

From “Postwar Pedagogy” to “Post-Cold War Pedagogy”: An Overview of the History of Educational Theory in Japan 1945- 2007¹

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This paper examines the development of educational theory in Japan from 1945 to the present in five time divisions: (1) postwar “new education” and its critics (1945-52); (2) revisionist educational policy versus the people’s education movement (1952-61); (3) the formation of “postwar pedagogy” as a self-reflection of the educational system (1961-79); (4) the exposure of the structural limitations of postwar pedagogy (1979-92); and (5) “post-Cold War pedagogy” (1992-).

The aims of the paper are: (1) to redefine “postwar pedagogy” as a concept with substantive rather than simply temporal boundaries; and (2) to situate contemporary educational theory in historical perspective by describing “post-Cold War pedagogy.” An analysis of “postwar pedagogy” and “post-Cold War pedagogy” reveals that educational theory has continually played the role of self-reflection upon the educational system. In this sense, while educational theory is dependent upon on the educational system, it has also, through reflection, participated in the shaping of the system.

1 Introduction

The term “postwar pedagogy” as it is commonly used in Japan contains the tacit understanding that Japanese educational theory started afresh following Japan’s defeat in World War II. The relationship of education to its past has been restricted to the democratic tradition of pre-war “new education.” This understanding obviously has some basis in fact. Chauvinistic and militaristic tendencies in education were eliminated by the American Occupation forces. In place of the philosophical idealism dominant in the prewar period, an empirical approach now came to the fore. Freed from the Imperial Rescript on Education, educational research could focus on educational aims and policy as well.

However, doubts have recently emerged as to the validity of this understanding of postwar pedagogy. A new approach emerging from research in social history suggests that the hallmarks of the postwar system—bureaucratic control of the economy, corporate management based on cooperative labor-management relations, a preference for egalitarianism, etc.—had their roots in the pe-

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riod of totalitarian mobilization in the 1930s and 40s rather than in postwar reforms. In the same context, continuity between the wartime and postwar periods has also been noted in the area of education (Yamanouchi 1995).

This paper cannot directly address the question of pre- and postwar continuity or discontinuity. Below, I first seek to redefine postwar pedagogy as a substantive, not merely temporal concept. This is my primary task. What we call “postwar pedagogy” can be understood as a complex that was constructed as a self-reflection of the educational system established in the 1960s (Section 3).

When I say that this paper cannot directly address the issue of continuity or discontinuity, I mean that a comparison between the pre- and postwar educational systems is beyond this paper’s scope. Here, I want to examine the formation of postwar pedagogy in the sense noted above, including the transitional periods of postwar “new education” and its critics (Section 1) and revisionist educational policy versus the people’s education movement (Section 2).

From the 1980s onward, changes in the educational system caused postwar pedagogy as a self-reflection of the postwar educational system to lose its object and, consequently, its legitimacy as a framework (Section 4). However, as of the 1990s, a new “post-Cold War pedagogy” seems to be developing as a self-reflection of the educational system as it reconstitutes itself (Section 5). A description, however inadequate, of this post-Cold War pedagogy, should serve as a means of situating contemporary educational theory in historical perspective. This is the second task of this paper.

2 Postwar “New Education” and its Critics (1945-52)

Despite censorship and various other regulations imposed by the Occupation forces, pedagogy in Japan after the defeat was certainly filled with the sense that a new era had arrived and with expectations of reform. Relying on the new freedom of latitude for educational activity that had opened up institutionally, a variety of experiments in postwar “new education” was carried out.

One of the most important theoretical concepts in this postwar “new education” was Satoru Umene’s core curriculum theory (Umene 1949). Umene thought that the core of the curriculum should consist of a series of problems closely related to everyday life that should be resolved through concrete “occupations” in the Deweyan sense (Umene’s proposed content actually overlapped extensively with the newly introduced “social studies” curriculum). Such problem-solving was considered to enable the formation of the social, emotional, and mental abilities that children required. This core would be supplemented by a systematic curriculum-based teaching component. Umene established the Core Curriculum League and worked to disseminate his theory.

However, Umene’s core curriculum theory was widely criticized. Postwar “new education”—and particularly the way in which it ignored traditional instruction, with its seemingly proven ability to produce results—was blamed for students’ declining academic achievement as revealed in the statistics. It also came under harsh criticism from Marxist pedagogy.

Marxism had already acquired great authority in the prewar period, particularly in history and the social sciences, and this was further enhanced by memories of oppression under the prewar and wartime Japanese state. Until the end of the Cold War, when communism lost its credibility as a realistic alternative, Marxism also played a role in educational theory that, if not dominant,

was certainly important. Influenced by Dewey’s pragmatism to ground education in children’s experience in their everyday life, core curriculum theory seemed to Marxist pedagogy overly conformist. Core curriculum theory, it was argued, ignored the reality of class struggle and the need for a systematic understanding of that reality, when it was only through systematic understanding that the immediate problems of people’s lives could be resolved (Yagawa 1950).

The pragmatic direction of the “new education” was also criticized by another tendency in pedagogy represented by the Association for Educational Science (Kyôiku Kagaku Kenkyûkai). Established in the 1930s, the Association developed cooperative ties between researchers and teachers with the aim of giving pedagogy both a scientific basis and practical significance. At the level of teaching and curriculum theory, the Association strove to integrate the acquisition of subject knowledge with problem-solving learning. Morikazu Katsuta, who played a leading role in the postwar incarnation of the Association, rejected both the view equating social science with problem-solving learning and the view equating it with systematic social science teaching. Instead, he sought a way to link scientific knowledge with the formation of democratic morals (Katsuta 1949). His attempt would subsequently lead him in the direction of a developmental pedagogy that saw the main task of education as supporting human development.

