSA revolution, important changes occurred in the popular movements of the Philippines: The National Democrat Front [hereafter NDF] lost its influence and a new political group, the 'Popular Democrats' [hereafter 'PD'] emerged. In fact, most leading people in the PD were former active members of the NDF. In spite of their common foundation, the PD escaped from the tyranny of orthodoxy and the rigid rule which characterizes many socialist groups in the manipulation of popular sectors. The PD's 'conjuncture analysis' was clearly different from the ND's 'structural approach,' which was firmly based on class struggle.[6] Regarding the relationship between the popular movement and popular education, the PD has played a significant role in propagating the idea of education as a vehicle for liberation and to developing new methods of popular education.

In the case of South Korea, the '*Min-Joong*' movement represents the people's struggle during the same period and against similar forces. '*Min-Joong*' signifies the people's concrete situation as a politically oppressed, economically deprived, culturally alienated, and unequally society. It was also characterized as being people-centered, humanizing, social-justice-pursuing, and transformative in both intent and action. When national economic policies were driven by export and heavy industries, rural and fishing communities were ignored and laborers' rights were frequently neglected. The early stage of the *Min-Joong* movement was initially aimed at providing support to those who had been ignored in the national policy. The self immolation of Jun Taeil's was a catalyst which saw the labor movement rise up to demand their legal rights. However, the Park government successfully deployed a number of laws (i.e., the Martial Law (1972), Yu-Shin constitution (1972), and the successive Emergency Orders (1972-79)) to control the people as a response to their demands (Cheng & Manning, 2003).

It was critical that Christian groups actively intervened in the people's oppressed situation. Christian groups in the 1970s *Min-Joong* movement had been influenced by liberation theology, community organization, and Marxism, in ways similar to those in the Philippines during the same period. However, their participation in the *Min-Joong* movement was not based on a socialist orientation like the Philippines, but initially led by humanistic sympathy. While the PECCO, COPE, PEACE, and other Christian groups had been controlled under the leadership of the NDF, organizations such as 'the Institute of Evangelical Education [*Seongyo Kyoyukwon*],' 'Christian Academy,' URM, and 'Evangelization Committee of the Metropolitan Special Area of Seoul [*Sudokwon Teuksu Sungyohwiwonhwoe*]' engaged in comparatively independent actions. In South Korea, the modes of the *Min-Joong* movement shifted from humanistic interests to ideological struggle beginning in the early 1980s. Interestingly, this pattern of evolution is different from that observed in the Philippines. The popular movement until the early 1980s had been strictly controlled by socialist groups in the Philippines, while later on it became dramatically separated from its ideological orthodoxy.

While the *Min-Joong* movement grew to be an ideological struggle against unjust authority, it lost its original foundation as a movement concerned primarily with people's lives. The teachers' movement for school democratization, the labor movement, the radical student movement, and the peasants' movement all contained wider

agendas such as 'anti-US,' 're-unification,' and 'anti-capitalism.' Thus, the *Min-Joong* movement became separated by its own ideological identification with the National Liberation [NL] or PD [People's Democracy] organizations. However, those who were oppressed in the economic, cultural, and social domains could not participate in such an intellectual movement. On one hand, the 1970s' *Min-Joong* movement sought ways to live with the oppressed on an individual and community level, while the 1980s' *Min-Joong* movement attempted to find a way to liberate the oppressed on a meta-narrative level (Cho, 1998; Choi, 1990; Han, 2001; Han & Huh, 1985; Kim, 1988; Yoon, 2000).

Educational Efforts for Social Transformation: 'Pop-Ed' and 'Min-Joong Kyoyuk'

Theories

In both countries, popular education is defined very similarly. According to the Popular Education for People's Empowerment ['PEPE'], popular education in the Philippines is 'education for social change.' Through this definition, the PEPE states that popular education is about cultural intervention aimed ultimately at transforming the social structure (Garcia, 1999; Tungpalan, 1990). Furthermore, popular education aims at people's empowerment to make them aware of the social conditions hindering their own conscientization.

In South Korea, popular education, and in particular '*Min-Joong*' education, is defined as being 'education aimed at changing people's consciousness.' Popular educators are concerned most of all about critical consciousness raising of the '*Min-Joong*,' who are poor, oppressed, alienated, and excluded. In Korea, popular education refers directly to conscientization.

