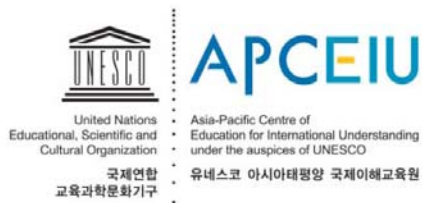


International Understanding and Cooperation in Education in the Post-Corona World

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APCEIU is a UNESCO Category 2 Centre established in 2000 by the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Korea and UNESCO in order to promote and develop Education for International Understanding (EIU) and Global Citizenship Education (GCED) with UNESCO Member States.

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International Understanding and Cooperation in Education in the Post-Corona World

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Foreword

While we are all undergoing these tumultuous times due to the coronavirus pandemic, the existing inequalities are widening and the cases of hatred, discrimination, and violence are increasing in many parts of the world. Concurrently, discourses and acts of nationalism, authoritarianism, and extremism are rising. Despite its evident and compelling necessity in this pandemic crisis, global collective action remains at a poor level.

With school closures across the world, learning loss, especially in vulnerable and marginalized learners, is likely to exacerbate the existing educational inequality. Numerous activities of international exchange or cooperation in education have been called off or postponed. Some of them have been replaced with online activities, but this has the effect of excluding people without access to the internet, thus making the educational inequality worse again.

Inequality and discrimination have long been critical issues in the modern world. However, as we witness today, they become more serious during the current crisis and this tendency may last even after the pandemic. While there is a possibility for turning this crisis into rare opportunity to address those problems more critically and fundamentally, the reality seems to be going in a different direction.

In light of these circumstances, we wanted to ask several pertinent questions. Firstly, what will be the implications of COVID-19 for international exchange and cooperation in education? What lessons can we learn from the past experiences including the 1918-19 flu pandemic? Secondly, what should we as educators, researchers, and practitioners do to counter the rise of populist nationalism and extremism? Thirdly, what should be the focus and direction of international cooperation in education during and after the pandemic in order to promote international understanding?

We invited several scholars to join a research project that aimed to answer these questions. We thank Dong-Joon Jo, Edward Vickers, Dina Kiwan, Fei Yan, Kyujoo Seol and Kyoko Nakayama for accepting the invitation and contributing their valuable papers to this publication.

As normal, the views and perspectives are not necessarily coherent among these scholars concerning the above questions. However, they share the concern that the pandemic is worsening inequalities and discrimination and education should do its part to counter this.

It is our hope that this publication will help us anticipate upcoming challenges after the pandemic and strengthen our efforts to tackle them together. I trust that the readers will join us.

Hyun Mook Lim

Director of APCEIU

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- Kyoko Nakayama (Professor of Social Studies Education and Multicultural Education, Teikyo University, Japan)

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Acronyms

APCEIU

Asia-Pacific Centre of Education for International Understanding

EIU

Education for International Understanding

ESD

Education for Sustainable Development

GCED

Global Citizenship Education

MGIEP

Mahatma Gandhi Institute of Education for Peace and Sustainable Development

OECD

Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development

SDGs

Sustainable Development Goals

STEM

Science, technology, engineering and mathematics

UN

United Nations

UNESCO

United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

UNICEF

United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

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The development of UNESCO's exchange programmes and their possible rearrangements in the post-pandemic years



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The development of UNESCO's exchange programmes and their possible rearrangements in the post-pandemic years

Dong-Joon Jo

1. Introduction

COVID-19 has disrupted almost all educational and exchange programmes. When the 1st wave of the COVID-19 pandemic reached its peak in April 2020, 290 million students were out of the classroom in the world (UNESCO 2020a). Higher education institutions cancelled in-person exchange programmes and summer schools and implemented virtual replacements; some countries even stopped issuing exchange visitor programme visas to control the influx of the virus.¹⁾ It will take at least one more year for school education and exchange programmes to return to normalcy. Some elements of the current *modus vivendi* in school education and exchange programmes may survive even after the current COVID-19 is over.

It is time to rearrange exchange programmes at UNESCO. As humans and some mammals like ferrets are the carriers of the virus, in-person exchange programmes pose the risks of spreading out the virus. Meanwhile, the exchange programmes have been ways for UNESCO to achieve its reasons for the foundation. The activity of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in the interwar period was one of the three inputs for the creation of UNESCO. Sir Alfred Zimmern, who served as the executive secretary of the Preparatory Commission in launching UNESCO, portrayed the background of UNESCO's creation as follows:

Let me remind you very briefly of the history of our organization. The initial decision to create a United Nations agency to deal with cultural problems was taken at the San Francisco Conference in June 1945. Behind this decision there lay the fifteen years of activity of the International Institute of Intellectual Cooperation in Paris; the deliberations of the Council of Allied Ministers of

1) For example, the United States suspended all J-type visas for exchange visitor for fear of the inflow of COVID-19 (President Trump's "Proclamation Suspending Entry of Aliens Who Present a Risk to the U.S. Labor Market Following the Coronavirus Outbreak," 22 June 2020).

Education in London during four years of war, in its latter period with backing from the United States of America; and a strong initiative from the French Government (UNESCO 1946, 19).

This paper is made up of three parts. First, it reviews UNESCO's mechanism for peace and the role of exchange programmes. The founding fathers of the organization tried to set up exchange programmes to tackle the interstate misunderstanding, which poses major threats to peace. Second, it shows that exchange programmes have been marginalized at UNESCO since the 1960s. Newly independent countries joined UNESCO in the 1950-70s did not share World War II experiences with its founding members and brought new agenda. Third, it discusses the impact of COVID-19 pandemic to exchange programmes and several points in the rearrangement of exchange programmes.

2. UNESCO's mechanism for peace and exchange programmes²⁾

UNESCO has advocated building “defences of peace” in the minds of men. The new mechanism for peace is quite different from the conventional ways of peace which focus on national powers such as power preponderance and balance of power. This section reviews the genesis of UNESCO's way of peace and how exchange programmes contribute to building “defences of peace” in the minds of men.

1) World War II Experiences

World War II was literally the culmination of total war. It consisted of a series of the largest military campaigns around the world. Nearly 24 million combatants were killed, and 50 million people perished. Overall, roughly 3% of the world population was killed in the last world war. It has left indelible material and spiritual damages too. The war showed that mankind as a species could perish due to its own internal conflict.

The war waged in non-military layers such as culture, science, and arts. More specifically, the ideologues of the Axis powers³⁾ claimed that their racial superiority was supported in the realm of culture. In the propaganda of the Axis powers, culture was the sum of the intellectual creations of the human race and included a variety of intellectual

2) This section is a revised version of my paper (Jo 2019, 106-113).

3) The Axis powers consisted of the Tripartite Pact powers (Germany, Italy, and Japan) and states that adhered to the Tripartite Pact: Hungary, Romania, Slovakia, Bulgaria, and Croatia. Also, it included Finland, Iraq, Thailand, and Vichy France as co-belligerent states.

activities such as science and art. The propagators of Nazism alleged that all fine culture had originated with the Aryans⁴⁾ and culture was the demarcation between the civilized and the barbaric peoples.

All the human culture, all the results of art, science, and technology that we see before us today, are almost exclusively the creative product of the Aryan. ...He (the Aryan) is the Prometheus of mankind from whose bright forehead (intellectual force) the divine spark of genius has sprung at all times, forever kindling anew that fire of knowledge which illumined the night of silent mysteries and thus caused man to climb the path to mastery over the other beings of this earth. ...From him originate the foundations and walls of all human creation (Hitler 1943[1927], 290).

In the discourses of the Axis countries, their cultural superiority was the basis that justified their start of World War II and the acts of cruelty. Because they considered that the culture created by the "Aryans" would be degenerated through mixing with "inferior races", the Axis powers justified actions preventing inter-racial marriages and even persecutions against the "inferior races." Quasi-scientific racism that was prevalent in the Axis countries and the crimes against humanity committed by the Axis Powers during World War II were the extensions of the idea of Aryan cultural superiority.

The propaganda activities by the Axis countries have linked peace with issues of education and mass media. Education was regarded as a propagandistic process, and mass media were used as a tool of propaganda in the Axis powers. Groundless racism, cultural supremacy, prejudice and hatred for "inferior races," justification for acts of political cruelty, and mass mobilization were achieved through education and media. In the Axis countries, education and mass media were part of their war machine.

The United Nations was a de facto wartime alliance. Though all of the members of the United Nations in 1942 were not formal allies, they had a common denominator in the sense that they were at war with the members of the Axis powers. The members of the United Nations in World War II had to cope with the cultural and education warfare with the Axis powers as well as handling their counterparts' military campaigns. They noticed that non-military warfare would be as important as military warfare.

4) The Japanese were defined as "bearers of culture" (Hitler 1943[1927], 170-171). They were often called "Aryans of the East", "Honorary Aryans", and "Herrenvolk (ruling race) of the Orient" in Nazi discourses. Italy defined itself as a "descendant of the Aryans" (Zimmerman 2009. 119-120).

2) UNESCO's response

The establishment of UNESCO has reflected the efforts of the Allies to restore education, science, culture and mass media as tools for peace. The direct origin of UNESCO was the Conference of Allied Ministers of Education, first held on November 16, 1942. The Conference was organized by Allied ministers of education to counter German propaganda during World War II and eliminate the remnants of Nazism in education. The Conference discussed the development of a consultative body to construct an educational environment to prevent the re-emergence of Nazism or Fascism in the long run. Recognizing that denazification was not simply a task for the area of education, the Allied ministers of education suggested the establishment of an international organization covering culture, science, mass media, and intellectual exchange.

The founding fathers of UNESCO declared that wars begin in the "minds of men." Ex-ante differences (between human groups) are located at the very first stage in the whole process from the seed of wars in the minds of men to the outbreak of wars. Though it does not clearly identify the cause of the differences among human groups, the UNESCO Constitution seems to imply that different ways of life at the group level are the primary source of differences which might eventually link with the outbreak of wars. Differences are the starting point in the causal chain of war, but differences themselves do not necessarily lead to conflict.

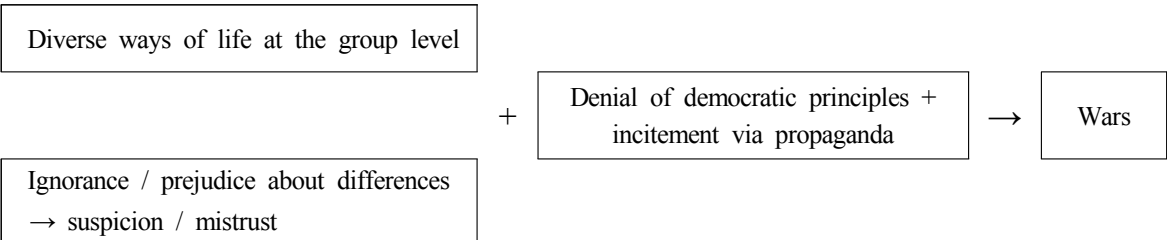
At the midpoint of the causal chain from differences to conflict, the UNESCO Constitution focuses on the ignorance of "each other's ways and lives" as a common cause of suspicion and mistrust. When they do not know other groups' different ways of life, people may judge other ways of life as undesirable and may even have prejudices against others. Ignorance and prejudices may lead to suspicion toward others and even mistrust. Ultimately, suspicion and mistrust in conjunction with difference may end up to wars. Likewise, the ignorance of the *a priori* and neutral differences between human groups may link with the outbreak of wars.⁵⁾

Furthermore, the UNESCO Constitution points to the two intervening variables in the outbreak of World War II. One is the denial of the democratic principles of human dignity, equality, and mutual respect. The Axis powers, based on quasi-scientific racial theories, did not accept the dignity of "inferior races" and did not recognize equality between human groups. As they applied their racism at the individual level, the Axis powers denied democratic principles such as human dignity, equality, and mutual

5) Realists have been critical toward UNESCO's causal chain from differences to wars. Wars often take place between human groups that are geographically close to each other and know each other well, where knowledge of the other cannot be seen as leading to peace (e.g. Niebuhr 1950, 4-5).

respect. The acts of cruelty by the Axis powers during World War II were the results of the denial of democratic principles at the individual level.

Figure 1. The Causal Chain of Wars in the UNESCO Constitution



The other is the propagation of racial theories by the Axis powers. Those who justified Nazism or Fascism based on quasi-racial theories actively utilized mass media and education to indoctrinate people with their false beliefs. The Axis powers provided biased information that would incite emotional and unreasonable responses from those who often had difficulties in making rational judgments. The propaganda by the Axis powers was a link for them to seize power and mobilize the masses to carry out World War II (Hitler 1943[1927], ch.6).⁶⁾

In sum, the outbreak of World War II was the culmination of the Axis powers' efforts to maliciously take advantage of the pre-existing differences in ways of life at the national level, people's ex-ante ignorance of the different ways of life and groundless prejudices against other groups by propaganda and education. As they did not have enough information about other nations to make reasonable judgments, they were easily swayed by pro-Nazi or Fascist movements that maliciously propagated racial theories. More specifically, social forces related to Nazism and Fascism provided false information on other human groups to those who had the ignorance and prejudices. People came to be familiarized and supportive of the two belief systems. After they got people's support, Nazis and Fascists took advantage of ex-ante democratic procedures and destroyed them. They utilized mass-media and education to justify their war efforts.

The founders of UNESCO sought to prevent wars by building "defences of peace" in the minds of men. They envisioned the "defences of peace" in the minds of men by (1) mutually understanding and respecting differences in ways of life between a priori existing human groups, (2) overcoming ignorance and prejudice with objective inquiry and education on the truth, (3) actively educating on diversity and democratic values, (4)

6) Nazi propaganda was not based on scientific truth, but an intentional act that drew the attention of the public to specific aspects, processes and needs to imprint first impressions in mind (Hitler 1943[1927], 179).

preventing the mass media from being used as a tool for propaganda, and (5) aiding people in making reasonable judgments through intellectual cooperation to raise mutual understanding."⁷⁾ Contrary to the Axis powers that used education, science, culture and mass media as part of their war machine, the Allied powers aimed to (1) promote the mutual respect of diversities in cultural issue-areas, (2) overcome ignorance and prejudices through the search for truth and intellectual cooperation in science issue-areas, (3) cultivate world citizens by the pursuit of mutual understanding and promotion of inclusiveness in educational issue-areas, and (4) encourage the exchange of objective information in communication. These efforts ultimately aimed to build the defences of peace that would oppose wars in the minds of men.

3) UNESCO exchange programmes for peace

The founding fathers of UNESCO noticed exchange programmes as a way to promote mutual understanding. The first UNESCO general conference decided to carry out a survey to find out the exchange of persons to contribute to "mutual respect and understanding among nations or conversely to international friction." Also, it decided to implement (1) exchange programmes for students, researchers, technicians, professors, artists, government officials, experts, and vocational education experts, and (2) fellowship training programmes (UNESCO 1946, 272-273).

UNESCO developed three categories of exchange. One is called an exchange of information and research. It includes documentation services, meeting for international cooperation, regular inquiries and special studies, and publications. Another is called the exchange of persons. This category includes the exchange of workers, young people, and teachers. The last is called fellowship. It sponsors various projects for studying abroad. In the early years, the exchange of person programme tended to concentrate on communication, reflecting the US interests in communication. Since the mid-1950s, the exchange of person programmes tends to focus on the education sector.

The main feature of UNESCO exchange programmes is providing opportunities for young people, teachers, and mid-ranking technicians to be exposed to different cultures, education environments, and vocational trainings. Also, UNESCO tried to disseminate the beneficiaries' experience with their cohort home. As international travel or study was not affordable to most people, UNESCO exchange programmes were valuable

7) UNESCO's "defences of peace" shares similarities with the "enlightened conscience" dreamed of by intellectuals. As an example, Leo Tolstoy criticized the support of the "enlightened men" for the Russo-Japanese Wars of 1904 and argued that the "enlightened conscience of mankind" must fight against the darkness oppressing humanity (Tolstoi 1904, 175).

opportunities for experiencing diversities. For example, UNESCO gave 14 youth travel grants from 36 countries. After finishing their travel and returning home, the beneficiaries were requested to share their experiences and send a report on their activities (UNESCO Director-General 1954, 164).

UNESCO exchange programmes have been directly linked with its mechanism for peace. Diversities among mankind exist. As the ignorance of preexisting diversities is a condition for mistrust, there should be opportunities to share information and knowledge in general. Also, people experience the diversities among people in person. These activities are designed to increase mutual understanding among people, which will make it hard for demagogueries and bigotries to breed hatred against other groups. The founding fathers tried to take advantage of exchange programmes to make a better condition for building “defenses of peace” in mind.

3. Marginalization of exchange programmes at UNESCO⁸⁾

The influx of the newly independent countries into UNESCO changed UNESCO's configuration in the 1950-70s. They did not share the founding members' experience of World War II, brought new agenda, and increased the diversity in UNESCO. As they have formed the majority and played a key role in the decision-making process at UNESCO, the link between UNESCO exchange programme and peace loosened. This section reviews how UNESCO exchange programme became marginalized.

1) Changes in the Post-WWII order and new discourses at UNESCO

There are three factors in the deterioration in the cooperation among UNESCO members. One is the Cold War. Though the founding members of the UN system expected that the fault-line between the victorious and defeated nations of World War II would last at least 50 years, a fundamental schism among the victors of World War II began to emerge at the United Nations in 1947, evolved into the Cold War, and eventually restructured them into two blocs. The advent of the Cold War disrupted the international order in the post-World War II era.

The joining of more Communist states to UNESCO in the 1950s also polarized the organization.⁹⁾ Issues which are friendly to Communism, such as economic inequality

8) This section is a revised version of my paper (Jo 2019, 113-116)

9) Poland (renamed the Polish People's Republic in 1947) and Czechoslovakia (renamed the Czechoslovak

and social tensions, began to be mentioned at UNESCO. Though it managed to fend the challenges off resulted by the numerical dominance of the Communist bloc in the 1950s, the Western bloc could not make a majority at UNESCO since the 1960s. The inter-bloc competition deepened at UNESCO.