3 Revisionist Educational Policy Versus the People’s Education Movement (1952-61)

While initial debate over “new education” was essentially between problem-solving learning and systematic learning, the focus of later debate was shaped by revisions to the postwar reforms that emphasized nationalism and strongly centralized government. This revisionist program was promoted by conservative administrations that sought to reverse the postwar educational reforms, and their aims of liberalization and decentralization in educational policy. This line was pursued tenaciously by the conservative camp, particularly after 1952 when Japan recovered its sovereignty. In the revision process, the Course of Study (national curriculum standards) created by the Ministry of Education shifted in emphasis from problem-solving learning toward systematic learning, a move closely linked to the Ministry strengthening its regulation of educational activities. This revisionist program was critically opposed not just by the Core Curriculum League, but also by the Marxists and the Association for Educational Science.

The nationalistic revisionist line on educational policy, with its centralization of power, pushed a wide range of scientists in education, from liberals to Marxists, toward the formation of a pedagogic theory that would support resistance activities spearheaded mainly by the teachers’ unions. They called this “people’s education theory” (*kokumin kyôiku ron*), and the resistance movement the “people’s education movement” (*kokumin kyôiku undo*) (cf. Murata 1970). At issue was who now wielded the authority to determine public education. According to people’s education theory, there were only two options: the people or the state. However, this dichotomy was obviously inadequate in dealing with the government’s revisionist line, which derived its legitimacy from both its formal legality and by the fact that the ruling party had majority support in a Diet elected by the people.

What rescued people’s education theory from its theoretical naiveté was the theory of the public sphere in education propounded by Teruhisa Horio (Horio 1961). According to Horio, the basic motif of people’s education theory—namely, replacing the state monopoly over the public

sphere with a state-free public sphere in education—was consistent with the fundamental principles of modern education and could be legitimized as such. Horio reconstituted these principles of modern education based on educational thought as it had developed in modern Europe through thinkers such as Comenius, Rousseau, Condorcet, and Pestalozzi. According to these principles of modern education, education is predicated upon on the child’s right to learn and consists of activities in support of that right. Since learning is essentially related to the formation of individual character, education should be understood as a private matter that cannot tolerate interference from state authority. However, public education was seen as indispensable in providing a general guarantee of the child’s right to learn. Public education should accordingly be conceptualized as “the organization of private matters,” and founded on the recognition of a public sphere in education where citizens join with teachers and parents to discuss and determine issues related to education, without state interference. In Horio’s view, Condorcet was the embodiment of this conception of public education.

Efforts to give pedagogy a convincing scientific basis can also be seen at the metatheoretical level in the ‘educational science debate’ conducted among theorists from the Association for Educational Science, the Association for Educational History (Kyôikushi kenkyûkai), and the field of sociology of education. This debate emerged over Katsuo Kaigo’s conception of education as a Marxist social science. Together with Ryoza Hirooka, Kaigo formed the Association for Educational History and edited the three-volume *Kindai kyôikushi* (History of modern education; Kaigo and Hirooka 1952-54), which interpreted the historical development of modern education in Japan, America, and Europe from a consistently Marxist perspective. Based on this history-oriented project, Kaigo sought to transform pedagogy into a social science in which education is interpreted as a form of superstructure (Kaigo 1955). Researchers in the Association for Educational Science criticized this concept in a handbook edited by Seiya Munakata entitled *Kyôiku kagaku* (Educational science; Munakata 1956). The handbook contained a paper by Akira Igarashi entitled “Kyôiku kagaku ni okeru jissen no mondai” (The relevance of praxis in educational science; Igarashi 1956), which suggested that Kaigo’s approach overlooked the special nature of theory and relevance of praxis in education. Kaigo sought to establish ‘objective’ laws of education and apply them to praxis. According to Igarashi, however, education praxis conversely dictated directions and methods to science, and educational science consequently needed to start from praxis.

Yoshihiro Shimizu, a leading theorist in the emerging field of sociology of education, criticized the debate between these two study groups as unproductive (Shimizu 1957). Both sides were bound by their dogmatic or practical preconceptions, and were consequently unable to satisfy the requirement for being value-free, which is essential to science. Educational science had to be based on empirical method, without which it could not achieve practical significance, he argued. This “educational science debate” provided the metatheoretical foundations for the subsequent formation of postwar pedagogy, where ideas such as Marxism, the priority of praxis, and empirical science would both conflict and overlap.

At the object-level, it was Horio’s concept of public sphere in education that would shape subsequent developments. His ground-breaking paper, mentioned above, was published in the eighteen-volume handbook *Gendai kyôikugaku* (Modern pedagogy; 1960-61), which might be viewed as concluding this period and announcing a new one in which “postwar pedagogy” would be established.

4 The Formation of “Postwar Pedagogy” as a Reflection of the Established Educational System (1961-79)

By 1960, the conflict over revision of postwar educational reforms had essentially been resolved in favor of state control. The same period also marked the beginning of the “high-growth policy” and the “economic miracle,” in the process of which the basic structure of Japanese society—which had been based on rural communities and extended families—would undergo fundamental change. Using the available institutional and administrative infrastructure, the Ministry of Education promoted educational policies designed to support the high-growth policy. The zenith of this effort was the manpower policy of the 1960s. Educational credentials became more critical than ever, not just for ambitious social climbing, but also for purposes of simply securing regular employment. Children from all social classes were gradually drawn into the competition for educational credentials and the struggle to get ahead. The knowledge of academic subjects necessary to pass entrance examinations for high school and university was increasingly viewed as the key to future success.