Interestingly, these definitions of popular education are similar as well as containing elements of difference. Both are about change and the empowerment of people through education. On the other hand, while the PEPE focuses on a cultural rupture to change the oppressive social structure, popular educators in Korea pay more attention to the transformation of people's consciousness. One possible explanation is based upon a different stress placed on the discourse about who the 'people' are. The term '*Min-Joong*' is situated within the realm of 'grand discourse' about popular education in Korea. For the Philippines, the discourse of the oppressed has not developed yet. Rather, Filipino organizations have developed practical methods that could be applicable to the fields of popular education.

The same phenomenon is drawn from references to popular education in each country. In the Philippines, the PEPE was launched in 1986 as an organizational network as a reflection of the popular movements and it has played a role in mediating popular organizations and providing them with educational strategies. Since 1986, the discourse of popular education has been developed in a more serious manner. In fact, the term 'popular education' was hardly used before the EDSA uprising in the Philippines.[7]

However, popular education in South Korea developed differently. References to popular education [*Min-Joong Kyoyuk*] were already common among those committed to radical movements during the 1970s. '*Min-Joong*' was a common word among people and a more radical connotation was added when *Min-Joong* discourses evolved further. Even though its popularity really took root when *Monthly Mook, Min-Joong Kyoyuk* was published in 1985, it was certainly affected by the former role of *Min-Joong* education carried out in the field outside of the school system.

Differing from the case of the Philippines, the discourse of popular education began to fall into disuse after the '6.29 Democracy Declaration.'[8] The disappearance of obvious oppression coincided with a general neglect of popular education. Therefore, it is true in a sense that popular education, a form of political education, was necessary and essential in the era of an unjust regime which did not respect basic tenets of human rights. In the case of Korea, the period of the 1970-80s can be characterized as a dark age regarding human rights and social development.[9] It overlapped exactly with the time when popular education was most prosperous.

In short, the importance of popular education has been different in each country. In the Philippines, people's organizations initiated popular education more actively after 'the EDSA Uprising' of 1986; however, in South Korea, popular education became virtually insignificant after the '6.29 Democracy Declaration' in 1987, when the country abandoned popular social movements.

Methods

Both the Philippines and South Korea maintain very traditional ways of education in formal settings, through which the relationship between teachers and students remain hierarchical. Emphasis upon instrumental repetition and memorization of knowledge in textbooks is a deep-rooted tradition, which was influenced by cultural 'Confucianism' and practical 'behaviorism.' When a strong hierarchical order exists in terms of educational achievement, in particular in higher education, every practice in school education tends to be evaluated in relation to one's potential to enter a 'prestigious' university. According to Freire (1970), educational practices retain an approach very much akin to 'banking' when it comes to teaching and learning in such an environment.

In a similar way to the formal school setting, traditional teaching methods in the Philippines and South Korea were also found in popular education, which seem to belong to the non-formal sector of educational practices. On one hand, some pioneering educators attempted to introduce a new teaching-learning environment for the popular sectors in education. On the other hand, such a new environment was soon overwhelmed by the traditional methods of teaching and learning.

In the Philippines, methods in popular education were changed from '*basa-talakay*' (popular education as education for national liberation and social emancipation) through 'close-open / legal-illegal' (popular education as popularization/legalization of the content of education of the previous period) to 'Hey! Hey! A. A.' (popular education as comprehensive empowerment) (Loredo, 1999). These methods implied that popular education is practical; thus, it could result in the same outcome in different contexts; popular education is well organized and ordered; and the content of popular education is ready to use from the start. Because most efforts at popular education take place in grassroots communities, every educational activity has to be practical in terms of economic development, health improvement, literacy, creating strategies against the perceived oppressors, and so forth. Therefore, popular educators and participants developed creative methods to advance a given agenda. At best, they attempted to make popular education more fun and participatory with more emphasis placed upon sing-alongs, dramas, role plays, dance, group work, poetry, etc. However, educators mainly depended upon traditional methods similar to the school settings where they had been trained. Besides this, the circumstances before the demise of Marcos required a high degree of order and organization when carrying out resistance activities.