The other factor is the disintegration of the colonial system and the emergence of the newly independent states. Newly independent states that had been colonies prior to the end of World War II got their independence and started to join UNESCO in the mid-1940s. The newcomers to UNESCO, which did not share the experiences of World War II, formed a majority at UNESCO. While most of UNESCO's founding states shared the common denominators of liberal democracy, the victory in World War II, and developed economies, most of the newly independent countries shared the common denominators of political authoritarianism, colonial experiences, and underdevelopment. Under UNESCO's "one country, one vote" decision-making rule, newly independent countries relied on their numerical dominance to project their agendas to the governance of UNESCO.

The Communist bloc and newly independent countries sought to project issues related to social inequality and injustice into the UNESCO's agenda. There were slight differences between the two blocs. The former bloc focused on the differences between developed and underdeveloped as well as colonial issues; the latter bloc paid attention to the conflict between capitalism and socialism. However, as they assigned the causes of social inequality and injustice to the capitalism in the developed world, the two blocs jointly tried to link peace issues with structural violence and cooperated with each other to lead UNESCO to eliminate some aspects of structural violence.¹⁰⁾ From the 1950s, UNESCO came to link peace issues with structural violence; it raised the need to study social tensions as a precursory indicator of wars. (UNESCO 1950, 18-19). The frequent keywords at UNESCO in the 1940-50s such as peace and mutual understanding gradually lost their popularity in the 1960s. UNESCO resolution in 1962 to participate in the United Nations Development Decade: A Programme for International Economic Co-operation [UNGA Res 1710 (XVI, 19 December 1961)] symbolically demonstrates the change at UNESCO.

Socialist Republic in 1948) participated in the founding of UNESCO in 1946. Cuba joined to UNESCO in 1947, Hungary (renamed the Hungarian People's Republic in 1949) in 1948, Yugoslavia in 1950, Russia, Belarus, and Ukraine in 1954, Bulgaria and Romania in 1956, and Albania in 1958.

10) When the allegation that UNESCO was under the communist influence was often raised in the early 1950s, the US Department of State even attempted to confirm this allegation through in-depth interviews with staff at UNESCO (US Department of State 1953)

Considering that one of the decisive conditions for rapidly overcoming any harmful social and economic consequences of colonialism in all its forms and manifestations is the eradication of illiteracy and the training in the shortest possible time of adequate national personnel for the development of the national economy and culture,

Conscious of the continuing need for UNESCO's services to these ends,

[the General Conference] Authorizes the Director-General to continue and to intensify his efforts in this direction. ...particular attention should be paid to the problems of overcoming educational, scientific and cultural underdevelopment of countries which have recently won their national independence or are endeavouring to attain it." (UNESCO 1962, 79)

The New International Economic Order and the New International Information Order were popular topics at UNESCO in the 1970-80s. While they argued that unfair terms of trade structurally intensified development and underdevelopment, newly independent countries and some South American nations tried to project their interests into the international economic order and the international information order at the United Nations system. The New International Economic Order, a visionary economic order which developing countries pushed for at the United Nations (UNGA A/Res/S-6/3201, 1 May 1974), claimed (1) that developing countries possessed the right to control and regulate the activities of multinational corporations operating inside their borders, (2) the right to nationalize the assets of multinational companies on terms advantageous to them, (3) that producer countries of primary commodities could form their own council such as the Organization for Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and (4) that the trade conditions between primary commodities and industrial goods needed to be changed, and that technology transfer from developed to developing countries was required. Following the suit at the United Nations, UNESCO also passed a resolution at the 18th General Assembly in 1974 to contribute to the establishment of the New International Economic Order. The new economic order remained a topic up to the late 1980s.¹¹⁾

11) Resolutions that directly mentioned the "New Economic Order" were consistently made up from the UNESCO's 18th General Conference in 1976 to the 22nd General Conference in 1983. The term showed up again in the 24th General Conference in 1987 for the last time; it disappeared since the 25th General Conference in 1989 for good.

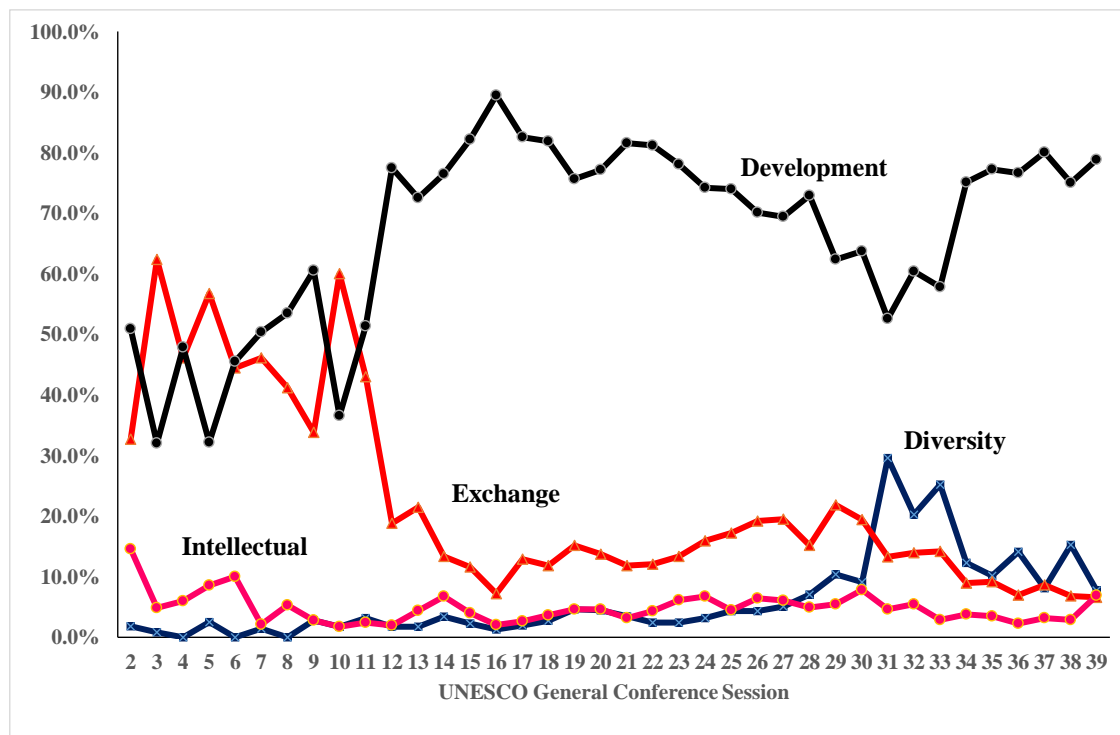
The New World Information Order, the other side of the new international order for developing countries, was initiated by some developing states at UNESCO. In 1969 at a press conference sponsored by UNESCO, criticism was raised that information moves in one direction from developed to developing countries (UNESCO 1970, 8-14). This criticism evolved into claims at subsequent meetings that information disparities were linked to "neocolonialism" and the "free flow of information" became a key topic at UNESCO. The term "New Communication Order" first appeared in a resolution at the 20th General Conference of UNESCO in 1978. The UNESCO resolution pointed out that "the present communication order in the world is far from satisfactory" and mentioned the necessity for a "new information and communication order." Since then, the term "new information and communication order" consistently appeared in resolutions up to the 25th General Conference in 1989.¹²⁾

The frequency of some keywords in the UNESCO's resolutions is a good indicator of the changes at the Agency. "Economy" and "development", which are friendly topics for developing countries, have appeared frequently in the UNESCO's resolutions since the 1960s. Since appearing in third place in the 11th General Conference in 1960, "development" has consistently placed third or fourth, and second place since 2005. The ranking for "economy" has fluctuated along with that of "development." The term was popular in the UNESCO's resolutions in the 1960s, entering the top ten list by the early 1980s, then showing a decline after the mid-1980s. Technology has always shown up on the list, but the meaning associated with it has changed over time. During the 1940s and 1950s, technology had been mentioned as an object of intellectual exchange, but since the 1960s it has been more associated with the field of economic cooperation.

In sum, the Cold War and the joining of newly independent states are responsible for the introduction of several new keywords related to the eradication of structural violence. The prominence of the new keywords at UNESCO implies that the meaning of 'peace' at the Agency moved from a mere absence of wars toward the absence of structural violence.

12) The New International Information and Communication Order and the New International Economic Order are inter-connected, as (1) media are influenced by an economic order under the control of large capital, (2) information is created in areas where science and technology are developed and moves toward underdeveloped ones, (3) media spread ideas that are friendly to commercial interests. The two orders share their emphasis on "self-reliance" (Pavlic and Hamelink 1985, 25-46). Galtung, who presents "imperialism" as an analytic framework linking structural violence, economics, and information, argues that social inequality and conflict are managed through the media at the final stage of imperialism (Galtung 1971, 94-98). Developing countries accepted Galtung's argument, projected it onto UNESCO and attempted to establish a new international order.

Figure 2: Relative Frequency of Four Keywords in UNESCO Records of General Conference (Resolution)



2) Marginalization of UNESCO exchange programmes

The international changes in UNESCO changed the relative importance of the major sectors. First, the exchange of person programme has lost the status of “major programme.” It was categorized as a major programme up to 1964, though its budget share was not comparable to the four major sectors. However, the category of the international exchange programme was demoted into a subcategory under communication in 1966. Furthermore, the category of international exchange programmes have been disintegrated into the four major programmes and lost its independent status.

Secondly, the surviving exchange programmes have been associated with technical assistance, development, and cultural diversity. As newly independent states emphasize development issues, UNESCO exchange programmes gradually have changed from a way of understanding to a route for economic development and diversity. Though the four major sectors in UNESCO appeared to exist, the contents of each sector reflected newly independent states’ interests. Meanwhile, exchange programmes for mutual

understanding shrank or even disappeared. The budget share of UNESCO exchange programmes decreased by around 5% in the 1950s to 1% in the 2010s.

Third, intellectual co-operation has lost its eminence in UNESCO, though it is one of the three fountains for the genesis of the institution. As diversity has come to be dominant over mutual understanding and mid-rankers or youths rather than notables have become key actors in international exchange, intellectual exchange and co-operation have been weakening. The exchange among intellectual notables has been sporadic in UNESCO.

In contrast, international exchange programmes flourished outside UNESCO. Exchange programmes among higher education have been a part of collegial life (e.g. Erasmus Programme). Lots of people have been engaged in various exchange programmes. International travel has been frequent. It is no longer a rare experience reserved for those who are wealthy and adventurous. In addition, as people migrate more frequently, the exchange within a state presents ways of experiencing different ways of life. The rare opportunity for international exchange programmes in the 1950s has become a common experience for the middle class in developing states.

4. Globalization, pandemic and exchange programmes

As internal travels have been suspected as ways of the virus inflow, the in-person international movement poses a risk of spreading the virus. Almost all exchange programmes halted or switched to virtual formats. This section reviews the link between globalization and pandemics, negative impacts of COVID-19 upon exchange programmes and UNESCO's responses.

1) Pandemic, a byproduct of globalization¹³⁾

There are three inflexion points for the globalization. First, the major geographical discoveries in the 15-17th century led Europeans to be connected with all people around the world. Second, the Industrial Revolution in the 18-19th century made transboundary long-range interactions faster. The introduction of steamboats made long-range travel safer and reliable. Third, the advent of long-range commercial air-planes has helped mankind imagine even the inter-space movements. The new transportation systems have allowed humans to overcome geographical barriers. Though mankind utilized the Steppe

13) This section is a revised version of my paper (Jo 2020, 148-151).

Route, the Silk Road, and the Sea Route to carry out intercontinental interactions, only a small number of adventurous men participated in transboundary long-range activities in the pre-globalization era. Meanwhile, long-distance travels have been relatively easy in the globalization era.¹⁴⁾

Contagious diseases often caused epidemics in the pre-globalization era. As the movement of humans was limited in the pre-globalization era, the scope of contagious diseases was localized. In epidemics, there were a series of interactions between humans and pathogens. Those who had strong resistances against contagious diseases survived and left their strong genomes. Strains that caused mild symptoms had more chances to survive than those with grave symptoms, as the latter would kill humans or would have fewer chances of reproduction due to human quarantine interventions. The interaction between humans and pathogens in epidemic led to the attenuation of the latter and the genome pool change in the former (Papkou et al., 2019, 923-928; Badgett et al., 2002). Humans and pathogens in a region came to co-exist in a series of epidemics. When they were exposed to attenuated pathogens later, outsiders would experience mild symptoms.

Globalization has become a pre-condition for pandemics. As humans are involved in long-distance travel, pathogens can spread out far away before they become attenuated; the change in the human genome pool occurs in all areas almost simultaneously. That is, the interaction between humans and pathogens occur simultaneously across areas. The temporal gap among the outbreak of contagious diseases has been shortened due to the development of faster transportation systems. Ironically, better means of transportation are responsible for pandemics.

Figure 3a describes how humans interacted with contagious diseases in the pre-globalization era. A pathogen led to an epidemic and became attenuated in Region 1. Long-range travelers brought attenuated strains which survived in the first epidemic in Region 1 into Region 2; the epidemic in Region 2 was milder than Region 1's first epidemic. More attenuated strains slowly spread out, and adjacent regions experienced milder epidemics.

14) For example, it took 35 days for Christopher Columbus to cross the Atlantic in 1492; it took only in 2 hours 53 minutes for British Airways Concorde to fly from New York to London on 7 February 1996.

Figure 3a: Spread and Attenuation of a Pathogen in the Pre-Globalization Era

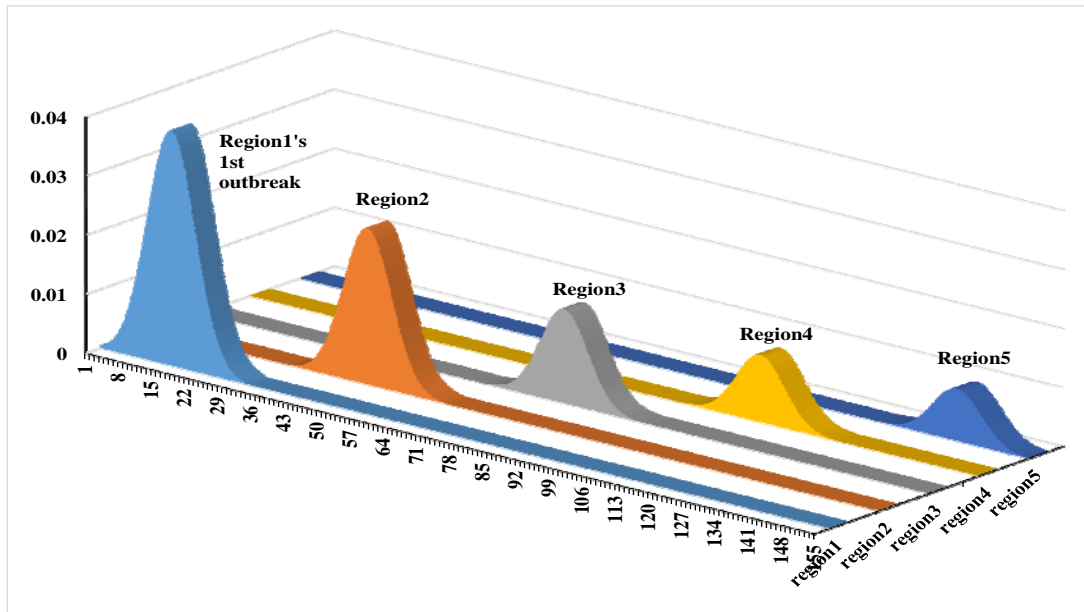
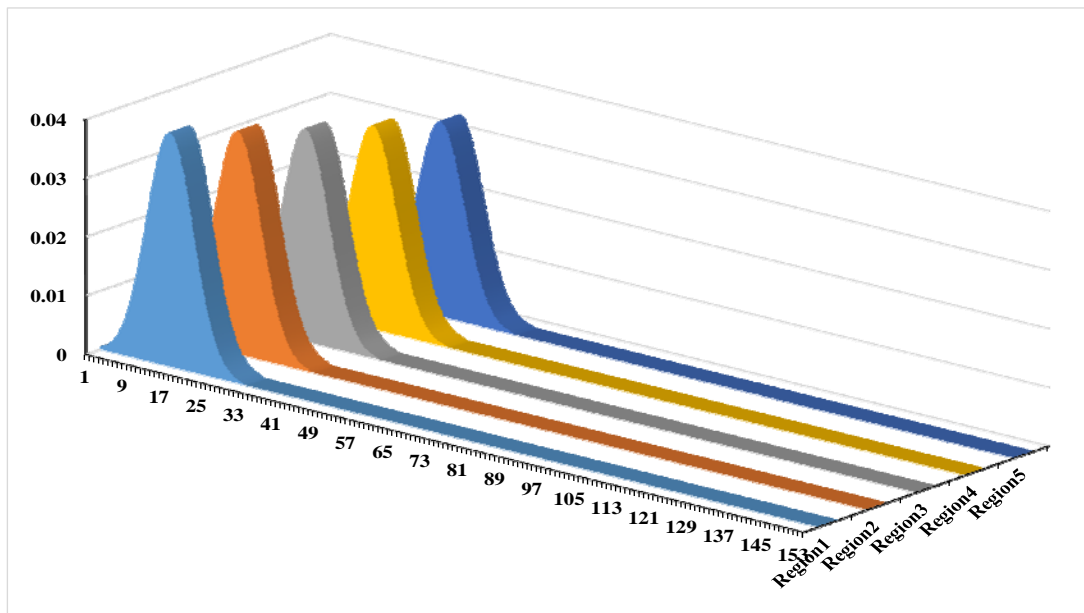


Figure 3b: Pandemic by a Pathogen in the Globalization Era



In contrast, Figure 3b shows how a pathogen may lead to a pandemic in the globalization era. A new pathogen causes a contagious disease in Region 1 and people with the pathogens move to other regions. All regions suffer from the same contagious disease almost simultaneously. The outbreak of Cholera in the 19th century, the first

pandemic, was linked with the introduction of steam-boats which connected India and Europe. The Russian Flu in 1890-93, the second pandemic, was linked with the introduction of railroads (Hardy 1998, 331; Skog et al. 2008). The spread of the COVID-19 pandemic is associated with the inbound travelers through flights from Wuhan (Hanon et al., 2020; Lau et al., 2020).