The institutional foundations of pedagogy were substantially expanded in the 1950s. Academic associations were formed in its various subdisciplines, and the major universities established graduate schools to foster successors in the discipline of pedagogy and grant them degrees. Pedagogy had established itself as a scientific research complex with highly diverse methods that sought—with great methodological diversity—to analyze, criticize, and control the ways in which education was taking shape in Japanese society.

Sociologist Niklas Luhmann has described pedagogy as a part of the system of education in which the system reflects its own unity (Luhmann and Schorr 1988). In Japan as well, pedagogy established itself as an indispensable element of the educational system through what Luhmann calls “system reflection,” or in other words, through the observation of the postwar educational system, which had finally begun to operate with some stability, and to develop various approaches to that end. In what follows, I will identify a number of the key approaches.

4.1 The Philosophical/Anthropological Approach

In 1961, Akira Mori’s *Kyōiku ningengaku* (Educational Anthropology; Mori 1961) was published. This massive work, which ran to more than 850 pages, represented a new philosophical-anthropological approach that emerged within pedagogical theory that had as its starting point the perspectives of recipients of education. Mori conceived of educational anthropology as a subdiscipline of pedagogy that would integrate the educationally relevant results of empirical research from the standpoint of human becoming (*ningen seisei*, *Menschenwerdung*), and thereby linking the various educational sciences to practical and philosophical perspectives on education. Starting from philosophical anthropology (particularly Heidegger, Jaspers, Scheler, and Gehlen) and drawing partly on the educational anthropology developed in West Germany (Bollnow and Derbolav), Mori explored the results of empirical research relating to the historical, sociological, psychological, and biological conditions of human development and sought to integrate these into a theory of human becoming.

Within the Association for Educational Science too, a similar anthropological approach developed in a direction linked more closely to psychology. A leading work in this area was Katsuta’s *Nōryoku to hattatsu to gakushū* (Ability, development and learning; Katsuta 1962). Adopting psychological findings concerning the development of human abilities (drawn primarily from Piaget

and Vygotsky), Katsuta laid out the basic conditions for guiding children's learning so as to encourage their development. He regarded learning as a creative process of assimilation and accommodation, and also stressed the critical importance of transmitting scientific cognition in verbal form, which he saw as essential to promoting child development and linking it to the formation of a democratic society. Through this formulation, Katsuta sought to give pedagogy an autonomous theoretical foundation from which to defend education from state interference—as typified by the Ministry of Education's revisionist policies.

In the 1970s, Horio created a type of developmental pedagogy that incorporated Katsuta's ideas into his own theories on the public sphere in education (Horio 1979). Horio understood education as an indispensable aid to human development. Through this concept of education, he tried to legitimize his demand for a public sphere in education free from the state. He believed that identification of developmental processes would clarify how the rights of children to learn should be satisfied within the educational system and provide a firm scientific basis for a public sphere in education free from state intervention. Horio's developmental pedagogy built upon Katsuta's concepts to become the dominant paradigm in postwar pedagogy.

4.2 Analysis and Criticism of the *Gakureki Shakai* (Society Based on Educational Credentials)

Of the various disciplines relevant to pedagogy—for example, philosophy of education, history of education, educational administration, teaching and curriculum theory, comparative education, adult education, etc.—sociology of education received particular attention for its positivistic self-understanding and substantial empirical findings.

In the 1950s, this newly established discipline focused on empirical but non-systematic studies of various topics of educational significance, such as the effects of teaching methods and youth awareness. In the 1960s, two mutually supportive frames of reference emerged that promised to integrate the results of these disparate studies: Parsons' structural functionalism and the Ministry of Education's manpower policies. This opened the way for establishing the positional value of empirical studies within a structural functionalist framework. It was hoped that given such theoretical backing, the results of empirical research would acquire practical significance through the medium of education policy within the manpower policy framework.

However, the accomplishments of the sociology of education were not limited to these two analytical frameworks. The sociology of education gradually found its own focus: Japanese society as a “society based on educational credentials” (*gakureki shakai*). A study group spearheaded by Michiya Shinbori undertook pioneering research (Shinbori 1966, 1969) that attempted empirical and critical analyses of the positional value, function, and consequences of educational credentials in Japanese society. Established as a key area of research within sociology of education, the theory of *gakureki shakai* also attracted general interest outside the discipline. The idea that Japan was a society in which educational credentials played a major role—both real and imaginary—increasingly became a basic assumption in public debate on school and educational issues.

4.3 Development of Various Teaching Models

A number of distinctive approaches can also be discerned in teaching and curriculum theories during this period, primarily unfolding as a critique of the problem-solving learning promoted in postwar “new education.”

Mathematician Hiraku Tôyama had been criticizing problem-solving learning since the

1950s on the grounds that it ignored and made a shambles of the systematic nature of mathematics. His criticism led to the formation of the Association of Mathematical Instruction. In the 1960s, Tōyama worked with the Association to develop a teaching model designed to enable systematic and creative mathematics learning. It was called the “Water Supply Method” because, just as water branches out from its source, this model systematized the presentation of arithmetical procedures from the general to the more specialized (Tōyama and Ginbayashi 1960). The aim was not just to achieve a significant improvement in the understanding and practice of arithmetic. This method was expected to lead children toward a better understanding of the concept of numbers and, as a result, into the world of modern mathematics.