In the late 1980s, new methods of popular education were derived from reflective meetings among national popular educators, such as the 'context-content-method.' In the Philippines, this new method of popular education was crucial. First, it was the first method developed by popular educators with experience in the field. Second, it was the outcome of collective reflection. Beginning with the evaluation of their past educational experiences, popular educators arrived at a Filipinized method. Third, the method was the result of dialogical discussions among the educators themselves. Four DAUPAN events, which became the genuine well spring of popular education, resulted in educators disseminating this method and applied it to their communities. Last, it became a basic philosophy of popular education in the Philippines. Based on the method, participating popular educators began to consider more deeply exactly what popular education is, why it is necessary, who participates in it, amongst other fundamental questions.

In the case of *Min-Joong* education in South Korea, even though methods have yet to be clarified and defined, each organization developed its own method to teach and learn. In the early 1970s, *Min-Joong* education methods were greatly influenced by the community organization movement. Popular educators from community organizers in urban shantytowns and rural areas adjacent to the industry complex adopted Saul Alinsky's well-organized blueprint for community development, which is composed of 10 principles (Alinsky, 1989; IUP, 1991). Therefore, popular education focused on enabling people to see 'what the problem is' and 'how it can be resolved.' Issue-centered activities based on the Alinsky model were similar to Freire's problem-posing education. In spite of these similarities, the crucial difference is that the CO strategy failed to relate social issues to the individual's identity as a human being.

In this regard, it is interesting that the Korea Christian Academy [hereafter 'KCA'] had put a strong stress on dialogue in education since its establishment in the 1960s.

The dialogical method of education was influenced by European churches, in particular German churches.[10] When the KCA re-opened the program in 1975, the emphasis on dialogue became more significant than before. In one sense, the KCA successfully put their ideas into practice by developing 'intermediary groups.' In another sense, it was too passive an approach to apply to the prevailing socio-political issues in South Korea.

Yahak, literally referring to night school, had reflected the changes of *Min-Joong* education methods in South Korea. Initially, it was established as a substitute for day-school education, when opportunities were restricted by the Japanese colonial authorities. Its substitute role continued until the early 1970s. *Yahak* teachers were mainly college students. The changes in student activism since the late 1960s provoked theoretical changes in *Yahak*. While a large number of *Yahak*s made efforts to prepare students for national examinations, some *Yahak*s re-oriented themselves toward people's conscientization [*Eu-Sik-Hwa Yahak*], in which others wanted to construct a 'living community' through education [*Gong-Dong-Che Yahak*], and a third group focused on labor issues for young participants working under difficult circumstances [*No-Dong (labor) Yahak*].

By diversifying *Yahak*s since the end of 1980s, educators came up with different methods of education. First, teachers became aware of mutual communication and knowledge production from the bottom-up rather than delivering the given knowledge in a traditional top-down manner. Second, dialogue was considered to be significant, with teachers approaching problems with students. Third, teachers considered student and community narratives as important teaching resources in themselves. Last, each teaching material or theme was closely connected to the structural analysis of the community, society, and nation.

As radical theories such as Marxism, Maoism, and Ju-Che Thought contributed greatly to the popular movement, *Yahak* since the early 1980s became the terrain upon which ideological struggle occurred in many sectors of the popular movement. In this regard, *Yahak* demonstrates another major change in terms of teaching methods since the early 1980s. However, efforts outweighed outcomes. Although *Yahak* teachers set 'conscientization' as a goal to achieve, their focus was primarily upon 'teaching politics' or encouraging the subjects of their efforts to 'become ideological.' Dialogic, dialectic, and parallel relationships between teachers and students were indeed minimal at *Yahak*: social awareness and raising consciousness were translated into class struggles. In addition, teaching materials disregarded grassroots perspectives.

Overall, popular education methods in both countries have been influenced by community organization movements and Paulo Freire's '*Pedagogy of the Oppressed*.' However, they were both heavily influenced by traditional education as well: Confucianism in South Korea and Catholicism in the Philippines.