2) Two faces of exchange programmes and UNESCO responses

There are two facets of the exchange programmes. On the one hand, they are good ways for mutual understanding. They provide opportunities for participants to accept and understand different cultures, acquire languages through practical immersion; develop self-control, problem-solving techniques, and challenge management skills. These benefits lead to interpersonal peace and may eventually contribute to inter-state peace.

On the other hand, exchange programmes may be laden with the spread of pathogens. In particular, people from a community that has not been much exposed to transboundary human interactions have more risk of spreading pathogens, though the risk is low in absolute terms. The resistance to a pathogen is different across peoples, as their exposure is not identical. Exchange programmes may pose threats to the hosting community and participants. Though it may decrease the risk of contagious diseases, the vaccination for exchange programme participants may not interdict the spread of a pathogen.

The COVID-19 pandemic reveals the negative aspect of exchange programmes. States that did not experience the inflow of the virus in early phase imposed travel bans to forestall the inflow of the virus, forgoing the economic benefits of inbound travel. Exchange programmes were suspended or cancelled too. For example, the US State Department halted all in-person programmes funded by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs due to its own “Global Level 4 Health Advisory” on 12 March 2020 (US Department of State 2020). UNESCO International Institute for Higher Education in Latin America and the Caribbean (IESALC) recommended to cancel or postpone international exchange programmes at countries affected by COVID-19 (UNESCO IESALC 2020).

UNESCO has been trying to sustain exchange programmes. Considering the health risks associated with in-person exchange programmes, the agency has been promoting online exchange programmes. For example, UNESCO launched ‘Online Leadership Training Programme’ for Arab Youth (UNESCO 2020b); UNESCO Tehran Cluster Office supported the 7th Science and Technology Exchange Programme (STEP) Summit

(UNESCO 2020c); several Asian national commission for UNESCO organized 'Learning for Empathy: A teacher exchange and support programme' (UNESCO 2020d). Online exchange programmes replaced in-person exchange programmes during the COVID-19 pandemic.

5. Rearrangement of exchange programmes

The current COVID-19 pandemic curtailed in-person exchange programmes. Before mankind reaches a herd immunity by mass vaccination or natural infection, it is hard to resume in-person exchange programmes. As long as the pandemic goes on, online exchange programmes serve as an alternative to in-person ones. Even after the pandemic is over, there should be some measure to handle public health risks associated with contagious diseases. The pandemic pressures for the rearrangement of exchange programmes in several following ways.

First, new online techniques should be developed to fill in what online exchange programmes miss, such as practices in immersion and interpersonal interactions. Though they are free from public health concerns, accessible by many participants and cost-saving, online exchange programmes have weakness in cultural issues and interpersonal interactions. Better online teaching techniques should be introduced and shared.

Second, the digital divide should be handled. Internet access is a key precondition for online exchange programmes. However, 49% of people have no access to the internet yet. People in developing countries and poor people in rich countries cannot afford internet access (Kranjec 2020). As a result, they cannot access the online exchange programmes. The digital divide will worsen the polarization between haves and have-nots. As stable Internet accesses come after the establishment of social infrastructure, there should be more investment for infrastructure in developing countries. It will be a challenge for international societies.

Third, there should be some measures to handle public health risks associated with in-person exchange programmes. The COVID-19 pandemic will be over either by mass vaccination or natural infection in 2 years at the public level, and in-person exchange programmes will resume. However, at the individual level, some people are susceptible to virus infection. They should be protected, and the potential threats as carriers should be interdicted.

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‘Rethinking Schooling’ once again: Post-corona challenges for education for peace and sustainability in Asia

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‘Rethinking Schooling’ once again: Post-corona challenges for education for peace and sustainability in Asia

Edward Vickers

1. Introduction – COVID-19 and challenges for education across Asia and beyond

In 2017, Krishna Kumar, Yoko Mochizuki and I coauthored the UNESCO report *Rethinking Schooling for the 21st Century*, which analyzed challenges confronting ‘education for peace, sustainable development and global citizenship in Asia’ (UNESCO-MGIEP 2017). One challenge our report overlooked was the microbial threat to our social and educational order. We should have known better: in 2007, Hong Kong-based researchers wrote that ‘a large reservoir of SARS-Cov-like viruses, together with the culture of eating exotic animals in China, is a time-bomb’ (Cheng et al., 2007). Human encroachment on wild habitats has elevated the risk of ‘zoonotic’ diseases such as novel coronaviruses (Gosalvez 2020). In other words, the pandemic of 2020 itself should be seen as a symptom of humanity’s increasingly unsustainable relationship with the natural world.

This paper addresses the question of sustainability by focusing on the socio-cultural, political and, above all, educational ramifications of COVID-19. I consider both how education has conditioned Asian responses to the pandemic, and implications for the challenges identified in our 2017 report: of instrumentalism and values; of nationalism and weak regionalism; and of competitiveness and regimentation. My broad conclusion is straightforward: the pandemic will significantly exacerbate those challenges, at least in the short term. At the same time, I argue that the very extremity of this crisis, by dramatizing the unsustainability of prevailing approaches to education, has the potential to spark a more fundamental rethink.

Why focus on Asia? One reason relates to the accelerating shift in the global centre of political gravity from America and Western Eurasia eastwards. The relative success

with which many East Asian societies have controlled infection rates contrasts with the shambolic incompetence of some Western governments, notably in the USA and UK. This spectacle of Western failure promises radically to undermine entrenched habits of viewing Western societies as developmental templates. Any lingering belief that it is natural to look to the West for solutions to humanity's shared problems seems likely to be one casualty of this pandemic.

But as to whether shattering the illusion of Western superiority opens the way to more sustainable and humane approaches to education, this remains an open question. Autocrats across Asia have long sought to delegitimize liberal or universalistic visions of human rights by associating them with an alien West. They have been abetted in this by commentators who extrapolate from justified denunciations of colonialism to sweeping demonisation of 'Western' epistemology *tout court* (see Vickers 2020a). The dichotomy of colonialist 'West' and colonized 'non-West' supports claims that the demise of Western 'hegemony' will usher in a new age of mutually respectful exchange amongst diverse communities. However, responses thus far to COVID-19 suggest a rather different narrative: of a worldwide intensification of virulent forms of chauvinism, not least in Asia. Eluding that destiny is perhaps the supreme challenge we face today.

To confront chauvinist ideologies, we must first understand their appeal. This requires considering how education contributes to dividing us, not just through curricular messaging, but through the very structures of schooling and qualifications systems. Following a review of some of the key pronouncements on the educational implications of the Covid crisis by international bodies (the OECD, the UN and UNESCO), I therefore proceed to consider a crucial issue these bodies largely overlook or take for granted: the dominance in global educational debate of an instrumentalist, dehumanizing meritocratic ideology. This phenomenon has attracted attention from scholars analyzing the post-2008 surge of populism in the West. However, Asia is meritocracy's 'ground zero', and home to some of its more extreme and troubling manifestations. Covid-induced disruption to educational provision starkly exposes the hollowness of claims that education supplies the meritocratic basis for social justice.

The remainder of the paper then revisits the various challenges identified in the

Rethinking Schooling report, examining how these have conditioned Asian responses to the pandemic, and how the crisis has, in turn, influenced policy and practice in relation to education for peace, sustainability and transnational citizenship. (The focus is primarily on China, India and Japan – Asia's most powerful states, and also those with which I happen to be most familiar.) Meritocratic fundamentalism is a crucial part of this story, whose importance to understanding 'challenges of competitiveness and regimentation' was a key theme of the 2017 report. Here this receives further emphasis in light of the differential impact of coronavirus-induced school closures and shifts to online provision on educational access. Other challenges, of instrumentalism and nationalism, involve blending meritocratic ideals with a vision of education as a conveyor belt delivering human capital for national development. A microscopic virus has exposed the gaping flaws in this vision, which cannot be healed by technical adjustments to educational delivery. We are challenged to rethink the foundational premises both of our education systems, and the social and political dispensations they serve.

2. Global responses to COVID-19 induced educational crisis

The initial responses of multilateral agencies to the educational disruption caused by COVID-19 have been broadly true to form. While the OECD focuses primarily on the impact on human capital generation, the UN and, especially, UNESCO give greater weight to broader humanitarian concerns. However, underlying these responses is a shared failure critically to reexamine key assumptions concerning education's socio-economic and political functions.

In the pamphlet *The Impact of COVID-19 on Education*, the OECD's Andreas Schleicher analyses the ramifications of the crisis from the perspective of human capital development (Schleicher 2020). Highlighting implications for educational financing, given both declining revenues and pressure to divert funds to health and emergency relief, he warns that 'reducing spending without improving productivity is likely to negatively affect the quality of education' (8). The impact of widespread school closures is discussed in terms of 'skills loss' and the assumed negative effect on future economic growth (4).

Mitigating these effects, Schleicher maintains, requires enhanced use of digital tools

for distance learning, a point he links to broader advocacy of educational technology. This in turn implies more teacher training in ICT, and more use of ICT in teacher training. However, his data shows that societies reporting the lowest deployment of ICT in the classroom include Japan, South Korea and Shanghai (17), all typically accorded exemplary status by the OECD. Schleicher nonetheless hails Shanghai as a model for ICT use in teacher training, with 'over 90%' of teachers there reporting 'undertaking online professional development in the past year' (18); we are not told what the content of this training was. In calling for a technological transformation of education, Schleicher thus appears to harness the pandemic to the OECD's preexisting agenda; in 2018, the organization issued a paper entitled 'A Brave New World: Technology and Education' (OECD 2018).

How far do these central OECD messages concerning growth, skills and the promise of technology speak to the reality of the COVID crisis and its educational impact across Asia? As we shall see, the portrayal of ICT as a transformational solution to problems of educational access has limited relevance to the experience of poor, rural or migrant communities. Schleicher also rehearses claims concerning the connection between educational 'outcomes' (as measured by PISA) and future economic growth that have been effectively debunked (Komatsu and Rappleye 2017). Education's role in equipping young people with employment-relevant 'skills' is certainly crucial, but precise causal relationships between 'skills' development and subsequent growth are hard to demonstrate. And the importance of schooling extends far beyond the development of human capital.

Acknowledgement of schooling's wider functions is more evident in the United Nations' response, *Education during COVID-19 and Beyond* (2020a). This pamphlet evinces a concern not just with 'productivity' or 'growth', but also with 'rights'. It stresses how the pandemic's consequences, especially mass school closures, threaten dramatically to exacerbate pre-existing educational inequalities. Closing schools, it recognizes, has effects that extend beyond the acquisition of skills to provision of children's services, and to the ability of parents, especially mothers, to work. The paper emphasizes that education is not just a 'fundamental human right', but an 'enabling right with a direct impact on the realization of all other human rights' (3).

When it comes to technology, however, the authors of the UN pamphlet seem

closely aligned with Schleicher. Hailing the way that 'the crisis has stimulated innovation in the education sector' (2), they stress the need to 'reimagine education and accelerate change in teaching and learning' beyond the current crisis, arguing that this should involve:

addressing learning losses and preventing dropouts, particularly of marginalized groups; [offering] skills for employability programmes; [supporting] the teaching profession and teachers' readiness; [expanding] the definition of the right to education to include connectivity; [removing] barriers to connectivity; [strengthening] data and monitoring of learning; [and strengthening] the articulation and flexibility across levels and types of education and training (4).

The attention paid here to monitoring and assessment testifies to the 'tyranny of metrics' in public debate over education (Muller 2017). The drive for measurement has been spearheaded by the OECD, and followed by other multilateral agencies seeking to demonstrate their hard-headed reliance on 'scientific' data. Reflecting this fashion, the UN paper forcefully asserts the importance of 'continuous monitoring':

Managing the education crisis requires a continuous monitoring of data at the student, teacher, and school levels. This monitoring will need to be based on a mix of existing data and assessment systems and potentially new approaches tailored to this specific context (26).

What, then, of UNESCO, which has traditionally adopted a distinctively humanistic vision? COVID-19 arrived just as UNESCO's new 'Futures of Education Commission' was beginning its deliberations. The Commission promptly responded with *Education in a post-COVID world: nine ideas for public action* (UNESCO 2020). This urges that 'our common humanity necessitates global solidarity' to ensure that disadvantaged communities are not further marginalized (3), warning of the risk to 'decades of progress' in addressing poverty and gender inequality (3-4). Securing funding for education for the poorest societies and communities, and refusing to accept 'current levels of inequality' (let alone their increase) are flagged as key concerns.

Technology also features prominently in UNESCO's prescription: we are told that it is 'particularly important that the world supports developing countries with

investment in digital infrastructure' (3). In pursuit of this goal, UNESCO has convened a 'Global Education Coalition for COVID-19 Response' whose sponsors include Big Tech corporations - Facebook, Google, Microsoft and others - that have profited from the crisis while continuing to avoid tax, thus helping deny governments the revenue needed to fund public education systems.¹⁾

Nonetheless, the UNESCO report marks a notable contrast with the approaches of the OECD and the UN. It emphasizes functions well beyond skills formation, drawing attention to the importance of schools as 'social spaces' and to the central role of teachers. While the UN couples its calls for 'support for teachers' with demands for enhanced monitoring and assessment (2020, 26), UNESCO stresses the need to promote 'the conditions for autonomous and collaborative work'. For UNESCO, 'the centre of any educational process is the human relationship between a student and a teacher' (13). This leads to an insistence that technology should boost rather than constrain professional autonomy; rather than handing technology companies the power to determine the curriculum, 'teachers, students, governments, civil society representatives and privacy advocates' should also be 'represented and shape these transformations' (17).

Nevertheless, all three responses reviewed here focus primarily on challenges to educational delivery; issues of content are relatively neglected. UNESCO singles out the need for 'scientific literacy' to combat an epidemic of 'fake news' that imperils efforts to combat various global threats, pandemics included (17-19). Its calls for 'inclusion and solidarity' and 'individual and collective flourishing' also carry curricular implications (10). However, these are not spelt out, and there is no discussion in any of these documents of how schooling, rather than promising an escape from our current predicament, may actually be part of the problem.

Curricular content frequently promotes malign social and political consequences; so too does education's role in allocating resources and opportunity within society. The OECD, the UN and UNESCO all highlight the risk of increased inequality resulting from the pandemic. But the sorting function of public examinations and related assessment procedures is not problematized. Unlike the OECD or UN, UNESCO refrains from demanding intensified assessment, perhaps out of recognition

1) See <https://globaleducationcoalition.unesco.org/members> (accessed October 17, 2020).

that excessive monitoring is hard to reconcile with support for teachers' autonomy or humanistic premises concerning education's purposes. However, these reports all share the assumption that education as such is intrinsically good, that more of it is generally better, and (at least for the OECD and UN) that the same goes for assessment.

Faith in the transformative potential of education is the gospel of today's global elite. Advocacy of redistributive taxation to fund enhanced state provision of public goods, guaranteeing security and dignity for all, is a fringe position at Davos or on the TED Talks platform (Giridharadhas 2019). Education, on the other hand, is widely hailed as a magic bullet, as if broadening access, raising skills and transforming consciousness were sufficient to put the world to rights. One difficulty with this is that by the time today's schoolchildren reach positions of power, the opportunity significantly to alter the trajectory of some of our most pressing problems (such as climate change) will be long gone. The belief that education should carry the responsibility for ushering in a sustainable utopia imposes a huge and wholly unrealistic burden of expectation on teachers and young people.

But the mistake in placing excessive faith in education also involves blindness to the malign purposes it often serves. The OECD, responding to the call for 'education for global citizenship' in the UN's Sustainable Development Goals, sought to define a set of decontextualized 'global competences' for promoting international understanding, arguing that these new metrics could be incorporated into its existing testing regime (Auld and Morris 2019). The underlying assumption of education's intrinsically benign nature remains undisturbed, as does belief in the efficacy of ever more elaborate measurement of outputs. However, when we observe the prevalence of hatred and bigotry, and their influence on responses to COVID-19, should we not trace this back, at least in part, to the effects of schooling? And when we consider problems of inequality and social fragmentation exacerbated by this crisis, to what extent should we see these also as consequences of an educational pathology: an epidemic of meritocracy? These questions emerge as crucial to understanding the social fissures that the pandemic has exposed.

3. COVID-19, education and the Asian context: meritocracy, inequality and solidarity

In the 2017 *Rethinking Schooling* report, we wrote:

A fundamentalist brand of meritocracy, deeply entrenched in East Asia but prevalent elsewhere too, helps legitimate existing patterns of privilege while contributing to new forms of discrimination or social fragmentation. Tweaking curricular messages... can only go so far in addressing such issues. To restore public awareness of the intrinsic value of learning, and moderate the extreme forms of credentialism that permeate many Asian schooling systems, what is needed is a fundamental reassessment of a social contract marred by pervasive insecurity. If we seek to persuade young people to care about our common future, it would help to give them a tangible stake in it (UNESCO 2017, 213).

The critique of meritocracy has since gone global, with notable studies of the USA and UK (Markovits 2019; Sandel 2020; Mandler 2020). Markovits observes how life in America has been transformed into a 'massive, multistage meritocratic tournament' (7), with the traditionally dominant 'leisure class' displaced by a new industrious elite based on 'merit' and earned income. The appeal to merit makes elite arrogance 'appear justified' (60), but 'meritocracy's charisma' disguises a 'corrupt core' (71). 'Feedback loops' enable the new 'superordinate working class' to pass on privilege to its children just as effectively as any landed aristocracy. The effect is to massively enhance inequality at the top end of the income scale.

Markovits nonetheless stresses that the costs of this 'competitive frenzy' are shared throughout society. Dependent entirely on their own 'human capital', and alienated from their 'true nature and intrinsic worth,' the elite exploit themselves (36). Showing how hours worked by the 'superordinate working class' have spiraled, Markovits observes that 'human capital more nearly enslaves than liberates its owners' (35). The transmission of their 'meritocratic inheritance' transforms elite families into centres of production, commodifying children and subordinating them to a regime of 'excessive and ruthless training' that 'does not elevate the human spirit so much as crush it' (116). Meanwhile, society as a whole is fragmented, with the vast majority of the population not only excluded from the opportunity to compete, but also apparently

denied moral grounds for challenging a yawning wealth gap derived from 'merit'.