In the natural sciences, Kiyonobu Itakura developed a “hypothesis-testing” teaching method that focused on performing experiments (Itakura 1971). Before the experiment—for example, if you were to place a water-filled beaker on a scale and then put into the beaker a weight suspended from a string, what would the scale do?—each pupil would predict the outcome by developing their own hypothesis and try to refute other claims. After discussion, a tally would be made of students’ final predictions, with the experiment then performed to reveal the real answer. Students would discuss the result and work out why it had occurred. Itakura created many concrete models of this hypothesis-testing teaching method.

In addition to these teaching and curriculum models drawn from educational praxis, this period also saw the introduction of “educational engineering” based on the theories of B. F. Skinner. Typical concepts in educational engineering included programmed learning and “teaching machines.” This was dazzlingly “scientific,” and also linked with the modernization of teaching that the Ministry of Education was promoting. Yet it had little lasting impact on teaching practice aside from some equipment left behind in a few classrooms.

“Collectivist education” can be understood as a practical form of Marxist pedagogy (Ogawa 1967). It drew extensively on East German and Soviet pedagogy, particularly that of Anton Semenovich Makarenko. Collectivist teaching methods that emphasized group work and competition between groups were widely adopted, though many of them did so in a manner completely devoid of reference to Marxist goals. The extent to which the spread of collectivist method was connected to the often-discussed conformist collective awareness of the Japanese is an interesting question. Of course, if things had gone according to the intentions of its chief advocates, collectivist education would have contributed to overcoming the feudalistic, conformist structure of Japanese society through the formation of self-managing groups.

5 The Exposure of the Structural Limitations of Postwar Pedagogy (1979-1992)

The 1979 publication of the eight-volume *Kodomo no hattatsu to kyōiku* (Child Development and Education) (Ôta, et al. 1979) was significant as a summary of both the developmental pedagogy specifically formulated by Katsuta and Horio and of postwar pedagogy as a whole. Developmental pedagogy had secured itself as the dominant paradigm in educational theory in Japan. The various types of educational research covered in Section 3 were all forms of self-reflection on the educational system and may be viewed as postwar pedagogy in the broadest sense, while the developmental pedagogy of Katsuta and Horio could be considered postwar pedagogy in a stricter sense, or in fact, its core.

The Katsuta/Horio view of education—education as an indispensable means of securing hu-

man development—was surprisingly well-received. This could be because the view served, together with the historical grounds provided by the “principles of modern education,” as a normative foundation for education, while also offering a frame of reference for the critical evaluation of the contemporary state of education, or as an indication of possible alternatives to it.

However, simultaneously with the widespread acceptance of developmental pedagogy, new types of educational problems erupted in the late 1970s. The public became aware of frequent incidents of student violence against teachers, particularly in junior high schools. Such school violence reached its first peak around 1980. Teachers tried to prevent student delinquency through intensive and detailed supervision of students, but the resulting “control-oriented education” itself came under fire at the end of the 1980s, as it became apparent that such tactics simply forced students to suppress and disguise their aggression so that it was not immediately visible. The suppressed aggression was—or so it was interpreted in debates concerning education—turned against, for example, fellow students, creating what became known as the bullying problem. Some students committed suicide after indicating in farewell notes that they had been bullied. The number of students refusing to attend school continued to rise, to the extent that such cases could no longer be treated as exceptional instances restricted to particular students.

Postwar pedagogy was not prepared to handle the new kinds of educational problems that emerged from the late 1970s onward. Postwar pedagogy was based on the educational system as it had been restructured after the war. It saw as its mission empirical analysis of the existing system (in the case of sociology of education) or as conceptualizing practical models based on the existing system (in the case of teaching and curriculum theory). Even where pedagogy criticized the existing system (as in the case of collectivist education and developmental pedagogy), the legitimacy of educational activities themselves was never questioned. As critical confirmation of its theories, the goal of developmental pedagogy was to free the educational system from political and economic intervention and thus realize a public sphere of education free from external power. The ideal of education as a vital prerequisite in the development of the child is supposed to be realized in this public sphere. However, what the new educational problems revealed was that educational activities conducted in the name of ensuring the development of the child could also function repressively.

The limitations of postwar pedagogy can be seen from another angle. Where the dark side of education had previously lacked significance, it was now pushed to the fore because of the declining credibility of the premises—actual or imaginary—of the *gakureki shakai*. In other words, people began to feel that “enduring” the school system did not necessarily produce rewards commensurate with the sacrifice. In fact, the industrialization of Japanese society was nearly complete by the early 1970s (the farming population slipped from 33 percent in 1960 to 14 percent in 1975), with the sons and daughters of the new white-collar workers no longer believing that educational credentials would necessarily secure them a better lifestyle than that of their parents. Here we see signs of change emerging in the very educational system on which postwar pedagogy was based. The framework of postwar pedagogy was beginning to lose its subject.