The Roles of Popular Educators

In Korea, popular educators attempted to sincerely serve people with their critical approaches to education. At first, popular educators were mainly intellectuals who were college students, critical ideologues, social activists, radical pastors, and community leaders, all of whom realized how revenue-generating national plans were devastating the social and economic conditions of ordinary people. Moreover, Park's regime and the successive military regimes were considered appropriate targets of social transformation. In this sense, intellectuals sought a space of freedom to bring to life their ideas of popular movements. Korean intellectuals concluded that the term '*Min-Joong*' meant to be oppressed, to be poor, to be excluded, and to be alienated in a system of monopolistic capitalism.

Popular education inherently came up at the grassroots levels of the popular movements. Popular educators from social intellectual circles enriched it on one hand, and they contributed to it's stagnation on the other hand. The most problematic aspect of popular movements in South Korea was their characteristic of 'personal heroism' by which a heroic leader tended to guide people under his own control.

Like radical elites in South Korea, popular educators in the Philippines approached the people with the purpose of awakening them; in their mind, "the awareness was itself already empowerment and itself already a reduction of their vulnerability and their poverty."[11] Popular educators who belonged to those groups seemed to be aware of 'all' situations and contexts in which their intervention was required. However, it is difficult for an intellectual to grapple with *all* because "if you are an intellectual you have

to be critical, see all sides and the worst thing you can be accused of being is biased and this was before all the theories of post-modernism (which argued) that every discourse is colored or tainted by a class of other positions."[12]

Furthermore, there existed a number of pitfalls for educators in the past, who had tried literally to apply something that had been proven in one place to another place.[13] However, when conjuncture analysis arose via the PD group and through the ND and SD movements, contextualization, reflective methods, empowerment of, by, and for the people, and dialogic relationships between educators and learners became significant elements in popular education (De La Torre, 1986). At this point, popular educators in the Philippines came to realize how important it was for people themselves to be aware of their social, cultural, and political context. They further emphasized people's realities, which must be the basis of problem resolution. Translating the community culture, context, language, and poor people's lives into the agenda of community development came to be considered more seriously, which would require a great deal of learning and humility.

In both countries during this period, popular educators had to play the role of teacher, facilitator, learner, trainer, and organizer. They frequently were asked to play multiple roles in order to deal with community issues. Because of these educators' deep engagement in social issues, Dennis Murphy's eloquent advice is perhaps worth repeating; "do what seems to be interesting to people the most. So you're not deciding housing or health program is the big problem, you're listening to what they say not because you have tremendous respect to it but you know it is more realistic to that because the problem they are more interested in will get the biggest crowd. And the most powerful is your organization." [14] Following the tradition of the CO movement, he strongly believes that people's organizations based on an actual community enable people to resolve any problems they have.

Although educators' roles were supposed to have some distance from their own intervention to those issues, however, most issues did not allow them to distance themselves from their involvement. Therefore, the ideal goal of increasing people's leadership and independence frequently was short circuited by the intellectuals' direct leadership. The failure of these educators in this respect is pointed out by other educators who had worked with them.

Educators who are ready to go into the field should feel confident in dealing with a problem with which they are not yet familiar. However, all problems do not meet the framework that is provided by a given theory to deal with similar issues. That is why a theory should be reflected by actual practice and vice versa. Praxis is the ongoing process of reflection, while continuing to participate in people's actual situations, according to Paulo Freire.

Therefore, educators are not those who are ready to distribute what they know, but those who are ready to learn to deal with the physical, emotional, epistemological, and spiritual challenges they will face. The attitude necessary to learn what they don't know necessarily accompanies another qualification to unlearn what they do know. Tungpalan states that "the unlearning process requires intellectuals to become humble, to understand where they stand, and to re-think whom they meet."[15]

In the long run, popular educators have to reinvent what they know and what they have done with creativity and sensitivity. Garcia emphasizes the point that "popular educators are not to stop but to continue being creative, to continue innovating, to continue advocating for popular education. There should be more conscious effort for constructing dialogues; there should be a more conscious way of exploring creative means."[16] In addition to creativity, popular educators are required to embrace a high degree of sensitivity. By re-phrasing Flora Arellano's words, a program of 'sensitivity training' is necessary so that popular educators become more sensitive to people. 'Sensitivity training' is strongly related to human rights education, focusing as it does on people's rights, the right of participation, the right of freedom of expression, and the right of development. Popular educators should consider these issues when they deal with people. As a result, they will hopefully become more socially aware of the ways in which people have been oppressed socially, culturally, and economically and politically. Through education, sensitivity can be broadened and promoted. [17]