Sandel relates this story of fragmentation and alienation directly to America's chaotic response to the pandemic. Over recent decades, increasingly globalized elites have come to feel that 'their economic prospects and identities were no longer dependent on local or national communities' (2020, 5). 'As the winners of globalization pulled away from the losers,' he writes, 'they practiced their own form of social distancing' (5). At the same time, the sense, amongst globalization's 'losers', that 'those on top look down with disdain', fuels the anger and resentment that draws them to authoritarian populists (5). A catastrophic erosion of social solidarity, destroying the grounds for believing that 'we are all in this together,' handicapped America's response to COVID-19.

These studies offer compelling analyses of American societal dysfunction, but their failure to draw comparisons with Asian experience is striking. This is particularly so given that Asia is arguably where meritocracy began, with the Chinese invention of competitive public examinations in the first millennium. Sandel acknowledges that Confucius, like Plato and Aristotle, believed in rule by the most 'meritorious'; he also recalls the 'brazen application of meritocratic thinking' he encountered on a 2012 lecture tour of China, when a student opined that 'having created their wealth, rich people are meritorious and deserve to live longer' (61). However, Sandel and Markovits treat meritocracy as essentially a Western phenomenon. Likewise, the French economist Thomas Piketty, in his monumental *Capital and Ideology* (2020), discusses 'The Invention of Meritocracy' exclusively with reference to Europe (709-716).²⁾

Turning from America to Asia confronts us with an apparent conundrum, since here we find meritocracy-fueled inequality without the collapse in mutual regard and solidarity seen in the USA. Piketty and colleagues portray China as converging with the USA in terms of inequality (Piketty et al., 2019); like India, China is characterized by 'hyperconcentrated wealth' (Piketty 2020, 685). Direct comparison of American and Chinese college admissions data is complicated by profound social and systemic differences. However, a 2015 study found that urban students were 43 times more likely than their rural counterparts to enter Peking or Tsinghua Universities, the country's premier universities, and that is before socio-economic class is taken into

2) Piketty is open about his focus primarily on the Western contexts with which he is most familiar, and the risk that this makes aspects of his analysis 'unbalanced' (2020, 1038)

account (Li et al., 2015; see also Vickers and Zeng 2017, 284-5). Japan and Korea, while considerably more equal than China or the USA, display levels of income inequality comparable to the UK (OECD Data 2019), with a widening gap between the elite and the rest. There, as in China, the costs of prepping children for meritocratic competition are often cited as a key factor in depressing birthrates (Arai 2016; Fong 2016). These include immense opportunity costs for mothers, with gender-based inequality in Japan and Korea the highest in the OECD.

And yet, despite the extent of inequality and the intensity of meritocratic competition across East Asia, these societies apparently remained relatively unified and quiescent in the face of the COVID-19 pandemic. Policy responses were starkly different: Japan, Korea and Taiwan avoided the kind of draconian lockdown imposed in China, relying instead on mask-wearing, social distancing and testing. Nevertheless, across most of East Asia there has been no sign of a collapse of social solidarity of the kind witnessed in the USA (the picture across South and Southeast Asia is decidedly more mixed). To what extent can this apparent social harmony be attributed to education?

A 2020 study of 'education, inequality and meritocracy' in Japan provides some intriguing pointers (Kariya and Rappleye 2020). The authors set out to challenge what they see as mistaken stereotyping of Japan as a utopia of equal opportunity schooling contrasted with the neoliberal dystopia of 'the English-speaking world' (12). They acknowledge that post-war Japanese schooling has been relatively egalitarian in important respects. However, this is due not to any 'unique' Japanese 'cultural commitment to equality' (13), but rather the 'unexpected outcome' of measures for the financing of schooling driven by bureaucratic logic. Somewhat contradictorily, they then assert that 'the ambivalent normative foundations of meritocracy' can be traced to cultural origins in 'modernity itself' (13); the West, as the fount of 'modernity', thus seems to take the blame for meritocracy's worldwide spread.

Kariya and Rappleye nonetheless offer an instructive account of the tensions inherent in Japanese meritocracy. Drawing a contrast with the attention devoted by 'Western' schooling to student individuality, they argue that Japan's approach, based on rigorous standardization of provision, implies a trade off along two axes: 'achievement of social equality' *versus* 'freedom for emergence of individual

differences' (200). The Japanese system takes almost no account of differences amongst individuals in terms of family background, innate ability, culture or other factors. This emphasis on uniformity through the standardization of educational inputs is largely responsible, they argue, for creating a culture of weak individuality. 'Merit', in this context, comes to be associated overwhelmingly with the effortful assimilation of standardized knowledge and behavioural norms, rather than the cultivation and expression of individual distinctiveness.

The argument that Japanese meritocracy imposes a trade off between individuality and equality-as-uniformity is compelling, but sidelining cultural factors seems oddly to ignore the ancient prestige of meritocratic ideals across East Asia. Appeals to that tradition have become central to efforts by the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) to recast its legitimating narrative on a basis of 'nationalism, performance and meritocracy' (Bell and Wang 2020, 94). China's approach to meritocracy is very different from Japan's; rather than rigorously enforcing uniformity in educational inputs, post-Mao China has unabashedly promoted elite education within the public system (Vickers and Zeng 2017). Memories of the violence directed at elites during the Cultural Revolution, when competitive examinations were abolished, fueled a radical reversion to educational elitism after Chairman Mao's demise in 1976. And as economic growth and national strength rather than class struggle have become its guiding principles, the CCP has associated itself with a meritocratic tradition that still commands widespread public legitimacy.

CCP propaganda associating meritocracy with Chinese 'tradition' points to one key distinction between East Asian and Anglo-American forms of meritocracy. As Sandel observes, American (and, more generally, Anglophone) elites have ostentatiously paraded their 'globalist' credentials (2020). The consequent association of meritocracy with rootless cosmopolitanism helps explain the visceral nativism and populist rejection of 'experts' that has rocked American and British society since the 2008 financial crisis. For those outside the highly-skilled, globally mobile charmed circle, 'the elite's intense concern for diversity and inclusion... carries an odor of self-dealing' (Markovits 2019, 61).

By contrast, meritocratic ideology across East Asia has been coupled with more or less exclusionary forms of ethno-nationalism; even where, as in China, elites have

adopted an increasingly globalized lifestyle, domestically they have been careful to maintain an often stridently nationalist posture. Piketty identifies 'social nativism' as a 'trap' for post-Communist and post-colonial societies experiencing spiraling inequality and economic globalization (2020), but while a 'saffronising' India may conform to this pattern, in East Asia nativism is not a response to novel stresses in the social fabric, but a longstanding, integral feature of the developmental state (Green et al., 2007). If East Asian societies have yet to witness any broad-based anti-elite backlash, this may be in part because meritocracy there has always come wrapped in the national flag.

Certain caveats are required at this point. In discussing the relationship between education and the handling of the COVID-19 pandemic, evidence is in short supply at the time of writing (October 2020). Other factors besides behavioral patterns seem likely to have played a significant role in rendering some populations more at risk than others; the editor of the medical journal *The Lancet* highlights 'poverty, insecurity and inequality' as key factors explaining Britain's particular vulnerability (Horton 2020). There is also the risk of confusing cause with effect: have East Asian societies been spared the worst effects of the pandemic because of their relative discipline and cohesion; or have they maintained their harmony thanks to success in containing the virus? It is impossible, at this point, to answer these questions with any certainty.

It is nevertheless possible tentatively to identify ways in which the COVID-19 crisis is influencing the terms of debate over education across Asia. The often harsh reality of lockdowns, school closures and rushed experiments with distance learning in many countries offer the most concrete examples of educational impact. But what is also important are perceptions, or the stories told about the pandemic. Attempts have already begun to weave COVID-19 into political narratives, with a view to promoting or legitimating particular policy responses. It is these ideological or cultural ramifications of the crisis that form the main focus of the remainder of this paper.

4. The impact of school closures – stark regional differences

First, however, a brief overview of the impact of school closures across Asia is in

order. Access to schooling is vital not only to the welfare of children and their families, but also to any veneer of meritocratic credibility: if children are denied instruction, then even the appearance of equality of opportunity is fatally undermined.

In this respect, the performance of different Asian societies during 2020 was starkly divergent. After a strictly enforced lockdown between late January and March, by April China was reopening schools across the country. In Japan, school closures lasted around three months, between late February and late May, after which face-to-face classes resumed. In Southeast Asia the picture was more mixed: Vietnam and Thailand avoided prolonged school closures, but the crucial tourism sector was decimated by the pandemic, with economic dislocation fueling mounting political disaffection in Thailand, especially among young people outraged by 'the king's obscene wealth, kleptocratic elites and lousy governance' (Economist 2020a). In the Philippines and Indonesia, meanwhile, the handling of the pandemic itself was more chaotic, resulting in widespread and prolonged school closures. Youth discontent mounted through 2020, with street protests not only in Thailand, but also in Indonesia, where a new law promoted as a 'job-creating antidote to the country's pandemic-induced economic slump' was fiercely criticized for trashing environmental safeguards and exposing workers to greater exploitation (Kine 2020). Between March and August 2020, school closures affected 62.5 million Indonesian students from pre-primary to higher education. Despite efforts by the government to deploy online and other distance learning tools, the World Bank noted that technological solutions alone would have limited impact, given the country's large digital divide. 'Disadvantaged students,' the Bank observed, 'are likely to be the most impacted', with 'poorer children' likely to 'fall behind their wealthier peers who have better access to online learning' (Gupta and Khairina 2020).

In South Asia, disruption to schooling and the accompanying economic dislocation was widespread and prolonged, with severe consequences for poor, rural populations, and especially for women and girls. The United Nations estimated that nearly 600 million children in South Asia were affected by lockdowns imposed in March or April, and largely still in place by September (Menon 2020). India's National Commission for UNESCO issued a short paper detailing support for distance learning during lockdown, focusing primarily on resources for digital learning (INCCU 2020). Government figures indicated that fewer than a quarter of Indian households had

internet access, although radio and television had 'greater penetration'. However, the UN reported that 147 million South Asian children were unable to access any form of remote learning (Menon 2020). A significant gender divide in access to technology, with women's access to mobile phones often 'governed by male relatives', was just one factor threatening a serious reversal in gender equality as a result of school closures (Nikore 2020).

While the long-term implications of disruption to schooling as a consequence of COVID-19 remain unclear, they may thus be severe. Even the shorter lockdowns seen in East Asia may have significant effects on child welfare and inequality, given uneven internet access and other differences in family resources for supporting learning at home. However, what unfolded in South Asia during 2020 was a disaster for the educational prospects of already disadvantaged groups. Moreover, prolonged lockdowns there brutally exposed the malign consequences of South Asia's fashion for low-cost private schooling as an alternative to state provision. In early October 2020, the *Times of India* reported that, in the Indian state of Telangana alone, 'close to 10,000 private budget schools' were 'staring at closure and have approached the state government for a takeover' (Biswas 2020).

Does this mean that a thoroughgoing rethink of education policy is at hand - in South Asia, or elsewhere? And if so, what form is this likely to take? As discussed below, in India a significant reorientation of education policy, already in the pipeline before COVID-19 struck, was promulgated in the summer of 2020; it combines a chauvinist *Hindutva* agenda and enhancement of state control with a tighter embrace of marketization and technology. In East Asia, meanwhile, the Chinese authorities have deployed education to cement control over restive regions on the national periphery, from Hong Kong to Xinjiang. Direct causal links to Covid-induced disruption are hard to pin down. But there are signs that, in Asia's two most populous and powerful nations, the pandemic encouraged a heightening of authoritarian technocracy, and the further undermining of humane and sustainable approaches to education.

5. Challenges of instrumentalism and values

The 2017 *Rethinking Schooling* report identified 'instrumentalism' as a fundamental

challenge to education for peace, sustainable development and global citizenship across Asia (and beyond). Instrumentalism here indicates an emphasis on fostering human capital for economic growth and national aggrandisement, treating people essentially as tools for the pursuit of corporate or state-determined goals. The notion is captured by the famous image of a hapless Charlie Chaplain caught in the cogs of a giant machine in the 1936 film, *Modern Times*. And just as some observers in the 1930s associated fetishization of industrial technology with the totalitarianism of the five-year plan, so our intention was to draw attention to the manifold dangers of instrumentalist ethics for individuals and societies.

This implies not a blanket rejection of technology, but an insistence that it should serve and not subjugate humanity. In the midst of the Great Depression of the 1930s, the American sociologist Lewis Mumford warned that 'to perfect and extend the range of machines without perfecting and giving humane direction to the organs of social action and social control is to create dangerous tensions in the structure of society' (1934, 367). Surveying the history of 'technics' in Western societies, he argued that 'the machine came into our civilization not to save man from work, but... [to] make possible wider servitude to ignoble standards of consumption' (105-6). Hannah Arendt reached a similar verdict in her analysis of totalitarianism as 'the last stage in a process during which "science [has become] an idol that will magically cure the evils of existence and transform the nature of man"' (2017, 453). She lamented the alienating nature of a world where 'all human activities have been transformed into laboring' (2017, 624). Alienated and isolated individuals, she observed, were more susceptible to control through state-sponsored terror (623). Indeed, totalitarianism itself could be characterized as 'organized loneliness' (628), with totalitarian movements deriving power from their promise to individuals of an escape from their isolation (627). Our contemporary world of rampant marketization, social insecurity and authoritarian populism offers disturbing echoes of this dystopian vision - echoes amplified by the Covid crisis. Far from liberating humanity, technology has long since helped transform us all, including elites, into entrepreneurs of the self, exploiters of our own human capital.

A more optimistic perspective on the transformative potential of technology was offered in the 1930s by John Maynard Keynes. Keynes prophesied that advances in productivity brought about by technology would mean that, by 2030, the wealth

generated by the global economy would be sufficient to release humanity from the traditional 'struggle for subsistence' (Keynes 1963, 360; quoted in Susskind 2020, 148). Keynes was essentially correct concerning the trajectory of global growth and rising productivity (Susskind 2020, 149). However, the distributive impact of meritocracy, combined with neoliberal market fundamentalism, have thwarted his prediction that this wealth would lead to shared 'economic bliss'.

The result is increasing global disparities in wealth, allied to technology-driven labour market polarization. Markovits portrays America as increasingly polarized between 'glossy' and 'gloomy' jobs - the former occupied by highly-educated elites, the latter by everyone else (2019, 156-194). A middle tier of semi-skilled, modestly-remunerated occupations has been 'hollowed out', with 'deskilling' rendering workers either redundant or subservient to management-by-algorithm.³⁾ Asia has participated in this trend, with technology-assisted globalization enabling large-scale outsourcing to Asian countries with relatively cheap labour costs, South Asia's call-centre industry being a case in point. This has brought significant benefits in terms of poverty alleviation and social mobility. But further advances in automation promise to make such outsourcing a way-station on the road to ultimate redundancy for many workers (Susskind 2020). Meanwhile, a narrow cadre of highly-educated elites, in Asia as in the West, corners the market for increasingly specialized superordinate roles in sectors such as finance, management, the law and technology itself.

The costs involved are to be gauged not only in terms of spiraling socio-economic inequality. An instrumentalist vision of education-as-human-capital-generation, allied to a narrowly technocratic outlook, diminishes or dismisses values intrinsic to the fulfilling life. What is consequently lost or neglected is eloquently summarized by Mumford:

Life, from the very moment of birth on, requires for its fulfillment goods and services that are usually placed in the department of "luxuries." Song, story, music, painting, carving, idle play, drama - all these things lie outside the province of animal necessities: but they are not things which are to be included after the belly is satisfied: they are functions which must be included in human existence even to satisfy the belly, to say nothing of the emotional and intellectual and imaginative needs of man. To put these functions at a distance, to make them the goal of an acquisitive life, or to accept only so much of them as can be canalized into

3) Markovits provides a profoundly disturbing account of the way in which Amazon deploys algorithms to manage and monitor the performance of its warehouse employees (2019, 172-3).

machine goods and sold as a profit - to do this is to misinterpret the nature of life as well as the possibilities of the machine (1934, 395).

A combination of meritocratic ideology and vested interests has fueled precisely such a 'canalisation' or commodification. Occupations whose 'outputs' cannot readily be monetized have been devalued, and leisure itself stigmatized, as 'honour' is associated exclusively with labour (Markovits 2019, 186). And this has happened even as technology has transformed labour, restricting opportunities for intrinsically fulfilling or meaningful work to an ever narrower minority.

Rather than prompting a reconsideration of the instrumentalist, human capital orientation in education, the COVID-19 crisis appears to have led many governments to double down. This is not a trend peculiar to Asia. In Australia, for example, reforms were announced in June 2020 that proposed lowering fees for university courses considered 'job-relevant', while raising costs for some humanities courses (Sears and Clark 2020). The British government has cited the Covid crisis in support of its own push towards vocationalisation in education, while banning the use in schools of material from organizations with 'a publicly stated desire to abolish... capitalism' (Busby 2020).

Here, though, Western policymakers are playing catch-up with many Asian counterparts, who have long adopted a strongly instrumental focus on STEM, and a highly statist vision of education's purposes. Japan, for example, has in recent years intensified an already extreme bias in public spending on higher education towards STEM, to the detriment of the social sciences and humanities (Vickers 2020). Determination to tighten state control over the educational and research agenda was further indicated in early October, 2020, by an unprecedented government move to veto the appointment of six professors in social science and humanities disciplines to the prestigious Science Council of Japan. The Council's mission is to protect academic freedom and, by extension, freedom of expression in society more broadly. All six of the vetoed academics had previously voiced criticism of government policy (Kakuchi 2020).