As of the late 1980s, many scholars of educational theory came to recognize the structural limitations of postwar pedagogy and began to seek a new approach. The “history of mentalities” or social history approach epitomized by Philippe Aries’ *L’enfant et la vie familiale sous l’Ancien Régime* (Centuries of Childhood: A Social History of Family Life) generated a clearer awareness of the inadequacies of Horio’s simplistic grasp of modern education (cf. Nakauchi 1983-84; Miyazawa 1988). The premise of Japanese postwar pedagogy in relation to politics and education—

namely, that politics and education were based on fundamentally different principles—was turned upside down by Foucault’s *Surveiller et punir: naissance de la prison* (Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison), which opened the way for viewing education as a disciplinary power. At the same time, this latter perspective was regarded as providing an appropriate framework for analyzing and understanding the new educational problems described above. Further, the debate over postmodernism that had raged in Japan as well as overseas since the 1980s also had repercussions on the field of pedagogy, with ideas of education itself as a product of modernity or indeed a historical fiction achieving a certain currency (cf. Imai 2004: 95ff).

While this new approach clearly identified and criticized the theoretical inadequacies of postwar pedagogy, it failed to build a new framework to replace the old one. As described below, the new framework in fact took the form of a response to new developments in educational policy. However, in the 1990s, a movement to sum up the critique of postwar pedagogy since the 1970s and construct a new framework began brewing within the field of pedagogy. The year epitomizing this was perhaps 1992, which marked the publication of two journals that would subsequently have a major impact. The Society for the History of Educational Thought, established the previous year with the professed goal of criticizing modern education, published the *Kindai kyōiku fōramu* (Forum on Modern Education), while five scholars in education from different disciplines—Hisato Morita (philosophy of education and Western educational history), Hidenori Fujita (sociology of education), Isao Kurosaki (educational administration), Yoshio Katagiri (history of Japanese education), and Manabu Satō (curriculum and teaching theory)—edited a new journal entitled *Kyōikugaku nenpō* (Annual Report on Pedagogy). Playing a leading role in both these journals was Hisato Morita, who was an expert on Dewey and other aspects of the history of American educational thought, and who had been one of the earliest to begin criticizing postwar pedagogy.

It was also symbolic that 1992 should be the year that the Soviet Union collapsed, effectively ending the Cold War order. As noted earlier, Marxism had played an important role in postwar pedagogy, and Horio’s theories, which formed the core of postwar pedagogy, were heavily influenced by Marxism. While Marxism had gradually been losing credibility since the 1970s, for pedagogy the end of the Cold War spelt the final obliteration of a real existing alternative to which it could turn.

6 “Post-Cold War Pedagogy” (1992-Present)

6.1 Response of Educational Policy to the Changing Educational System

Beginning in the late 1970s, the educational system itself entered a major process of transformation. The very system in which postwar pedagogy had formed itself as a reflection was changing, leaving the framework of postwar pedagogy bereft of its object. This situation was recognized within the discipline as defining the structural limitations of postwar pedagogy. Before looking at the reconfiguration of educational theory from the 1990s onward, here we examine the restructuring of education policy on which this was founded.

It was educational policy that first responded to changing conditions in the educational system. This is apparent in the deliberations of the Ad Hoc Council on Education (AHCE, 1984-87). The AHCE was expected to promote the deregulation of educational policy, even over the head of the Ministry of Education if necessary. The AHCE criticized traditional educational policy as overly focused on ensuring that schools were under state control and the same educational conditions

were provided to all children. The AHCE argued that this compulsory homogeneity nipped the buds of individual creativity, even though individual creativity was exactly the capacity so urgently required by a post-industrial society. Supporters of deregulation within the AHCE sought to encourage the development of individual initiatives in education by essentially privatizing the educational sector and by rapid relaxation of state regulation. Deregulation was certainly the keynote in the four reports issued by the AHCE, and that keynote could be said to have determined the direction of subsequent educational reforms. In simplified form, what this meant was a shift in focus at the institutional level from state control and patronage to market control and evaluation, and at the practical level from the acquisition of common knowledge and skills to fostering motivation and interest in the acquisition of knowledge and skills. Specific post-AHCE changes are sketched below.

At the above-mentioned institutional level, the catchphrase of “introducing private-sector dynamism” opened the way for appointing school principals who had neither a teaching licence nor teaching experience, and the establishment of schools by NPOs and publicly-traded companies, albeit under certain conditions. The flexible administration of school districting was recommended, and a number of communities around Japan experimented with allowing a choice of schools at the level of compulsory education. The idea of these experiments was that exposing schools to market principles in the form of parents making choices as customers would improve the schools. For parents to be able to make a real choice, a wide range of options needed to be made available. Schools were encouraged to take a variety of individual initiatives, and even in terms of curriculum administration, where the education authorities had previously stressed the Course of Study (National Curriculum) as the standard for schools, they now conversely insisted that the Course of Study was no more than *the minimum* standard. At the level of higher education, national universities, which had previously been entirely under state control and protection, were now transformed into independent corporate entities. While universities gained various freedoms in terms of budget operation, their budget allocations were increasingly linked to performance evaluations (for example, how much external funding they had managed to secure). The “evaluative state” as a new mode of discipline can be seen in all the reforms noted above, but emerges perhaps most clearly in higher education.

Epitomizing the shift in priorities at the practical level were the slogans *yutori kyōiku* (pressure-free education) and the “new concept of academic competence.” A concerted push was made to introduce *yutori kyōiku*, which sought to reduce the proportion of children’s lives occupied by school by, for example, reducing curriculum content and classroom hours and adopting a five-day school week. The “new concept of academic competence” appeared around 1991 as a slogan encapsulating the basic approach of the 1989 revision of the Course of Study, and served to legitimize *yutori kyōiku* from a curriculum perspective. What society was going to need was not so much a fixed set of knowledge and skills but rather “the motivation to learn actively and the ability to respond proactively to social change” (Ministry of Education 1993: 7). This was precisely the “new concept of academic competence” that *yutori kyōiku* was aimed at.