Conclusion

Even though more complicated critiques regarding the

post-revolution situation in both countries persist (Magno, 1992; Neary, 2003; Sison & Werning, 1989), no disagreement exists with the argument that both cases have led to the democratization in social, cultural, and political sphere in these two countries as well as other ones nearby. While differences in these countries could be pointed out, similarities between the two cases remain relevant. They have put an end to military dictatorship regimes that lasted for approximately two decades. Both revolutions were provoked not by top-down agendas, but by people's power. And they affected social and cultural transformations after the change of the polity in both nations. Broadly, those were able to occur based on consistent people's struggles against unjust social rules and the recognition of the need for more humane living conditions.

For the Philippines and South Korea, democracy was the answer to the question; 'what kind of society to pursue?' Regarding the question of 'how can a society be transformed?,' the term democratization is a proper answer. Democratization can be understood as (1) the struggle for and establishment of a democratic state, as well as, in its usual sense, and (2) the struggle against an authoritarian regime, ending in its transformation or overthrow and replacement by a democratic regime, and the consolidation of democracy (Abueva, 1997). Such lengthy rhetoric of 'democracy,' 'democratization,' and 'democratic' does not mean anything without the actual participation of people in the process to democratize a society in the two countries (De la Torre, 1986).

It was popular education that has led to the radical intervention of education in order to liberate those who have been oppressed (Freire, 1971). Popular education aimed at democracy, participation, full conscientization and greater autonomy for the community. Popular education, one dimension of non-formal education (La Belle, 1986; Torres, 1990), actively intervened in the process of democratization in which humanization could be achieved in the both countries.

This comparative study of popular education between South Korea and the Philippines has shown that education has played a pivotal role in promoting democratic consciousness and participation in popular movements by widening the possibility of social transformation. In both countries, it was very true that popular education could not be detached from the process of transformative social movement during 1970s-1980s. While comparing two cases of popular education in terms of concepts, methods, and popular educators' role, more active participation in popular education in both formal and non-formal sectors is suggested so as to promote the level of social democratization in both South Korea and the Philippines.

Notes

[1] Like the 'EDSA uprising' of the Philippines, the South Korean government put a step forward to democratization by this event which happened by people's insistent on-street demonstrations and through which people could have a right for direct vote in presidential election.

[2] See Sisson(1989) for the CPP's history, struggles, and changes, which were narrated by the re-founder of the CPP.

[3] It is still one of the most critical crime to express that socialism could become an alternative ideology in Korea due to the law titled "*Kukgaboanbeop* (National Security Law)".

[4] Abueva (1997) describes 'elite democracy' in the following way: "Philippine history has of course examples of the elite's ambiguous and equivocal norms and conduct concerning their collaboration with the Spanish, or American, or Japanese colonial governments even during the times when Filipino patriots were still fighting the colonialists and sacrificing their lives for their country. On the whole, the elite's norms of right and wrong, and their application of democratic and non-democratic values, seem ambiguous, inconsistent, and opportunistic. It is not surprising that, influenced by them, the nation at large seems to have a weak sense of right and wrong, based largely on personalistic judgment rather than on universalistic criteria" (p. 25).

[5] Also see (Godonoo, 1998) for a similar situation in Japan.

[6] The CPP's approach to the national politics had been totally based upon class struggles and pursued after socialist revolution. However, the PD's perspective to the Philippines needed more conjectural and contextual approaches in order that social change would occur with people's participation. The conjuncture analysis soon became a popular discourse among popular activists because ND could not envision the future with such a dogmatic slogan, "class struggle against the capitalists and imperialists".

[7] Edicio De La Torre recollects that it was himself who popularized the term popular education in the Philippines in the early 1970s. In the initial period, he wanted them to recognize the significance of education when people were engaged in popular movements for social transformation (Interview with Edicio de la Torre, March 29, 2005).

[8] In fact, the use of the term '*Min-Joong*' was socially and politically avoided in public because the government strongly propagated that it was a term employed by North Korea, a communist country. Therefore, it was not unusual to be asked the following when found using the term in any way: "Are you a spy sent by the North?" (Interview with Han-Soo Kim, June 25, 2005).