The link between educational instrumentalism and authoritarianism is far starker elsewhere in Asia. In its pursuit of the 'four modernizations', China's Communist

Party long since abandoned egalitarianism, instead interpreting 'scientific socialism' as the fulfillment of 'objectively' determined, state-mandated economic or strategic goals (Vickers 2009). Following the Cultural Revolution, a return to elitism and meritocracy was seen as crucial to nurturing the technocratic vanguard that would construct a strong, modern nation (Vickers and Zeng 2017, Chapter 2). Under Xi Jinping, the Party has raised the banner of science higher still, promoting a 'Made in China 2025' campaign aimed at developing hi-tech industry, while simultaneously tightening restrictions on civil liberties and freedom of speech - with Covid occasioning a further turn of the screw (see below). In China, 'science' is invoked to silence debate by presenting government diktat as incontrovertible truth.

In Asia's largest democracy, too, 2020 witnessed moves to harness education to the further entrenchment of authoritarian technocracy. In July, the Government of India issued a new *National Education Policy* (NEP), promptly slammed on the front cover of *Frontline* magazine as 'a deadly cocktail of the Hindutva agenda and the World Bank model of knowledge prepared to suit the needs of corporate job markets'. A former Dean of Delhi University's Department of Education noted that the policy's 'guiding principles' invariably prioritized 'duties', discipline and social order over rights, equity or justice, as in this extract:

'- ethics and human and constitutional values like empathy, respect for others, cleanliness, courtesy, democratic spirit, spirit of service, respect for public property, scientific temper, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equity and justice' (NEP p. 5, quoted in Rampal 2020).

Despite the Covid-induced crisis in low-cost private schooling, the NEP envisages further involvement of private or 'philanthropic' actors in educational provision, calling for state schools to be 'paired' with private counterparts to enable sharing of 'best practices' (Prasad 2020, 6). The government was criticized for failing to commit 'to a common school system based on neighborhood schools for all children, irrespective of socio-economic status' (Sadgopal 2020, 13). Calls in the NEP to enhance the use of technology in education and to expand online education and training for teachers were attacked for ignoring 'India's digital divide' and pandering to corporate interests (Narayanan 2020, 17).

Krishna Kumar (former head of India's National Council for Educational Research and Training, and lead coordinating author of our 2017 *Rethinking Schooling* report) echoes some of these criticisms, drawing attention particularly to what he saw as the impoverished vision of education underpinning the new policy. He reserves special condemnation for the stipulation that some students could henceforth be diverted earlier into a vocational stream:

'Letting vocational opportunities be introduced from Class 6 runs the risk of resuscitating entrenched hierarchies, especially at a time when unemployment might be high, traditional livelihoods are under severe strain and the mindless adoption of new technologies is deskilling people' (quoted in Trivedi 2020, 19).

Kumar also notes how, with respect to education's distributional role, the NEP envisages extending rather than reforming the long-established system of high-stakes public examinations. These date back to the era of colonial rule, when examinations served as tools of political and social control (Kumar 2013), leading Kumar to remark that 'the NEP presses old remedies into service' (quoted in Trivedi 2020, 19). However, these exams 'handle and hide social disparities... by upholding the regime of merit' (20). As for the knowledge that these examinations will test, he criticizes the 'curricular minimalism' of the NEP, which envisages a bare-bones focus on literacy and numeracy for most students. The overall vision amounts, he says, to 'the judging by outcomes of a curtailed curriculum' (19).

In India, then, the Covid crisis has provided the backdrop for reforms to education policy that promise to exacerbate meritocracy-fueled inequality, in a context where inequality has already substantially worsened as a direct result of the pandemic. The Indian formula differs significantly from China's in the extent of its embrace of the market, undermining even the appearance of equity. However, in its statist logic, instrumentalist vision and appeals to the promise of science and technology - if not in its overtones of religiosity - the NEP strongly echoes East Asian developmental statism. Similarly, the emphasis on duty and discipline over rights and freedom, backed up by nationalist appeals to purportedly unique ethical traditions, is reminiscent of China's authoritarian nationalism. Even as Indian troops confronted their Chinese counterparts along the Himalayan frontier in the summer of 2020, India's newly-minted education policy thus paid a back-handed compliment to its giant Asian neighbor.

6. Challenges of nationalism and weak regionalism

The second category of 'challenges' identified in our 2017 report, of 'nationalism and weak regionalism', are closely related to those of 'instrumentalism and values'. A vision of citizens as 'human capital' or 'human resources' by implication takes the individual not as an end in herself, but as a tool for fulfillment of some external goal - typically defined in economic, military and, ultimately, national terms. It is significant that India's NEP was promulgated by the 'Ministry of Human Resource Development', which replaced the old Ministry of Education in 1985 at the outset of India's long dalliance with Washington Consensus neoliberalism. But the habit of viewing citizens as 'resources' for national development, and education as an exercise in maximizing their efficient deployment, is deeply ingrained across much of Asia.

Highlighting the connection between state-centred nationalism and dehumanizing instrumentalism does not imply disparagement of patriotism as such, but reminds us to pay attention to its ethical and political content. As we wrote in 2017, 'emphasizing the importance of going beyond national identity does not mean denying the importance of nation-states as institutions, nor of the sense of belonging and mutual regard that they promote and embody' (UNESCO-MGIEP 2017, 210). Indeed, the COVID-19 crisis has underlined the importance of societal cohesion buttressed by a broadly shared sense of identity and shared values. This accounts, at least in part, for the comparative success of South Korea, Japan and Taiwan in coordinating responses to the pandemic without resort to stringent lockdowns. Vietnam's effective campaign against Covid featured rather more explicit appeals to patriotism, with militaristic allusions to past struggles against foreign invaders (Nguyen 2020). China's successful campaign to contain the virus was also conducted under the banner of patriotism, but as justification for a strategy of intensive surveillance and punitive enforcement that recalls Hannah Arendt's description of totalitarianism as 'organized isolation'.

The utility of patriotism in a moment of national crisis should not obscure the ease with which loyalty to the group can tip over into chauvinism and xenophobia - a pattern disturbingly in evidence across much of Asia during the Covid crisis. In June 2020, Japan's deputy prime minister, Aso Taro, opined that the nation's relatively low death rate from the coronavirus reflected the superior 'level' of the Japanese

population, deploying an archaic term, *mindō*, associated with the fascist regime of the 1930s and 1940s (Yoshī 2020). Invoking purportedly unique national characteristics in this way was widely condemned within Japan, but is consistent with the educational agenda of the nationalist right. Since the early 2000s, Japanese nationalists have successfully pushed for enforcement of patriotic education in schools, stricter censorship of history textbooks, and the enshrining of moral education as an assessed component of the compulsory curriculum (UNESCO-MGIEP 2017, 78-89).

Across Asia (and worldwide), the fight against COVID-19 both drew on and fueled nationalistic sentiment through invidious comparisons with other nations. Pakistan, for example, trumpeted its relative success - by comparison with India - in containing the virus (The Economist 2020b). For its part, China quickly sought to present COVID-19 as a 'win' for one-party autocracy, with President Xi declaring that 'the pandemic once again proves the supremacy of the socialist system with Chinese characteristics' (quoted in Rachman 2020). In effect, the CCP spent the latter half of 2020 performing a victory lap for a 'China model' that asserts the virtues of meritocracy-based hierarchy over democratic equality (Bell 2015; Bell and Wang 2020). In late September, the Education Ministry ordered that China's success in combatting the coronavirus be incorporated into the school curriculum for 'Thought and Politics'. It explained that this would reinforce appreciation of the 'advantages of the system of socialism with Chinese characteristics' and contribute to education in 'the four forms of self-confidence' (*si ge zixin*) (MOE 2020). The framing of the pandemic response in such terms threatens to inject further bitterness into global diplomacy, complicating efforts to achieve transnational collaboration over other shared threats (such as global heating). And indeed, the lack of international trust and collaboration in the early stages of the viral outbreak can be seen as key to enabling its spread.

Within nations, as well as internationally, the pandemic has fueled tension, with a UN Special Rapporteur lamenting 'the scapegoating of minorities' as well as a deteriorating outlook for migrants and refugees (UN 2020b). Here again, education's role in propagating homogenous and totalizing visions of national identity, often premised upon distorted narratives of historical victimhood, fertilizes the soil in which inter-communal tension can thrive. In both India and China, the brunt of

stringent coronavirus lockdowns was borne by rural-urban migrants, drawn, in the Indian case, overwhelmingly from underprivileged low caste or minority populations (Rozelle et al., 2020; Khanna 2020). And in both countries, 2020 saw the ramping up of ongoing campaigns to suppress ethnic and religious minorities, and to clamp down on political opposition.

China's government was already engaged in a sweeping project of incarceration and 're-education' directed at the Muslim Uyghurs of Xinjiang. During 2020, this was further extended, signaling a broader shift away from the long-established Communist adherence to a multi-ethnic, pluralist vision of 'Chineseness'. As the new school year began in September, protests erupted in Inner Mongolia following the introduction of Chinese-language textbooks in place of those in Mongolian (Wu 2020). This marked just the latest stage in a recentralization of textbook production begun in 2017, but the unheralded suppression of texts in minority languages came as a shock to locals in previously quiescent Inner Mongolia. Official adoption of an unapologetically Han-centric vision of Chinese identity was further indicated by Chinese attempts to censor a planned exhibition on Genghis Khan in the French city of Nantes (AFP 2020), testifying to ongoing efforts to extend CCP propaganda activities overseas (Hamilton and Ohlberg 2020).

At the southern end of China, the early months of the COVID-19 pandemic coincided with a crackdown on opposition in Hong Kong, involving stringent new controls on education. In May, controversy erupted over a public examination question that asked students to consider positive as well as negative aspects of Japan's influence on China in the early 20th century; the government retrospectively cancelled the offending question after students had sat the examination. The National Security Law (NSL), introduced the following month, included restrictions on free speech within local classrooms and in the media. In October, a primary school teacher was deregistered for designing a lesson on the topic of free speech that invited students to discuss the controversy over calls for Hong Kong's independence. The lesson in question had actually occurred in March 2019, over a year before the introduction of the NSL (Ewing 2020). Meanwhile, local pro-Beijing politicians initiated a witch-hunt against local teachers suspected of harbouring separatist or dissident opinions, and Hong Kong's Education Bureau busied itself organizing training programs to ensure strict compliance with the new law (Lau 2020).

Similarly intensified encroachments on civil liberties, freedom of expression and minority rights were in evidence elsewhere in Asia during the COVID-19 pandemic - not least in India. The BJP's election victory in 2019 had been followed by the abolition of autonomous status for the Muslim-majority state of Kashmir, and imposition of direct rule from Delhi. 2020 began with mass demonstrations in many Indian cities against a controversial law making religion, for the first time, a basis for Indian citizenship. While that measure 'fast-tracks asylum claims of non-Muslim irregular immigrants' from neighboring countries, the separate introduction of a 'National Population Register' and a proposed 'National Register of Citizens' threaten to deny citizenship to existing Muslim residents by forcing them to prove their status (Human Rights Watch 2020). The consequent widespread protests were brought to a sudden halt in March by the Covid-induced lockdown and associated restrictions on public gatherings and freedom of movement.

With these restrictions still in force, the BJP government took further steps to promote its Hindu nationalist agenda through education. The NEP, promulgated in July, emphasizes the importance of teaching Sanskrit at all levels of the education system, but makes no mention of Urdu (the medium for the high culture of Muslim India). Japanese, Korean and Thai are named as foreign languages to be taught in the nation's schools, but Mandarin Chinese is omitted (Rajalakshmi 2020, 16). The document is suffused with paeans to India's distant past, but lacks 'any reference to the medieval period [when Muslim kingdoms ruled northern India] and its contribution to knowledge systems' (17). The 'underlying politics' of the NEP, writes Rajalakshmi, is revealed in a long paragraph 'on the glory of ancient India where everything was picture perfect and "seamless accessible knowledge" was available to all' (14-15). Here ancient Hindu civilization is portrayed as prefiguring the technologically-enabled information networks of the 21st century. Meanwhile, the *Hindutva* agenda took more concrete form during the summer of 2020 as construction of a temple to the Hindu deity Lord Ram commenced in Ayodhya, on the site of a mosque demolished by BJP supporters in 1992.

Nationalism, long propagated and reinforced through education, thus both conditioned responses to the pandemic across much of Asia, and derived a further boost from it. Epidemics have often fueled bigotry and xenophobia: in 14th century Europe, Jews were widely blamed for the Black Death, and thousands were massacred

in vicious pogroms (Cohn 2012). Disease can also bring societies together, as Covid seems to have done in the societies of Northeast Asia. Much depends on how people are predisposed to view their fellow citizens and their own place in the world. But the construction of a strongly unifying national consciousness, while an asset in crisis management within state borders, can prove a liability for achieving the transnational collaboration necessary to managing global pandemics, or preventing them in the first place. The upsurge of chauvinism that has accompanied the Covid crisis provides little reassurance that education systems will help temper patriotism with the consciousness of our shared humanity needed to underpin concerted global action.

7. Challenges of competitiveness and regimentation

A shared sense of identity and civic purpose is indispensable to the political health of modern societies. But it can also become a tool for confining or restricting the search for human fulfillment, channeling it in directions ordained by powerful elites. The American sociologist Thorstein Veblen, writing during the First World War, attributed that conflict to efforts by a 'feudalistic' ruling cast to exploit 'the servile patriotism of the common man' in order to achieve 'national aggrandizement' - thereby legitimating and extending their own political control (Veblen 1915; see Vickers 2009). The 'greatly enhanced facilities for indoctrinating the populace with militant nationalism' offered by modern systems of schooling enabled mass regimentation, fostering collective devotion to the competitive enhancement of national prestige (Veblen 1917, 21).

Mumford, for whom Veblen was a key inspiration, went further in arguing that 'regimentation' was 'the soil in which the machine could grow' (1934, 41). By this he meant that a culture of subordination of the individual in army, factory or office was key to imposing the routines consistent with increasingly mechanized approaches to production and administration. At the same time, he lamented a consequent 'quantification of life' and 'concentration on power as an end in itself' (85). This amounted, he wrote, to 'a growing contempt for life: for life in its variety, its individuality, its natural insurgence and exuberance' (85).

In the 2017 UNESCO-MGIEP report, we took a correspondingly grim view of the

relationship between education, regimentation and competition in many Asian societies - but was this overstated? The COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted advantages enjoyed by relatively orderly, disciplined societies - such as those of East Asia - where citizens are disposed obediently to follow guidelines over social distancing and mask wearing. Moreover, an emphasis on regimentation can be interpreted more positively as reflecting a recognition - often absent from the skills-obsessed discourse of the OECD or of many Western policymakers - of the important socializing function of schooling. In Japan, for example, reluctance to experiment with online learning during the early months of the pandemic, and the prioritizing of the rapid reopening of schools, was attributable in part to the conviction that education is as much about socialization as it is about transmission of skills (although Japan, too, has witnessed a shift towards greater use of online learning tools as a result of the pandemic).

This stress on socialization is linked to the insistence on uniform resourcing of education noted by Kariya and Rappleye in their study of Japanese meritocracy (Kariya and Rappleye 2020). However, they perhaps underplay the influence of the country's militaristic past on postwar approaches to education's socializing role. The educational institutions and practices introduced during the Meiji period (1868-1913) were suffused by an ethos both profoundly militaristic and unabashedly elitist. The postwar system broke with elitism and militarism, instead embracing egalitarianism and pacifism. But intense regimentation has remained a hallmark of Japanese schooling and society. The crushing overwork that Markovits associates with the 'superordinate elites' of meritocratic America today has long been the common lot of the Japanese salariat. Uniformity extends to shared subjection to a regime of absurdly long hours exemplifying the 'contempt for life' Mumford associates with the 'machine age'. This reflects the trade-off Kariya and Rappleye posit between equality and 'freedom for the emergence of individual differences' - but Japanese education's role in suppressing individuality is a factor not just of bureaucratic convenience, but of an entrenched insistence on individual subordination to national or corporate goals.

That insistence is even more pronounced in China, whose combination of elitist meritocracy and strict regimentation, with militaristic overtones, is more reminiscent of pre-war than post-war Japan. Whereas the Korean, Japanese and Taiwanese responses to COVID-19 arguably testified to the success of schooling in underpinning

trust and solidarity, the Chinese authorities place less faith in the power of socialization alone. The Communist Party's enthusiasm for technology is attributable largely to appreciation of its potential for reinforcing control through surveillance. Even before the pandemic struck, a massive deployment of surveillance technology had transformed Xinjiang into a massive 'open-air digital prison'; cameras installed on campuses and in classrooms were extending the capacity of the authorities to monitor teaching; and mobile phone location tracking was widely used by the security services (Schell 2020). The sophisticated surveillance tools already developed for other purposes proved highly effective in contact tracing and quarantine enforcement during the Covid lockdown. But to the extent that the pandemic further legitimated the use of such technology, in China and beyond, it established a potentially dangerous precedent (Doffman 2020). The 'Brave New World' hailed by the OECD's enthusiasts for technology profoundly threatens our liberty (OECD 2018).

Technology certainly allowed teaching and learning to continue through the pandemic in some form, for some students, but with implications for educational inequality, and quality. The importance of qualifications to life chances intensifies pressure on governments to ensure continued provision of education, and many responded in 2020 by rapidly expanding the use of digital learning tools. Rozelle et al., (2020) report that use of online learning during lockdown even in rural areas of China was as high as 71%. However, they attach the significant caveat that this figure tells us nothing about the 'quality' of the online experience, and note that more research is needed to establish the implications of this massive online experiment for educational equity. In some areas, the shift to online teaching involved a mixture of lectures from 'the most well-known teachers in the province' and follow-up classes taught by students' regular teachers (Strauss 2020). However, differences in students' home circumstances (such as the reliability of their internet connection and availability of a quiet space to study) meant that the overall effect of the shift to online classes was to exacerbate inequalities between wealthier and less-privileged students.