Yutori kyōiku was to some extent an unavoidable reaction to the new educational problems noted above. However, as is apparent in the “new concept of academic competence” argument, it also embodied an element of positive action in the sense that educational policy was responding to the society of the future, as it was envisaged. The “new concept of academic competence” was designed to respond to the information-technology society by shifting the goals of education from the level of acquisition of knowledge and information to the metalevel of having the interest and

motivation to learn and the ability to put information to practical use. Emphasis was also placed on the joy and satisfaction of learning in order to encourage this interest and motivation. This change was an attempt to respond to the marked shift from instrumental to consummatory values, particularly among the younger generation, which might be called “the aestheticisation of everyday life.” [cf. Imai 2004: 79f.]

As noted above, after the AHCE, policies aimed at reducing state intervention—generally falling under the rubric of neoliberalism—were also pursued in the area of education. The response of pedagogy to these policies could perhaps be summed up as bafflement. The core element of postwar pedagogy, the developmental pedagogy of Katsuta and Horio, saw one mission of pedagogy as resistance to bureaucratic control in order to ensure the freedom of education, and in providing scholarly evidence for the legitimacy and necessity of this. Now, however, the bureaucracy was beginning to pursue policies that relaxed its own control, again depriving pedagogy of one of its focal points.

Deregulation obviously did not mean the total elimination of state control over education. In Japan too, neoliberalism has gone hand in hand with strengthening nationalism, and in education this trend has been apparent in a string of education laws from the 1999 Law Concerning the National Flag and Anthem to the 2007 revision of the Fundamental Law of Education. In its section on the goals of education, the new Fundamental Law of Education speaks of fostering a spirit of “respect for tradition and culture” and “love for one’s country and one’s hometown.” Here we can see the motif of state control being expressed in a symbolic area that did not entail fiscal spending. Here was something that the framework of postwar pedagogy might have picked up on to assert its own validity as a focal point of resistance to state control. But it was already apparent that this framework was not up to the task of analyzing the newly emerging educational system.

6.2 The Reconfiguration of Educational Theory

After the period of bafflement, educational theory has also been showing signs of moving toward reconfiguration since the 1990s, rebuilding itself as a reflection of the newly emerging educational system. To my eye, there have been three focal points in this process: educational policy, teacher training, and clinical considerations.

6.2.1 Pedagogy as a Theory of Educational Policy

The reconfiguration of pedagogy clearly began in the debate over declining academic competence that has been the focus of educational discussion in the 2000s. This so-called “academic competence debate” was triggered by a survey on academic competence conducted by mathematicians and economists concerned about the declining abilities of university students. The results were published in two books: *Bunsû ga dekinai daigakusei* (University students who can’t do fractions; Okabe, et al. 1999) and *Shôsû ga dekinai daigakusei* (University students who can’t do decimals; Okabe et al 2000). As the titles suggest, these two volumes pointed out that there were a rather large number of students at supposedly leading universities who could not perform simple fractions and decimal calculations, much to the shock of the public. Figures in international studies of academic competence—TIMSS and PISA—conducted around the same time also showed a relative decline in the academic competence of Japanese children (although there were many areas where the statistical difference was insufficient to bear out a numerical decline), fueling concern that *yutori kyôiku* might be accelerating this decline in academic competence among Japanese students.

Takehiko Kariya, a specialist in the sociology of education, established the direction of this academic achievement debate through his empirical research. What Kariya identified and demonstrated with empirical research was not the broader question of whether the academic competence of Japanese students was declining, but the issue of disparities in academic competence across social classes (Kariya 2001). In particular, Kariya pointed out that there was a growing class disparity in terms of motivation to learn. Kariya's research, which focused on the amount of time that children spend studying at home, showed that the lower the social class, the more marked the decline in time spent studying in the home (and accordingly, the decline in motivation to learn), and further, that children from lower social classes had *higher* self-esteem despite their lower achievement. Based on this data, Kariya suggested that *yutori kyōiku* policies, including the “new concept of academic competence” were not only failing to achieve their objective of promoting the desire to learn, but also unwittingly embedding and expanding class disparities. This was because educational policies were not based on a real understanding of the actual state of education.

Grounded as it was in empirical research, Kariya's argument had sufficient impact to shape the direction of public debate over academic competence. Here, we can see the beginnings of the reconfiguration of pedagogy as a reflection of the educational system as it had been restructured after the AHCE. To begin with, pedagogy is reconfiguring itself as a policy science, a discipline for the analysis and criticism of educational policy, with the sociology of education playing the key role in this enterprise. This can also be seen in the work of Hidenori Fujita, a scholar in sociology of education who criticizes neoliberal education reforms from a position emphasizing public mission of education (Fujita 1997).

Further, the sociology of education might be said to have found a new focus for research within the academic competence debate, replacing the old framework of the *gakureki shakai*. This new focus is on the “stratified society” (*kakusa shakai*). There is widespread concern that a Japanese society in which the majority of the population once saw themselves as middle-class and believed that educational credentials could boost them up the social ladder is now being transformed into a society in which class disparities are becoming more pervasive, fixed, and multigenerational. The consensus was also that education—not just school education, but education in the broader sense, including what was unconsciously taught at home—played a major role in the formation of the stratified society. Much as with the earlier concept of the *gakureki shakai*, research in the sociology of education concerning the stratified society (e. g., Honda 2005) ended up attracting attention not just from educators but from a much wider social spectrum.