[9] In spite of the argument above, the same period has been recognized globally to be the most pivotal in terms of economic development and which finally gave birth to the 'Han River's Miracle'.

[10] Interview with Dae-In Kang, the current President of KCA.

[11] Interview with De la Torre, March 29, 2005.

[12] Interview with De la Torre, March 29, 2005.

[13] Interview with Robert F. Garcia, March 22, 2005.

[14] Interview with Murphy, April 9, 2005.

[15] Interview with Tungpalan II.

[16] Interview with Robert F. Garcia, March 22, 2005.

[17] Interview with Flora Arellano, April 6.

References

Abao, C. (1999). Beyond bread and butter: The demand for democracy in South Korea. In K. N. Gaerlan (Ed.), *Transition to democracy in East and Southeast Asia* (pp. 105-148). Quezon City, Philippine: IPD (Institute for Popular Democracy).

Abueva, J. V. (1997). Philippine democratization and the consolidation of democracy since the 1986 EDSA revolution: An overview of the main issues, Trends and Prospects. In F. B. Miranda (Ed.), *Democratization: Philippine perspectives* (pp. 1-82). Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press.

Acedo, C., & Uemura, M. (1999). *Education indicators for East Asia and Pacific*. Washington: World Bank.

Alejo, M. J. (2001). *Pop-Ed monograph: Citizenship and pedagogy*. Quezon City, Philippines: PEPE Inc.

Cheng, Y., & Manning, P. (2003). Revolution in education: China and Cuba in global context, 1957-1976. *Journal of World History, 14*(3), 359-391.

Cho, H.-y. (1998). *Hangugui Minjujuuiwa Sahwoeundong: Bipan Silcheondamronui bogweongwa Guseongeul Wihayeo* [Democracy and Social Movement in Korea: for Restoring and Re-forming its Critical Discourse]. Seoul, Korea: Dangdae.

Choi, J.-j. (1990). Minjungminjujuiui Gusang [Ideas of Popular Democracy]. In Christian Institute of Social Studies (Ed.), *Sahwibaljeongwa Sahwiundong*[Social Development and Social Movement] (pp. 77-90). Seoul, Korea: Hanwool.

De la Torre, E. (1986). *The politics of popular democracy.* Paper presented at the Third World Studies Forum: A Consultation on Popular Education and Leadership Formation, UC-Diliman, Quezon City, Philippine.

Gaerlan, K. N. (Ed.). (1999). *Transition to democracy in East and Southeast Asia*. Quezon City, Philippine: IPD (Institute for Popular Democracy).

Garcia, R. F. (1999). *Of maps and leapfrogs: Popular education and other disruptions*. Quezon City: The Philippines: PEPE.

Godonoo, P. (1998). Tribute to Paulo Freire: His influence on scholars in Africa. *Convergence, 31*(1), 30-39.

Guerrero, D. (1999). A tiger changing stripes: Post development, transitions and democracy in South Korea. In K. N. Gaerlan (Ed.), *Transition to democracy in East and Southeast Asia* (pp. 59-104). Quezon City, Philippine: IPD (Institute for Popular Democracy).

Guillermo, R. G. (2002). Enabling truths on the verge of pedagogy. *Philippine Studies, 50*(2), 279-289.

Han, S.-H. (2001). *Formation and Development of Popular Education*. Seoul: Kyoyukkwahaksa.

Han, W.-S., & Huh, B.-S. (1985). *Hanguk Minjungkyoyukron: I-nyeomgwa Silcheonjeonrak* [Popular Education Theory of Korea: Ideology and Action*]*. Seoul, Korea: Hakminsa.

Igaya, L. (1999). The political economy of the Philippine democratic transition. In K. N. Gaerlan (Ed.), *Transition to democracy in East and Southeast Asia* (pp. 3-58). Quezon City, Philippine: IPD (Institute for Popular Democracy).

IPD. (1988). *Popular education for people's empowerment (PEPE): A report on two consultations on the education and training programs of non-government and people's organizations in the Philippines*. Quezon City, Philippines: IPD (Institute for Popular Democracy).