Another significant factor influencing the gap between educational 'haves' and 'have-nots' during the pandemic was access to online private tutoring. The widespread use of private tutoring, especially across East Asia, has long been seen as a symptom of intense credentialism (Arai 2016). Markovits notes how elites in

America have increasingly sought to cram their offsprings' waking hours with expensive, tailored educational support; across much of Asia, though, private tutoring has long been a mass phenomenon. The shift to online provision of private tutoring, already underway prior to the pandemic (for example, linking overseas English tutors with Asian students), greatly accelerated during 2020. In China, the lockdown of early 2020 hastened the closure of many small, local tutoring companies, in line with earlier government moves to tighten regulation and raise quality across the sector (Zhang 2019). Since companies capable of offering elaborate online content tend to be the largest, best-capitalized players, the pandemic also accelerated a concentration of the sector, rendering it more susceptible to regulation. The boost to demand for online private tutoring during 2020 also raised the salary levels offered to tutors by major providers. In September, a report found some online tutoring companies offering starting salaries as high as US\$70,000 to graduates from top universities (Zou 2020). Unsurprisingly, graduates from the prestigious universities surveyed were found to be more likely to take jobs with private online tutoring companies than with regular state schools.

More research is needed to ascertain the extent of such shifts of teaching talent from offline to online providers, and from the public to the private sector, but their implications for educational equity are cited as a major concern by the UN and other agencies (UN 2020, 6). One likely effect is to alter the pattern of inequality: with physical proximity to the provider less important, access to high quality private tutoring will be determined less by location than by wealth. A prosperous family in a small town will be more readily able to purchase the kind of tutorial provision available to their big city counterparts. As governments accelerate plans to extend internet connectivity, partly in response to COVID-19, the influence of socio-economic status on access to online learning may become more straightforward.

Improving connectivity and boosting the capacity of public schools to deliver online lessons, while useful in supporting educational provision in an emergency, will thus not solve the fundamental problem of competitive intensity and inequality. The demand for private tutoring is driven by credentialism, which is in turn fueled by the rewards and penalties attendant upon success or failure in the race for qualifications. As in any arms race, the players constantly seek to take the struggle for advantage into fresh territory; technology alters the terms of the competition, but not the

competitive dynamic itself. And what powers that dynamic, the driving force behind the seemingly inexorable intensification of educational competition, is insecurity.

Insecurity weaves competitiveness and regimentation into a matrix of socio-political control. At first sight, it may seem paradoxical to link 'competition' to 'regimentation', since the former involves distinguishing individuals from each other, while the latter implies suppression of individual differences. However, examination-focused competition can actually reinforce conformity. Especially in systems where assessment is focused overwhelmingly on mastery of a relatively narrow, uniform curriculum, competition for credentials effectively functions as a test of the individual's willingness and ability to conform. This imperative is sometimes made explicit through rhetoric portraying educational competition as a collective duty. In China, just as state leaders have deployed military metaphors in outlining national plans for education, so teachers often use similar language when drilling their students for key examinations (Vickers and Zeng 2017, 35; Kipnis 2011). In rallying their juvenile troops, teachers can invoke the dire consequences of defeat, especially in societies where public welfare provision is threadbare. Revealingly, a frustrated Chinese teacher featured in the 2015 BBC documentary *Are our kids tough enough? Chinese School* attributes the ill-discipline of her British students to what she sees as an overly generous UK welfare system.

Insecurity also exerts a powerful influence on national policies and the narratives that frame them. The early pursuit of 'catch-up' modernization in Japan and China, conducted under the shadow of imperialism or colonialism, was informed from the outset by Spencerian notions of the 'survival of the fittest' (Zhao 2016). Although educators and many social commentators have increasingly lamented the competitive intensity of education in the early 21st century, contradictions persist between the aspiration to promote a more caring, collectivist ethos, and the reality of pressures on teachers to prioritize preparation for high stakes public examinations (Arai 2016; Zhao 2016, 20). And these contradictions are traceable to the beliefs that continue to underpin national policy. In China, despite much public hand-wringing over the test-oriented nature of education and the competitive burden on students, the government's 2010 framing document for education policy over the following decade shows that 'the basic assumption about the purpose of education remains unchanged... [to] serve the purpose of promoting economic development and enhancing national

competitiveness in the global economic market' (Zhao 2016, 21).

A worldview coloured by Spencerian Social Darwinism alongside older notions of competitive meritocracy aligns neatly with the OECD's instrumentalist vision of education as human capital formation. Both the OECD's internationalist neoliberalism and Asian developmental statism take insecurity-fueled competition as a fundamental law of nature. PISA's league tables and nationalist ideologues alike frame international competition as meritocracy writ large; with reference to the Opium War, Chinese students are told that 'not studying leads to backwardness, and backwardness leads to getting beaten' (cited in Vickers 2009, 70). More widely across Asia, from BJP-ruled India to Thailand or from Myanmar to Indonesia, many governments seek to promote the idea that disciplined focus on the competitive nurturing of one's own human capital is a patriotic imperative, while opposing or criticizing government policy is a dereliction of civic duty.

However, the COVID-19 crisis has highlighted the unsustainability of educational regimes that demand regimented diligence from students, but cannot deliver broadly shared security and dignity in return. Meritocracy is riddled with injustice at the best of times, but when inequality is turbocharged by mass school closures, and labour market disruption blights youth prospects, the illusion of fairness wears very thin. Technical adjustments to the mechanisms for delivering education are incapable, on their own, of rendering the system just, and will do nothing to moderate the fierce competitive intensity that distorts learning and cramps lives. For that we need to look beyond schooling itself to the social, political and cultural context in which it is embedded.

8. Education and our post-pandemic challenge: security, justice and dignity for all

'What then! do you think the old practice, that "they should take who have the power, and they should keep who can," is less iniquitous, when the power has become power of brains instead of fist? and that, though we may not take advantage of a child's or a woman's weakness, we may of a man's foolishness?' (Ruskin 2015 (1864), 26-7)

The work of the radical British art critic, John Ruskin, was a major influence on the Indian independence leader and social reformer, M. K. Gandhi. Convinced by Ruskin's scathing critique of the 'science' of political economy, Gandhi embraced the idea of a 'moral economics' as one 'which nourishes the greatest number of noble and happy human beings' (Guha 2013, 174-5). Rejecting the notion that the professional or monied classes had a greater claim on dignity than farmers or labourers, he held that 'to work with one's hands, and on the land, was more honourable than working with one's brains or with the aid of machines' (175). We need not embrace wholesale the romanticism of Ruskin or Gandhi to recognize the force of their insight that the unrestrained competitive pursuit of economic growth is both unsustainable and ethically hollow.

Growth-oriented economic competitiveness is implicated in a pandemic more pervasive even than COVID-19: the disease of meritocracy-fueled inequality. This denies dignity to a growing swathe of humanity by 'concentrat[ing] advantage and then fram[ing] disadvantage in terms of individual defects of skill and effort, of a failure to measure up' (Markovits 2019, 187-188). Moreover, it universalizes insecurity, subordinating everyone to a regime of inveterate competition-through- education in the name of economic necessity.

The costs of this epidemic of competitiveness are to be measured not just in distributive inequality, but also in profound alienation and social fragmentation. COVID-19 dramatized this by presenting us with the vision of millions of learners, isolated from each other and from their teachers, separately accessing information online. The idea that learning can be reduced to the individualized transmission of skills, all with the aim of maximizing 'human capital', represents the apotheosis of the machine and the collapse of a humane conception of education. This feels like a final manifestation of the mechanized dystopia foreseen by critics of modernity from Ruskin onwards. In the words of Mumford,

'To substitute... the dissected corpse for the living body, dismantled units called "individuals" for men-in-groups, or in general the mechanically measurable or reproducible for the inaccessible and the complicated and the organically whole, is to achieve a limited practical mastery at the expense of truth and of the larger efficiency that depends on truth' (Mumford 1934, 50-51).

Hannah Arendt warned that mass alienation can lead to totalitarianism conceived as 'organized isolation', but totalitarianism stands at one extreme of a diverse spectrum. In the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic, several Asian societies offered timely and largely positive illustrations of education's importance in inculcating the trust and solidarity necessary to containing the spread of disease. At the same time, instances of nationalist tub-thumping and interference with freedom of expression served as reminders of how emphasis on shared values and identity can tip over into chauvinism and xenophobia. In India, for example, the BJP has sought to further an agenda of technological modernism and ethnocultural nationalism as far removed as imaginable from Gandhi's vision.

The spectre of chauvinism should serve as a warning against simplistic attempts to dichotomise 'East' and 'West'. This paper deals specifically with Asia because that is its prescribed remit, but the division between Europe and Asia is essentially artificial, distorting or concealing deeper Eurasian commonalities (Goody 2006). In the context of Covid, both Europe and Asia supply examples of countries that have been relatively successful in containing the virus, and others that have been far less so; there are no generalized 'Eastern' or 'Western' approaches to viral containment. More fundamentally, as Ruskin's influence on Gandhi illustrates, the circulation of ideas between 'West' and 'East' has always been complex and multidirectional. Modernity itself is not an exclusively Western invention, nor should critiques of modernity be sought exclusively beyond 'the West'.

We should therefore beware of prophets using the COVID-19 pandemic to preach the demise of 'Western modernity' and the superiority of equally stereotyped or vague 'Asian' models. Such tendencies have already emerged in discussions of the relationship between education, culture and climate change. The Chinese government has proclaimed a vision of 'ecological civilization' that contrasts 'harmonious' Chinese unity between man and nature with an instrumentalist, exploitative 'Western' ethos. The attempt to contrast rapacious 'Western modernity' with holistic non-Western wisdom both draws upon and is echoed by Western postcolonialist scholarship (see Silova et al., 2018; Vickers 2018). However, unsustainable exploitation of the environment in fact has a long history in China (Elvin 2004), which today is the world's largest emitter of greenhouse gases. The

concept of eco-civilization 'implies no ecological revolution' and 'largely ignores the environmental risks inherent in continued global growth dependency' (Hansen et al., 2018, 202). This rhetoric serves above all to glorify an essentialised vision of Chinese culture while legitimating the authoritarian CCP regime and its developmental agenda.⁴⁾

The lessons we derive from the COVID-19 pandemic should emphasize what unites us rather than divides us. Global collaboration in the development and delivery of vaccines can serve as a model and metaphor for the transnational collaboration necessary to tackle a range of other crises, climate change included. And that collaboration should extend to the pursuit of approaches to education capable of helping to inoculate humanity against social disintegration, conflict and environmental collapse.

But we must avoid the mistake of seeing education, on its own, as the master tool for remaking society. Rethinking schooling is not enough; we must rethink the socio-economic models that schooling serves, moving away from winners-take-all competition. A humane approach to education will remain elusive so long as we persist in ignoring the malign potential of schooling, both as a vehicle for inculcating chauvinism, and as a cog in the machinery of competitive meritocracy. While seeking entirely to eliminate competition from our education systems would be wrong and foolish, we must recognise the dehumanising consequences of meritocratic fundamentalism. Treating fellow citizens merely as bundles of 'skills' to be evaluated for their productive capacity is perverse and degrading. It punishes misfortune, stokes elitism, and incentivises unsustainable economic behaviour.

Whatever we make of his specific recommendations for 'participatory socialism', including construction of a 'norm of educational justice', Thomas Piketty is therefore right to propose a multi-pronged approach to addressing the curse of inequality. Debating education in isolation from its socio-economic and political context is pointless. We cannot leach the poison of competitive intensity from our education systems without embarking on a larger project of societal transformation. As Piketty argues, this will necessitate, *inter alia*, a major shift towards progressive taxation

4) The concept of 'ecological civilization' (shengtai wenming) is cited in the Education Ministry's September 2020 directive on incorporating material on the coronavirus into the school curriculum for Thought and Politics (MOE 2020). Thus China's efforts to contain the virus were also framed by a narrative claiming superiority for the nation's purportedly unique ethical heritage.

(with transnational collaboration on corporate taxation), state-coordinated measures to diffuse wealth, some form of land reform (involving the public capture of unearned landed wealth), and a means of taxing carbon emissions (2020, 966-1031).

With COVID-19 rampaging across the USA in March 2020, an article in the *New Yorker* drew conclusions, expressed as questions, echoing some of Piketty's prescriptions and those of our 2017 report:

Will we find a new approach to distributing resources—one in which society values people for their humanity, and not for what they produce...? Will we think of distance learning as a way to make education more accessible or as a way... to save money...? Might the shift prompt us to stop thinking of school as a place to warehouse children while their parents go to work, and start thinking of ways to engage children in learning? Will we emerge more atomized than ever before...—insuring that the new authoritarianism continues—or will we take care to create our public space anew?(Gessen 2020)

These are challenges that confront us not as Chinese, Indians, Europeans, Africans or Americans, but as humans confronting the post-pandemic world together. And for education in particular, the fundamental challenge is to remodel our societies so that learning can be experienced not as a source of division and alienation, but as intrinsic to human fulfillment, and a basis for our communal life.

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Race, gender, disability, and their intersections under the impact of COVID-19



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Race, gender, disability, and their intersections under the impact of COVID-19

Dina Kiwan

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic the world is facing in 2020 is having wide-ranging and intersecting impacts on the economy, health systems, educational systems, and our ways of life globally. In March 2020, we witnessed the largest ever school closures, spanning over 180 countries, implemented to curb the virulent spread of COVID-19. It has been estimated that 1.6 billion children and youth were out of school during this time (World Bank, 2020a) and whilst school systems have opened since September, there continue to be partial closures and uncertainty. The COVID-19 crisis is further compounding 'learning poverty' and reducing progress to meet SDG goals relating to education - SDG4 - to insure inclusive and equitable education.

It is extrapolated from the existing data that the global level of education will fall, and up to 7 million children could drop out of school due to the economic impacts of the COVID-19 (World Bank 2020a). These effects will be greater for those in poverty and in lower-income countries where access to online learning is likely to be more limited. According to World Bank simulations, knock-on effects will be reflected through a reduction in earnings, and that exclusion and inequality will be further exacerbated especially for those who are already marginalised, including girls, ethnic minorities, refugees, and persons with disabilities.

Ethnic minorities are at greater risk of catching COVID-19 and having ongoing negative health outcomes (Patel et al., 2020; Golestaneh et al., 2020), including more adverse mental health outcomes. The causes for these disparities are multifaceted and have been reflected and taken up by the Black Lives Matter movement. Health disparities are evident and access to a wide range of services has also been severely affected for persons with disabilities (World Bank, 2020b). For example, in the UK, 59% of deaths

were of persons with disabilities between March - July 2020 (Disability Rights UK 2020), and there has been a call for a COVID-19 inquiry by persons with disabilities; in addition the Shadow Secretary of State for Women and Equalities has called on the Equality Human Rights Commission (EHRC) to scrutinise how the government has broken the law with regards to the impact of Coronavirus on persons with disabilities. With regards to gender, whilst men are more vulnerable medically, with 70% of those dying from the virus being men (Polglase 2020), women are more affected by the political, economic and social consequences of COVID-19 (Al-Ali 2020). It is predominantly women who are the health carers in the front-line. There has also been increased domestic violence globally against women and girls (Bradbury Jones and Isham, 2020) - “a pandemic within a pandemic” (Evans et al., 2020); this is also the case for women and girls with disabilities (Humanity and Inclusion, 2020). LGBTQI+ persons are also at increased risk of violence, with organisations less able to provide resources and support (Younes, 2020). Also with lockdown, there has been a return to more traditional roles with women as primary carers with responsibility for children out of school, and their learning.

International organisations and initiatives, including UNESCO, UNICEF, World Bank and UNPRPD are advocating “building back better” to take account of existing exclusions and inequalities, and to reimagine societies and education. This requires international collaboration. Yet we are witnessing a securitisation and militarisation of COVID-19, with increased nationalism, authoritarianism and isolationism, as evidenced through border closures and nations competing to develop vaccines. This paper firstly examines the discourses and practices surrounding the securitisation and militarisation of COVID-19. This will be followed by examining the existing evidence base on the impact of pandemics on education, followed by emerging evidence relating to COVID-19. Finally, the paper explores the potential for education to address xenophobic nationalism and racism, gendered discrimination and discrimination by disability, through international research collaborations and practical initiatives.

2. Theoretical framings and practices of COVID-19: securitisation and militarisation

The intellectual history of ‘security’ has seen a shift from state-centred conceptions of

security post-World War II towards conceptions of security of the individual over the last 30 years - the concept of 'human security' (Kiwan 2019). Human security is people-centred and multidisciplinary in approach, in contrast to traditional conceptions of national or state security. Human security is considered to be a prerequisite for development, and is conceptualised as addressing two domains of threat: ongoing challenges such as hunger and disease, and more acute challenges such as conflict and natural disaster. The discourse of human security is often credited to the UNDP's Human Development report in 1994. It is this approach that underpins the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which calls on all countries to develop national frameworks to tackle all forms of poverty with interrelated strategies in a wide range of domains including education, health, hunger, gender equality, social protection, water, climate change and environmental protection. There have been critiques of the human security approach, notably that it provides a way for stronger states of the global north to intervene in lower and middle-income countries, and that it may exacerbate inequalities. On the other hand, it has been recognised that the concept of human security has enabled feminist contributions in security work which have been largely absent (Gasper and Gomez 2015). For example, the critique of the public-private divide and the legal void of the domestic sphere, (Okin 1989), and the gendered division of labour have been highlighted as contributing to vulnerability and marginalisation. The conditions of lockdown brought about with the COVID-19 pandemic has increased the isolation of women in the private sphere, making them more vulnerable to domestic violence. The intersections of gender with legal status, socio-economic status and disability further compound these vulnerabilities.

With the COVID-19 pandemic, arguably we are witnessing a re-invigoration and justification of state securitisation, with an accompanied militarisation and orientation towards the state and the securing its borders. External security agencies, such as the army, are typically deployed in response to large scale natural disasters (Godefroy 2020), although typically not in health. Yet globalisation illustrates the internal-external inter-relationships between external security agencies and the state, and now increasingly transnational challenges such as COVID-19 are framed as a security threat, where notions of defence and security are blurred (Future Globalist 2020).