6.2.2 Pedagogy as a Theory for the Teaching Profession

The reconstitution of pedagogy as a theory for the teaching profession has also become a marked trend since the 1990s. Naturally, the development of pedagogy in Japan has been inextricably linked with teacher training from the prewar era, and this situation continued in postwar pedagogy. But this relationship was based on a particular conception of theory and praxis. It was assumed that learning the propositional knowledge accumulated by research in the various teaching-related disciplines—pedagogy, psychology, and the various sciences associated with the subject matter—could promote subsequent teaching praxis. In line with this assumption, the university curriculum for teacher training consisted of lectures on the above areas and a brief period (two to three weeks) of practical training. This apparently theory-oriented curriculum reflected the belief that the most that could be expected from teacher training at universities was a basic understanding of teaching and the acquisition of professional ethics, thus laying the foundations for the ac-

quisition of practical teaching skills through on-the-job training. Put more positively, the teacher-training curriculum at universities was expected to enculcate a disposition enabling teachers to improve their practical skills through their responses to the various concrete issues arising in the course of teaching. In other words, the goal was to foster teachers’ potential to productively experience educational activities.

The survival of this theory-oriented curriculum, despite the various criticisms it was subjected to, can only be understood in the context of the credibility acquired by postwar pedagogy. It was believed that by explaining to prospective teachers what was meant by the principles of modern education or education as a critical means of ensuring human development, pedagogy could instill in them the motivation and perspective necessary for critical engagement with the realities of the Japanese educational system. However, after the AHCE, intense criticism launched at the theory-oriented curriculum forced major changes. The emergence of new educational problems noted above and the inadequate response of teachers to them were certainly factors. However, seen from the perspective of pedagogy, changes in the teacher-training curriculum arguably signified that postwar pedagogy had lost its credibility. Pedagogy’s propositional knowledge was no longer adequate to the task of providing motivation and perspective for students entering the teaching profession.

Reform of the teacher-training curriculum could be summed up as emphasizing praxis over theory. The Discussion Group on Teacher-Training Faculties at National Universities established within the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT), submitted a report in 2001 that called for the development of a curriculum to foster teachers’ practical skills. The “model core curriculum” proposed in 2006 by the Japan Association of Universities of Education in response to this envisages incorporation of practicums into the training process at an early stage, creating a cycle of teaching experience and reflection on that experience. The aim is to form actual rather than potential teaching abilities; “quality control” of graduates is a frequently-used term. Not unlike electrical appliances, graduates need to be sent out into the workplace in “plug-and-play” condition. Pedagogy must also contribute to that quality control. The task of pedagogy is no longer to supply an overall perspective on the teaching profession, but to develop the techniques for the formation of actual abilities. This set of assumptions is what I mean by pedagogy as a theory for the teaching profession.

It is possible that the development of this concept of pedagogy could conversely work to lower the status of teaching as a profession. Beginning in 2007, universities have been permitted to establish teacher-training graduate schools in which at least 40 percent of teaching positions must be allocated to “veteran” teachers or administrators who have not necessarily received any academic training. This is high compared to the 20 percent ratio of “veteran” staff at graduate schools of law, which are also established as professional schools. There is a danger that praxis-oriented teacher training might reduce the teacher’s work to the short-term execution of tasks without scientific reflection or ethical judgment. In a worst-case scenario, teachers would simply perform their jobs as contractors, with pedagogy serving as the equivalent of a work manual.

It was Manabu Satô (1997) who was quickest to note this danger and suggest an alternative. A specialist in teaching and curriculum theory, Satô criticized research in this field that viewed teaching only as an application of existing theories and was primarily concerned with rationalization of classroom activity—or how to make children behave as the teacher requires. He proposed instead a model of reflective practice that drew on the work of Donald Schön (obviously, ‘reflection’ in this context refers to person, unlike the concept of reflection in Luhmann’s system theory).

The reflective practice model sees teaching praxis as not simply the implementation of existing theories and programs but rather as a series of practical judgments made by individual teachers operating in actual teaching situations. Research in teaching and curriculum too should not seek to produce general propositions but rather to “tell, describe, and critique the traces of teachers’ various individual experiences as miniature narratives” (Satô 1997: 19). Accordingly, Sato’s proposal for teacher training was simultaneously consistent with a praxis orientation while diverging from the teacher-training graduate school concept (cf. Satô 2005).

With postwar pedagogy suffering from a critical loss of credibility, Satô’s proposal could be described as an experiment in opening up the potential for the cultivation of productive experience in educational activities on the basis of a different premise than that of postwar pedagogy. The core of the teacher-training curriculum would not be the transmission of propositional knowledge and/or teaching practice, but rather case studies. The key point here is that these case studies would not simply comprise practicing routinized tasks, but would instead lead to the discernment and ability to make independent judgments required by reflective practice. Case studies would accordingly need to be extended beyond the “veteran” level and linked to the kind of research in teaching and curriculum noted above. Satô’s proposal was underpinned by the belief that the aim of teaching and curriculum theory was not to create “good teaching,” but rather to stimulate learning and remake schools as “learning communities.” With its emphasis on learning communities and its foundations in Deweyan educational thought and the theory of situated learning, Satô’s is perhaps the most influential pedagogy in Japan today, with a reach far wider than theory for the teaching profession alone. However, it is symptomatic that this concept emerged from teaching theory. Providing theory for the teaching profession has become one of pedagogy’s main focal points, and this too demonstrates the ongoing reconfiguration of pedagogy as a reflection of the restructuring educational system.