Kim, S.-J. (1988). *Bundan Hyunsilgwa Gidokyo Minjungkyoyuk* [The Korean Peninsula in Separation and Christian Popular Education]. Seoul, Korea: Korea Center of Theologcial Studies.

La Belle, T. J. (1986). *Nonformal education in Latin*

America and the Caribbean: Stability, reform, or revolution? New York: Praeger.

Leyco-Reyes, S. (1985). *Social science education and national development in the Philippines.* Singapore: Regional Institute of Higher Education and Development.

Loredo, R. (1999). A history of popular education (or how we are evolving from being transmission belts). In R. F. Garcia (Ed.), *Of maps and leapfrogs: Popular* (pp. 77-94). Quezon City, Philippines: PEPE.

Lusterio, R. R. (1996). (Book Review) Experiencing Transitional Democracy: The Role of the Anti-Marcos Opposition Groups. *KASARINLAN (A Philippine Quarterly of Third World Studies), 12*(1), 89-92.

Magno, A. R. (1992). From the TWS desk: Critical juncture for the left. *KASARINLAN (A Philippine Quarterly of Third World Studies), 8*(2), i-2.

McGaw, B. (2005). *OECD perspectives on Korean educational achievements.* Paper presented at the International Conference on 60 Years of Korean Education: Achievements and Challenges, Kintex, Korea.

Mendoza, A. M. J. (1996). Democratization and economic growth: What's in store for South Korea. *KASARINLAN (A Philippine Quarterly of Third World Studies), 12*(1), 45-70.

Miranda, F. B. (Ed.). (1997). *Democratization: Philippine perspectives*. Quezon City, Philippines: University of the Philippines Press.

Neary, M. (2003). *Korean Transformations: Power, Workers, Probation, and the Politics of Human Rights.* Seoul, Korea: Sungonghwoe University Press.

PEPE. (2000). Education (still not) for all. *Popular Education Notebook 2000, 6,* 1-4.

Petierra, Raul (1988). *Religion, politics, and rationality in a Philippine community*. Manila, Philippines: Ateneo de Manila University Press

Rosca, N. (1990). Myth, identity, and the colonial experience. *World Englishes, 9*(2), 237-243.

San Juan, E. (1998). Transforming identity in postcolonial narrative: An approach to the novels of Jessica Hagedorn. *Post Identity, 1*(2), 5-28.

Segovia, V. M., & Galang, A. P. (2002). Sustainable development in higher education in the Philippines: the case of Miriam College. *Higher Education Policy, 15*(2), 187-195.

Sison, J. M., & Werning, R. (1989). *The Philippine revolution: The leader's view*. New York: Crane Russak.

Soriano, C. V. (2000). Sangandaan: Academe and popular education: Possibilities for learning and actions for development. *Popular Education Notebook 2000, 6,* 13-18.

Stauffer, R. B. (1990). Philippine democracy: Contradictions of third world redemocratization. *KASARINLAN (A Philippine Quarterly of Third World Studies), 6*(1 -2), 7-22.

Synott, J. P. (2002). *Teacher unions, social movements and the politics of education in Asia: South Korea, Taiwan and the Philippines.* Aldershot: Ashgate.

Tornquist, O. (1990). Democracy and the Philippine left. *KASARINLAN (A Philippine Quarterly of Third World Studies), 6*(1-2), 23-50.

Tornquist, O. (1996). Whither studies of Asian democratization? *KASARINLAN (A Philippine Quarterly of Third World Studies), 12*(1), 7-24.

Torres, C. A. (1990). Adult education and the transition to socialism in Cuba, Nicaragua, and Grenada. In *The politics of nonformal education in Latin America* (pp. 67-108). New York, Westport (CO), London: PRAEGER.

Wagner, P. A. (1997). Popular education in the Philippines: To make ready to risk. *Popular Education Notebook,* 20-22.

Wilson, D. C. E., et al. (1990). *Asia and the Pacific: Issues of educational policy, curriculum, and practice.* Meeting Papers: Clearinghouse: SO020849.

Yoon, J.-I. (2000). *Unconstitutionality of prohibition from extracurricular lecture and normalization of school education.* Paper presented at the KEDI Forum of Educational Policy, Seoul, Korea.

Received November 1, 2007
Revision received March 31, 2008
Accepted April 8, 2008