State-centred security approaches stand in contrast to the person-centred security paradigm, notably with a concern for the most vulnerable, with a prevention-oriented

approach (Kiwan 2019). With increased state securitisation comes a trade-off with personal liberties and human rights. With regards to migration, whilst controlled migration is typically framed as a development resource, refugees are typically framed as a security threat. The pandemic is accentuating and exacerbating such discourses both politically and in the public imagination. For example, Trump's referral to COVID-19 as the Chinese flu, and the documented racism and violence towards Chinese and other Asian populations in the Global North illustrates this ill-informed xenophobia. There has also been a significant reduction in the processing of asylum claims during the pandemic. In the UK, for example, there has been a 40% reduction in asylum applications in 2020 (Refugee Council 2020).

Militarisation is arguably a twin organising principle and rhetoric alongside that of securitisation in the response to the COVID-19 crisis, regardless of the country's political regime. Giroux and Filippakou (2020) note that the language, in particular of right-wing politicians such as Trump "promote the increasing militarisation of language, public spaces, and bodies" (p.1), as evidenced in such metaphorical language and phrases as 'war-footing', 'mounting an assault' and a literal 'rallying of the troops' in some instances, as seen for example in the UK with the use of the army in operationalising the test and trace systems. The army has also in several countries, been used to build medical facilities, as well supporting the police in enforcement of COVID-19 measures. It is argued that there is a slippery slope into authoritarianism and the curtailing of rights in face of this pandemic threat. There is indeed empirical evidence that during conflict and heightened threat, the nation-state becomes restrictive with less scope for dissent or diverse views. There is an increased emphasis on the 'nation' and 'common values' (Ben-Porath, 2006; Kiwan 2013). Globally, we are witnessing the closure of borders, criminalisation of undocumented migrants blamed for spreading the virus, the need for the intervention of the police and the army, a politically-driven quarantining of 'enemies', and the return to traditional gendered roles for women in the home. UN High Commissioner for Human Rights, Michelle Bachelet has expressed concern, saying: "We have seen many States adopt justifiable, reasonable and time-limited measures. But there have also been deeply worrying cases where governments appear to be using COVID-19 as a cover for human rights violations, further restricting fundamental freedoms and civic space, and undermining the rule of law" (OHCHR, 2020). Giroux and Filippakou (2020) refer to this as an 'opportunistic' authoritarianism that is rationalised in terms of protecting public health. In practice

globally, there are curtailments of civil liberties with respect to freedom of movement, protest, freedom of the press, coupled with a heightened state of individual helplessness, and a public climate of further castigating and marginalising the already marginalised – persons with disabilities, immigrants, ethnic and religious minorities.

The securitisation and militarisation of a global public health issue – the COVID-19 pandemic becomes normalised. Liu and Bennett (2020) astutely point out, that “while the object of control is a 125-nanometer virus, targets of containment range from national territories to human bodies” (158). Based on their study of Mainland China and Hong Kong, they critique the constraint of the trade of medical products and the surveillance of individual citizens, as well as the imposition of borders between ‘residents’ and ‘non-residents’ (Liu & Bennett 2020). Whilst the security agencies may in some senses be productive bringing logistical and organisational capabilities, they may also become the state’s means to enforce brutal domestic measures.

Export restrictions and quarantines as public health measures however, give rise to spatial inequalities. Indeed, in the global south, lockdown measures are exacerbating extreme poverty and starvation, as is also the case for the poor in the global north. It is projected that up to 265 million people in the Global South may die of starvation (WFP 2020). The closure of schools for many children has deprived many children of at least one meal per day, and social distancing is not a possibility in refugees camps in Lebanon, favelas in Brazil, or informal settlements in Kenya for example (Al-Ali 2020).

Giroux and Filippakou (2020) use the term ‘pandemic pedagogy’ to describe the role played by the media and social media in stoking “political theatre, fractured narratives and racial hysteria (cf Butsch 2019). Pandemic pedagogy undermines the understanding of the complexity of social problems, similar to Ben-Porath’s (2006) notion of narrow citizenship, and simplistic patriotism in contexts of ‘war’.

As such, the role of education is central to understanding the global nature of the COVID-19 crisis we are all facing, and its multi-faceted impacts across education, health, economy, and how it illustrates the significant inequalities in our societies, challenging fundamental assumptions, systems and infrastructures.

3. Impact of pandemics on education: the existing evidence base

A report prepared for the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID) in March 2020 identified a number of educational impacts of disease outbreaks in general, drawing from the relatively small existing literature which mainly draws from the Ebola crisis in lower and middle income countries (LMICs). Despite this evidence gap, Hallgarten (2020) identifies a number of educational impacts which include: school closures, lack of at-home educational materials, diversion of resources and teachers, lack of teacher training during crisis, lack of school maintenance, reduced financial resources, psychological stress and fear of returning to school, and financial hardships with difficulties paying school fees. In addition, at a systems level, the progress of educational reform was impeded, examinations interrupted, and school drop-outs increased due to social distance policies decreasing class sizes.

It was also found that the effects of school closures on those who are already disadvantaged or marginalised are disproportionately affected. The poorest families were found to have family members who died (World Bank 2020a) and increased child exploitation and labour. The gendered nature of exacerbated marginalisation was evident with girls having less access to educational materials or online learning at home, higher rates of girls dropping out of school for caring responsibilities, as well as increased rates of sexual exploitation, sexual violence and teenage pregnancy of female pupils, with less access to sexual and reproductive health information. With regards to disability, Hallgarten (2020) notes an evidence gap in this regard. The evidence base on the increased marginalisation of those from ethnic and religious minorities is also scant. Of note, however, there was no empirical evidence that learning outcomes were negatively impacted as a result of Ebola (ACAPS 2016), in contrast to the simulated projections of the World Bank (2020a), as noted in the introduction.

The existing empirical data, although sparse, highlights a number of issues to take into account that should be considered in the educational response to COVID-19 (Hallgarten, 2020). Firstly, funding for education is rarely prioritised, as evidenced, for example by UNICEF's budget on Ebola, where 35% was spent on health, yet only 11% on education (UNICEF, 2017). Secondly, there was a lack of coordination across the different sectors, which can be exacerbated with a decentralised education structure. Thirdly, there has been little research on the support of at-home learning or the efficacy of on-line

learning. Fourthly, there should be greater collaboration and sharing of resources with educational emergencies initiatives and expertise. Finally, Hallgarten (2020) identifies stronger evidence for the success of more informal learning programmes that include psychosocial support.

What emerges from this review is that there was little research on the impact on the most marginalised pupils by gender, disability or race/ethnicity. Lessons learned would appear to be negligible, or at best, based on a slim evidence base. The next section of the paper explores some initial findings reported regarding the key challenges of COVID-19 with respect to marginalised populations, and critically considers how to build in resilience and what has been termed “building back better’ through international collaborations with respect to research-informed policies and practices in education.

4. Emerging evidence of educational challenges for marginalised populations by race, gender and disability

The range of impacts on education from COVID-19 are wide-ranging and intersecting with other sectors including health, immigration and the economy. As the OECD (2020) report on the impact of COVID-19 on education states, it is very clear that the pandemic “has not stopped at national borders” (p.4). Whilst it has affected everyone, the consequences for the most marginalised have been the most severe, exposing the many structural inequalities in educational systems worldwide. During lockdown, these inequalities ranged from lack of access to online education, to parental support needed to enable learning, and to the differential resources for teacher training and adapting learning resources. It has been extrapolated that the most marginalised – by race, socio-economic status, legal status, disability and gender are more likely to be negatively affected and fall behind, as well as being more likely to suffer from poor physical and mental health and also may be a greater risk of violence. Human Rights Watch (2020) in its submission on the impact of COVID-19 on children’s education in Africa to the African Committee of Experts on the Rights and Welfare of the Child identified many children receiving no education, for example in the Congo, and Madagascar, or no teaching as in Zambia, Kenya and the Central African Republic, or less learning through distance education, as in evidenced from Kenya and Morocco. Children living in countries in armed conflict will be doubly affected by the exacerbating effects on

pandemic school closures. Longer-term economic estimates project a decrease of up to 69% of current GDP on average per country, but these will be higher for lower and middle income countries, and those students already structurally discriminated against globally (OECD 2020; World Bank 2020a). Higher education has also been severely affected, with international student mobility severely curtailed due the closing of country borders. Universities have typically been struggling to ensure the safety of their campuses for face-to-face teaching, as well as facing significant challenges in shifts to online learning. Whilst economic benefits are used to justify the reopening schools and universities, the quality of the learning experience and the physical and mental health risks are a significant trade-off. Not only is education affected in the short-term, but it is important for us globally to prepare for the long-term impact of the pandemic on education. According to the OECD (2019), spending on education in 2016 across OECD was approximately 11% of public expenditure, and there is a real concern that the pandemic will divert funds away from education in the long-term, even though, it is estimated the sector of education will be the hardest hit (Edge Foundation 2020). Youth unemployment is expected to rise significantly; for example, in the UK, it is estimated that it could be rise as high as 2 million (Institute of Employment Studies 2020). The drop in international student mobility also has an impact on the budgets of universities, and in terms of the international student experience, students are missing out on the cultural benefits as well as the financial benefits of access to an internationalised job market (OECD 2020).

We have seen a rise in xenophobia in public attitudes in response to COVID-19. The Times Higher Education in March 2020, reports on researchers urging universities in Europe, North American and Australia to actively take steps to protect Asian students from COVID-19-related attacks (Times Higher Education 2020a). Incidents in the UK, the Netherlands, the US, Australia and Canada have reflected “anti-Asian-looking” attitudes and behaviours, where the rise on physical and verbal attacks includes those that “look Asian” - including both immigrants and native citizens. The rise in xenophobia in global pandemics is not a new phenomenon. This is reflected in language, for example, Trump’s labelling of COVID-19 as “Chinese Flu”, similar to the “Spanish Flu” of 1918 despite it being a global pandemic. It can be argued that associating an epidemic with ‘the other’ is a rhetorical device to promote fear of the other (Noel 2020), and ‘nationalise’ the response to COVID-19 through devices of securitisation and militarisation as elucidated early in this paper. Other forms of xenophobia are

manifested by sensationalised media reporting, bullying at work and school, suspending access to education and health of certain groups and mandatory COVID-19 testing applied only to migrants (The New Humanitarian 2020).

The United Nations General Assembly in its first COVID-19 related resolution emphasised the need for “full respect for human rights.. [with] no place for any form of discrimination, racism and xenophobia in the response to the pandemic” (UN General Assembly 2020). UNHCR (2020) highlights a range of issues which could lead to medium - longer term racial discrimination against racial or ethnic groups, including vaccine development, testing access, surveillance and tracking tools, and. Immigration policy and border control management.

The structural inequalities have been made clearly visible along raced and classed lines in the US context in the health context, where the poor without health insurance are at greater risk. Racism, discrimination and xenophobia has been further stoked up throughout the pandemic and legitimised by the dangerous xenophobic tweeting of President Trump claiming the “end of immigration” (Times Higher Education 2020b). It is especially critical that education budgets, especially in relation to equity and diversity initiatives are not cut, but in fact more strongly supported in the wake of COVID-19 challenges. Critically, inclusive teaching strategies and professional development opportunities are strongly needed at this time, more than ever. In addition, research into xenophobia and racism, is critical. One partnership, for example, launched by UNESCO is the AAPI COVID-19 Project at the Department of Sociology, Harvard University. The project examines how racism and xenophobia has impacted diverse communities and ethnic groups across a range of sectors, including education. The Black Lives Matter movement has highlighted even more the deep structural inequalities, racism and discrimination not only in the US, but more broadly in the West, including in the UK. There is a renewed urgency to addressing structural racism. This can be seen in the comments of the new UK teachers’ union head calling for institutional racism to be addressed (The Guardian 2020a).

In April 2020, up to 91% of students were out of school. UNESCO (2020) has estimated that there may be up to 11 million girls globally who may not return to school after the COVID-19 crisis. Whilst girls may be pressured to take up more caregiving in the home context, as well as being exposed to domestic violence, boys may be at increased risk of

disengaging with education and taking on work. According to UNESCO chief of section for education for inclusion and gender equality, it is imperative to learn from previous pandemics in order to address gender equality in these contexts (UNESCO 2020). Unfortunately, much of the data analysis on education impacts of COVID-19 have not been disaggregated by gender, and similarly initiatives and measures must be gender sensitive and informed by appropriate empirical evidence.

Whilst there have been improvements in gender equality over the last 30 years, there is widespread political concern that COVID-19 will result in significant setbacks of gender equality. For example, in the US context as well as in developing countries, more women work in social sectors, where the economy has significantly contracted. In addition, globally around 70% of health sector works are women and so more exposed to the virus (Word Bank, 2020c). Women are also more likely to work in informal sectors, and therefore have less access to social protection as well as lower pay (ILO 2018). Women also carry the burden for most of the housework (Fabrizio et al., 2020), and these compounded factors in the context of the pandemic as well as school closures are leading more women to leave work. Globally 25% of girls aged 15-19 are not employed or in education, compared to 10% of boys (UNICEF 2020b). The COVID-19 crisis has also seen some early evidence that there may be more female drop outs from school (ibid 2020b).

A number of international organisations advocate the importance of gender-sensitive policy development in the response, recovery and prevention efforts of COVID-19. However, the OECD (2020) notes that economic decision-making at global and national levels is moving quickly with insufficient attention to gender. It is argued that emergency responses need to be balanced with long-term development goals. Even for those in more privileged positions, including academics at universities, women are disproportionately carrying a greater burden in response to COVID-19. This is further exacerbated with intersecting systems of oppression including ethnicity, race, gender and dis/ability (Malisch et al., 2020). Higher education institutions must acknowledge and address gender and other intersectional inequalities that are exacerbated with COVID-19.

According to the World Health Organisation (WHO), approximately 15% of the world's population - 1 billion people live with disabilities. OHCR (2020) reports a

disproportionate impact in both institutional settings and within the community for persons with disabilities. The introduction in the UK of the Coronavirus Act has been controversial with calls of over 150 organisations including Disability Rights UK for it to be rescinded, as it gives powers to central government to curb the rights of persons with disabilities to care, education and mental health protection (Disability Rights UK 2020). With regards to education, persons with disabilities are less likely to enter education and more likely to drop out of education, and with COVID-19 this effect is likely to be exacerbated. There is a concern that online learning is not sufficiently inclusive, and also the inter-relationship of those with disabilities and poverty results in further discrimination and high risks of exclusion. In October 2020, almost 20% of children with special education needs in the UK are absent from school, according to government figures, due to problems with timetabling and infection control (The Guardian 2020b). In addition, school closures have led to a lack of support and protection structures (IDDC 2020).

5. The potential of international educational collaborations in research, policy and practice

Hallgarten's (2020) review of existing evidence on the impact of pandemics on education tells an important story. There has not been sufficient research and learning from experience from previous pandemics with Hallgarten highlighting four areas of evidence gaps with respect to research (Hallgarten 2020):

“The review found four particular evidence gaps: First, how distance learning materials can support learners who do not have access to family members with the skills or time to help them. Second, a gap in the use of screen or internet-enabled technologies to support alternative education. Third (and related), a gap in remote teacher training and development during school closures. Finally, the review analysed gender and equity issues but did not find any literature that explored disability. The education in emergencies literature has an emerging evidence base across all four themes within refugee education contexts, but has not yet learnt from or applied this evidence to disease outbreak situations.” (p.2-3).

A number of international organisations have produced reports with recommendations for governments. It will be important for the medium to long term, for these proposed recommendations to be empirically informed by research evidence. It is critically that national and international research funding bodies liaise to identify priorities for research in the field of education and marginalisation arising from COVID-19. For example, UNHCR (2020, 4) identifies a number of recommended actions, including that states should ensure that online learning does not exacerbate inequalities, and that there should be international collaborations through UNICEF to “bridge the digital divide”. It is proposed that this can be further supported through the development of “multiple learning solutions”, including “through television and radio classes, expansion on internet access and providing computers to children and youth facing racial discrimination”. The support of research to collect data on such interventions relating to remote learning is important in order to examine their degree of effectiveness among different communities. UNHCR (2020) also recommends that states should ensure food assistance programmes to target those children dependent on school meals. UNHCR (2020) identify a limited number of “promising practices” which include some governments increasing digital access through public-private partnerships with telecommunications companies to subsidize connectivity as in North Macedonia, or not charging costs for education costs as in Rwanda, Paraguay, South Africa and Jordan. There are also examples in Somaliland, Burkino Faso and Burundi where radios and digital cards for mobile phones are delivered to families in rural areas (UNICEF 2020). UNHCR (2020) also recommends that states and civil society promote solidarity and anti-discrimination through engagement and education, and create collaborative networks between governments, community and religious groups to promote dialogue and understanding in a range of sectors including education. One promising initiative includes The Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination against Women (CEDAW) which has set up peer-to-peer learning webinars in collaboration with Religions For Peace (CEDAW 2020).

6. Global Disability Initiative – UNPRPD Disability Inclusive Framework

The UN is playing a leading role in raising awareness at international policy levels, and the UN Partnerships on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) is working with a number of countries in conducting situational analyses to assess the nature and scale of the discrimination and exclusions for persons with disabilities, and developing

in partnership with these countries, a framework to promote and support the implementation of a disability-inclusive response and recovery from COVID-19. The Disability Under Siege Network¹⁾, is working with the UNPRPD, funded by the UK Arts and Humanities Research Council to develop an empirically-informed analytical framework to promote and support the implementation of a disability-inclusive response and recovery from COVID-19. The framework will be co-produced with disabled people, particular from the Global South, and the sectors of Health, Education, Economy/Employment, and Social/Community. The completed framework will be disseminated by the United Nations Partnership for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNPRPD) to governments, NGOs, Disabled People's Organisations, and other key stakeholders in the countries where UNPRPD is currently running programmes. The framework will provide a comprehensive toolkit to complete a situational analysis of the impact of COVID-10 response and recovery measures on disabled people, as well as include recommendation for best practice examples and an evidence-based rationale for key measures to ensure disabled people are not marginalised or excluded further as a result of national and international responses to COVID-19. The rationale for this project is to:

- i) Developing a research-informed multi-sectoral response to the increased challenges arising from the context of COVID-19;
- ii) Identifying future/emerging research priorities and gaps in research in order to ensure medium-long term disability-inclusive development in line with the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) and meeting the relevant SDGs ("Building Back Better").
- iii) Informing future priorities for research collaboration between UKRI (including cross-Research Council remit) and UNPRPD.
- iv) Developing resilience to future challenges - at individual, community, national and global levels.