6.2.3. Pedagogy as Clinical Theory

Finally, I would like to comment briefly about clinical perspectives, which have become another focus in the reconfiguration of “post-Cold War pedagogy” (cf. Imai 2004: 107ff). After the response of the schools to the new educational problems that erupted in the late 1970s foundered under criticism of their “control-oriented” approach, the solution that finally emerged was to deepen our understanding of children. Schools had to recognize that the problems that had emerged were difficult to overcome through educational processes, and accordingly, before attempting to initiate these processes, it was necessary to understand the minds of children and the way children relate to others. In deepening our understanding of children, the teacher’s perspective, from which the child is seen first and foremost as the object of educational processes, would conversely be obstructive. What was needed was a clinical psychology approach to understanding the child. A clinical perspective, which entailed understanding the child without objectification, was incorporated into the educational system as a constituent factor. This was epitomized by the school counseling service launched by MEXT in 1995. The Ministry’s plan entailed assigning specialists in clinical psychology to elementary and junior high schools as school counselors to deal with bullying, violence, and other problematic behavior. This service has expanded steadily, with school counselors assigned to junior high schools throughout Japan as of 2005.

Efforts to approach education from a clinical perspective have also emerged within pedagogy, to the extent that clinical pedagogy has recently won a name for itself as a distinct discipline (cf. Kobayashi, Sumeragi, and Tanaka 2002). Clinical pedagogy embraces considerable method-

ological diversity—drawing on, *inter alia*, clinical psychology, the sociology of education, and the philosophy of education—but all can be viewed as responses by pedagogy to the new educational problems. Clinical pedagogy also speaks to the trend in educational policy toward requiring teachers to adopt a “counseling mindset.” In the report of the Discussion Group on Teacher-Training Faculties at National Universities noted earlier, it was stressed that the “counseling mindset” was a quality that should be fostered in teacher training.

The “post-Cold War” educational system sought to overcome the dilemma confronting education in the form of the outbreak of the new educational problems by shifting educational goals to the meta level and emphasizing interest and motivation over knowledge and skills. However, with problematic behaviors continuing to prove elusive, the educational system has been attempting to reduce these to problems of the individual psyche and to deal with them from a clinical perspective. Clinical pedagogy may be thought of as a response to this restructuring of the educational system.

Clinical psychology may have no dispute with tracing issues back to the psyche, given its nature as a discipline. But scholars advocating clinical pedagogy have tended to be highly critical of this approach. They believe that the wider social context giving rise to problematic behavior must be considered. Sumeragi, whose methodology draws on the philosophy of education, sees the significance of a clinical approach to school counseling as lying in recognizing and clarifying the very context in which a given situation has come to be seen regarded as problematic (Sumeragi 1996). This might be seen as an attempt at critical reflection, from a clinical standpoint, on the educational system as it goes about restructuring itself.

This attention to a clinical perspective on education has commonalities with the attention given to the concept of “care” in the sense that both emphasize supportive human relations that do not objectify the “other.” Noddings’ *Caring* (1984) and Martin’s *Schoolhome* (1992) were translated into Japanese in 1997 and 2007 respectively. This is no doubt partly due to the growing importance of a feminist perspective in pedagogy. However, the new attention being paid to the educational functions of the family may also underlie interest in the concept of “care.” The debate on the stratified society mentioned earlier also identifies the importance of education in the home as an agent in reproducing disparities. The incorporation into school education of the care-based human relations that have traditionally been the province of the family, as proposed by Martin, is likely to become increasingly necessary in Japan as well.

7 Conclusion

We have overviewed, albeit from a restricted perspective, the development of Japanese pedagogy from 1945 to the present, with special consideration of its theoretical aspects. The overriding impression from this overview is the dependence of pedagogy on the educational system. When the educational system is operating stably, pedagogy too develops a stable object and approach and its pronouncements gain credibility. However, when the educational system destabilizes and enters a volatile period, pedagogy too falls into confusion. Assuming that the mission of pedagogy is to observe the educational system, there is no shame in the tendency of Japanese pedagogy to reflect the given conditions of the educational system. Through its observations, pedagogy also contributes to the operation of the educational system. Particularly in times like the present, when a new system is in the process of being established, there would seem to be considerable latitude for this

contribution. The shape of the “post-Cold War” educational system, seen from the perspective of a pedagogy that is presently in the midst of reconfiguring itself, remains uncertain and only dimly perceived. This is not so much a failure in clarity on the part of pedagogy as it is intrinsic to the nature of the matter itself. This vagueness of perspective arises from pedagogy’s reflective engagement with the indeterminacy of an educational system in the process of reconfiguring itself.

Note

- 1 Sections 2-4 of this paper also appeared in the following papers in German and in Japanese:
 Imai, Yasuo.(2000). Die Entwicklung der Erziehungswissenschaften nach 1945. In *Bildung und Erziehung in Japan*, edited by G. Haasch, 399-409. Berlin: Edition Colloquium.
 ----- (2004). 1945 nen igo no kyôikugaku no tenkai. In *Kenkyûshitsu kiyô*, 30: 107-114.

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