1) Led by D. Kiwan.

7. Global Citizenship Education: addressing nationalism, racism and extremism

UNESCO and its work in the field of Global Citizenship Education (GCED) provides an important framework for educating learners globally. In June 2017, a consultative UNESCO seminar with experts from around the world²⁾ was held in Seoul, South Korea on the rise of nationalism and extremism, and the implications for and of GCED. Empirical evidence collected illustrated an 8-fold rise in following of white nationalist movements on Twitter in 2016 compared to 2012 (UNESCO 2018a) . There is also empirical evidence indicating a rise in right-wing nationalist movements in Europe over the last 40 years and a rise in hate crimes (ibid, 2018a). Whilst generally positively received globally by governments' Ministries of Education, the relevance of GCED has been questioned in a structurally state-dominant world. GCED is described in the following terms:

“[It] aims to empower learners to engage and assume active roles locally, nationally and globally, to face and resolve global challenges and ultimately to become proactive contributors to a more just, peaceful, tolerant, inclusive secure and sustainable world.”

As such, the tensions between the global and local, and how to connect these in practice appears unclear and idealistic, rather than dealing with the ‘messiness’ of the local and national. GCED has also been critiqued as depoliticized with insufficient focus on structural inequalities and challenging environment such as societies in conflict and extreme poverty.

UNESCO (2018a) has proposed that “GCED has to be delivered in a way that benefits the most vulnerable, disillusioned and disenfranchised segments of the population”, and that it should focus on collaborative partnerships. In addition, it must build on the local and country context, recognising and extending local and national practices that reflect the aspirations of GCED (UNESCO 2018b). GCED provides an important framework in education for raising awareness of the effects of the securitisation and militarisation of COVID-19, and the structural inequalities for the most marginalised being exacerbated by the pandemic.

2) I was one of the invited participants of this seminar.

8. Feminist initiatives

Coronavirus has been called a ‘disaster for feminism’ (Lewis 2020). Instead of 2020 proudly marking the 25th anniversary of the Beijing Platform for Action for gender equality, COVID-19 is threatening to roll back the gains made (UN Women 2020). In response, there are feminist organisations and activists in the Global South challenging government interventions to the pandemic that are not taking account of, gender, as well as providing information, support and services. For example, the regional African feminist advocacy platform FEMNET has invited women to share their concerns on Twitter, leading to media discussion. In Latin American, there has been local, national and transnational organising. Another initiative emerging from women in the Global South, in collaboration with marginalised women of the Global North – the Feminist Alliance for Rights (FAR) has put forward a statement referred to as ‘the Feminist COVID-19 policy’ endorsed individuals and women’s networks and organisations in over 100 countries (Al-Ali 2020). In the Middle East, there have been educative initiatives to inform women about COVID-19. For example in Iraq, a platform called ‘She is a Revolution’ has launched a number of initiatives on public health and education, and in Egypt, a gender tracker was launched to monitor the impact of COVID-19 on women and over marginalised groups (ibid 2020). Al-Ali (2020) highlights the inherent problems in state-led gender interventions which do not tackle structured inequalities, and the dilemma facing feminist NGOs and activists, especially in authoritarian countries regarding strategies for influence and impact.

9. Concluding thoughts

The nature of intersectionality with race, socio-economic status, disability and other axes of power further nuance the extent of that ‘disaster’. Calls for emphasising the awareness of intersectionality to inform response to the pandemic have been emphasised and for data being collected to be disaggregated. Berkhout and Richardson (2020) argue against what has been referred to as an epistemology of ignorance (Mills 2007), where there is failure to collect data about racialised or other relevant social groups. They argue for the inclusive production of knowledge in responding to intersections of race, gender, socio-economic status, disability, sexuality and other axes of oppression in the response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The UN and other international organisations can provide analysis disaggregated by gender, race, disability and other axes of oppression in order to inform international and national-level policies and interventions. In addition, the funding of research must prioritise medium to longer-term projects in order to provide an empirical evidence base to ‘building back better’, which is critical to developing sustainable structures, systems and processes that are inclusive and resilient.

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Competition or cooperation: Configuring ‘International’ in Chinese school textbooks



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Fei Yan

1. Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic has not only become a global crisis, but also a sort of prism that exposes and magnifies the problems of our contemporary international society and thus causes us to question our previous assumption about our world. One such assumption is that the world we live in is increasingly globalised and that people around the world have gradually developed a sense of global community. However, our individual national responses to this extraordinary global crisis demonstrate that, in fact, the world is still divided and our various societies still cling on to our parochial agendas and concerns.¹⁾ Despite the urgent need for international cooperation, it is also surprising to see that there has been rising xenophobic and nationalist sentiment among politicians and people around the world. Globalisation, while it has given us the means of easy international travel, has still not yet created a global community.

On the other hand, despite being the focus of international criticism for its lack of transparency in dealing with the emergence of the coronavirus in its early stages (Patten 2020), the Chinese government seems to have shown a strong willingness to lead international cooperation in fighting against the virus and other global problems. In recent speeches delivered at events celebrating the 75th anniversaries of the United Nations, seeing COVID-19 as "a severe test to the whole world", Chinese President Xi Jinping urges "a strong global response to global threats and challenges" (Xi, 2020a). He

1) For instance, when in early 2020, the Chinese people were reacting in panic to the advent of the novel coronavirus, people in most other countries did not seem to be really paying sufficient attention to the approaching threat. This lack of international awareness was very surprising, given that the crisis in China had been widely reported by media across the world since January. Yet, at the time of writing this paper, the United States and India have become the largest countries to be most adversely affected by the virus - with a huge and mounting loss of life (at the present moment over 200,000 and 100,000 respectively) while, on the other hand, most Chinese people are back to living and enjoying their normal, everyday lives.

also lists many contributions that China has made to global collaboration against the virus (such as sharing its experience and medical technologies and maintaining the stability of international supply-chains) and proposes "constructing a new type of international relations" that "improves and reforms the global governance system" (Xi, 2020b). "Great powers [daguo, lit. "big countries"] should act as great powers", Xi claims, "to provide more global public goods and take more responsibilities" (ibid). Commenting on Xi's talks, Chinese Foreign Minister Wang Yi explains that Xi's speeches answer "important questions" such as "what kind of world mankind will face, what role China will play for the world, and what kind of international order we need in the post-pandemic era" (People's Daily 2020). Alongside China's rise as a major power in international economic and security systems in recent years, Xi's statements and Wang's comment seem to suggest that China is ready to play a leading role in global governance in the post-coronavirus world.

How does the Chinese government educate its future citizens with this new and more engaging vision of China's role in the world? And what knowledge of the "international" (as a concept relative to "China") are Chinese students given in schools that their state believes necessary for them to pursue international cooperation and tackle global problems in the future? It is noted that curriculum guidelines for various school subjects in China include the broader aim of educating students with "the awareness and vision to face to the world" (History) or "global awareness and international vision" (Morals and Rule by Law). How then is this "awareness and vision" inculcated in students through state-sanctioned curricula? To be more specific, what is the nature of this "awareness and vision" as defined in China's current school textbooks? Does it promote the spirit of global citizenship and teach students the necessary skills needed for international cooperation? Or does it actually reinforce chauvinist attitudes and a vision of global competition that undermines international understanding and cooperation? The answers to these questions matter as they help us (as educators, researchers and practitioners) to understand how we could better promote international understanding and cooperation in specific national education systems.

This paper aims to answer these questions by examining the discourse of "international" as it is constructed in the most recent Chinese school textbooks. Details of the textbooks examined in this paper are introduced in the next section. Following that, the paper provides a brief historical review of China's conceptualization

(imagination) of the "world" over the last century. As will be shown in my analysis of textbooks later, such a historical review is necessary since historical developments still have a great influence on our current understanding of "international" in Chinese society. Based on this review, the paper then analyses the textbooks and concludes with suggestions on what education researchers can do to counter existing problems when promoting international understanding and cooperation in the post-coronavirus world.

2. Textbooks examined in this Paper

As the written or realised form of school knowledge, textbooks have played a central role in most education systems across the world. This is particularly so in China where textbooks basically replicate the curriculum exactly, and studying, memorising and reciting textbooks is students' major model of learning. In this paper, I examine the most recent Chinese textbooks of "Morals and Rule by Law" (*Daode yu Fazhi*) for junior middle school students used nationwide since 2017.²⁾ These textbooks (six volumes in total) are published by People's Education Press (PEP), an affiliate of the Chinese Ministry of Education. Since 2017, the PEP version has become the only available version in the textbook market across the country as the Chinese government has re-centralised textbook production for the three most value-laden subjects: Literature (*yuwen*), Morals and Rule by Law, and History.³⁾

The subject of Morals and Rule by Law has replaced the previous Thoughts and Values (*Sixiang Pinde*) and is regarded as a sort of citizenship education in the Chinese education system. It is compulsory for all students in the last three years of "compulsory education", so in theory, all Chinese students aged roughly 13 to 16 are expected to study the textbooks. Like Thoughts and Values, Morals and Rule by Law is also the subject most closely associated with official ideological correctness, so it not only serves

2) It is acknowledged in this paper that a comprehensive analysis of the role of school education in forming students' "international understanding" in China should ideally involve a full examination of many other subjects especially History (Vickers, 2009a, 66). However, as noted below, Morals and Rule by Law is particularly chosen for close analysis since it constitutes a benchmark for ideological correctness, not only for teachers and students, but also for curriculum developers (Vickers, 2009b, 524).

3) In the 1990s and 2000s, China practiced a sort of diversification in its textbook production, mostly to meet the diversified needs of different regions (e.g. the more developed eastern coast regions and less developed western regions). During that period, PEP had a handful of competitors in the textbook market, though these competitors were usually also state-owned entities. Local governments in China were permitted to choose textbooks deemed suitable for their own region (Su, 2011, 150).

as an ideological benchmark across the school curriculum, but also most directly and explicitly sets out to shape the values of future Chinese citizens (Vickers, 2009a, 66; Vickers, 2009b, 524).⁴⁾

The focus of my analysis is the discursive construction of "international" in Chinese Morals and Rule by Law textbooks. Textbooks were read and coded. Two main themes emerged from the coding process: "the representation of the international society" and "China's relationship with international society." As shown in Table 1, each of the main themes consists of several sub-themes, and together these constitute an image of "international" in the Chinese Morals and Rule by Law textbooks. In my analysis, special attention is paid to the nature of international relations defined in these textbooks as well as the portrayal of China's position within international society.

Table 1. Themes and sub-themes of representation of "international" in Chinese Morals and Rule by Law textbooks

Main themes	Sub-themes
Representation of international society	Globalisation
	International communication in a diversified world
	A "new international order"
	International cooperation
	The "international" as threats
	The "century of humiliation"
	International competition
China's relationship with international society	Uniqueness of Chinese cultural identity (compared to other countries)
	China's new status in the international stage

Many scholars have pointed out that the construction of "international" (as "the others" to China) is central to the construction of "the Chinese self" (Müller 2011; Mitter, 2003; Vickers, 2009a; Zhao, 2004; Gries, 2004). Duara (2018, 33) also notes that a self-other identity distinction is basic to the nation-form, since "the national people are often

4) Of course, textbooks of Morals and Rule by Law should not be seen as the most important vehicle for political socialisation of students in China. Political education extends well beyond the school campus. For instance, media are also a major source of students' knowledge about international issues.

distinguished from other national peoples and cultures that are often in competition or opposition to them". An example is that Chinese official historiography has long defined the mid-nineteenth-century arrival of Western Imperialism (e.g. the Opium War 1840-1842) as the beginning of "modern" Chinese history (Gries 2004, 40; Harrison, 2001, 60; Wakeman, 1977, 1).⁵⁾ This self-other identity construction is also a dynamic process, "evolving in part through their mutual interactions" (Gries 2004, 31; Xiang, 2009). Examining the representation of "foreign countries" (especially Europe) in History curriculum documents published in China since 1900s, Müller (2011, 33-34) finds that the status of China vis-à-vis "the world" changed and shifted over the twentieth century. He also notes that the historical developments and shifts still frame the current Chinese attitude towards the "world" (ibid). Therefore, while the construction of 'international' in current Chinese textbooks is situated in the context of recent political development and curricular change, it is still important to review the evolving development of China's imagination of the 'world' over the last century. This is discussed in the next section.

3. Historical developments of China's imagination of the "World"

The pre-modern Chinese view of the world is widely known through the expression *tianxia* (all-under-heaven) (Yi 2008; Harrison 2001).⁶⁾ According to this view, China is located at the centre of the world and is the only true civilization in the world (as expressed in the name of China in Chinese: *zhong-hua*, meaning "being central and civilised"). Holding this view, premodern Chinese elites believed that outside of China is the land of the "less civilised" or "barbarians" (roughly defined according to their geographical distance from China – and thus the degree of their familiarity with the Chinese/civilised lifestyle) (Yi 2008). A tribute system was often practiced between China and its surrounding states as a way for the latter to show respect (and their vassal status) to China's dominant position in the *tianxia* system. Those who refused to follow the system would be punished or become the subject of China's military conquest, despite the claim that non-Chinese "barbarians" should *lai-Hua* ("come to China") or become

5) The rationale for this is that, thereafter, China was forced to interact with the modern world, represented by Western imperialist powers, and underwent dramatic internal changes (Wakeman, 1977, 1-2). In Communist terminology, China then entered the 'half-feudal and half colonised' (*ban fengjian ban zhimin*) period.

6) Frank Dikötter (1992) pointed out that in reality a racial understanding of Chinese identity was also popular throughout Chinese history, especially when China was under military threat (e.g. the Mongols or Manchus) or cultural threat (e.g. Buddhism) from outside.

sinified, as a result of being inexorably drawn in by the superior Chinese civilisation, the magnetic attraction of the exemplary sage-ruler of China (*tianzi*, or Son of the Heaven) and the practices of his exemplary state (Wang 1991, 27).⁷⁾

The idea of *tianxia* became a form of institutionalised knowledge through the imperial civil examination (*keju*) in ancient China (Yi, 2008). For a very long period in Chinese history, the *keju* examination concentrated on testing candidates' knowledge of classical texts of Confucianism which promote the idea of linking personal morality (*xiushen*, to cultivate oneself) to the governance of the country (*zhiguo*) and rule of the world (*qi tianxia*, literally unify the world in peace). As a result, those who passed the *keju* felt ready to take the world (*tianxia*) as their own responsibility since they were confident in their moral and cultural accomplishments (Yi 2008, 27). However, despite their claimed ultimate objective of "a unified and harmonious world order" (*tianxia datong*), it is noteworthy that their sense of moral and cultural superiority actually not only enabled them to assert and maintain their control over the population of China, but also provided them with justifications which they used to legitimise their claims for expansion (Vickers 2015; Rowe 1994, 421).

This conviction of the moral (if not necessarily technical) superiority of China's civilisation was fundamental to the concept of Chineseness in premodern days (Wang, 1991). However, this was decisively challenged and threatened by the arrival of Western imperialist powers (and Japan) following the Opium War (1840–1842). The defeat of China and the subsequent humiliation (e.g. "unequal treaties" signed following its defeat) at the hands of imperialist powers who were, for example, "with superior British technology literally outgunning anything the Chinese defenders could offer", made the Chinese elite groups aware of a new world order of competing independent states (Harrison, 2001 86; Mitter, 2004 30). China needed to "learn from the 'barbarians' (i.e. the West)" (*shiyi changji yi zhiyi*), as these elites suddenly realised, in order to become modern and strong enough to survive in the competition with other powers (Zarrow 2012).

It was against this background that early Chinese intellectuals actively participated in

7) Historians also revealed that in reality not all the "barbarians" were automatically attracted by Chinese civilisation. China's expansion in history, although carried out in the name of a civilising mission, was often achieved by a mix of strategies including military conquest and forced civilising activities such as coercive schooling (Schneewind, 2006; Vickers 2015).

inventing a new sense of identity and reconceptualised a new world order based on the discourse of race and social Darwinism which were imported into China at that time (in the middle and late nineteenth century) (Dikötter 1992, 65).⁸⁾ These ideas were particularly attractive and convincing (though terrifying at the same time) to many Chinese intellectuals since they fitted so well with what the Chinese saw around them: the "blacks" were enslaved; the "browns" (i.e. the American Indians) and the "reds" (i.e. the Australian Indians) were almost extinct; Korea and many other former Chinese tributaries (the "yellows") were colonised, and China itself was too vulnerable to control its own fate against the aggression of imperialist powers (Chow 1997, 36; Harrison, 2001, 73). Darwinist ideas of "struggle for survival" and "survival of the fittest" thus became the motto of Chinese elite groups during this period, as they firmly believed that a country was doomed to colonisation and extinction if it did not become a strong nation-state (with colonies of its own) (Duara 2018, 34).⁹⁾ Nationalism, as "a historical topos, systematic discursive formation, and systemic intellectual practice" (Karl, 2002 7), also emerged and was adopted by Chinese intellectuals in order to transform the Chinese populace, famously described by Sun Yat-sen as "a loose sheet of sand", into "the sleek body of a national citizenry capable of mobilization for global competition" (Duara 2018, 34).

Since then, the struggles to transform China into a strong and modern nation-state and the restoration or enhancement of its status on the international stage, have become the overriding state goal of the Chinese government, whether under the leadership of the Republicans, Guomindang/Kuomintang, Maoist or post Reform Communist regimes, irrespective of their claimed different political ideologies (Vickers, 2009b, 525).

It is also noted that, along with the rise of nationalism in early modern China, various

8) Chinese intellectuals learned these ideas either by going to study in the West directly, or via Japanese sources (Zarrow 2012, 150). For example, Yan Fu (1854-1921) was sent to England to study at the Royal Naval College for two years in the 1870s. During his study there, he became interested in English works on social theories and after he came back to China, he started to translate some of these works, including Thomas Huxley's *Origin of Species* and Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Sociology*. It should be mentioned that the construction of modern national identity in China (and many Asian countries) during this period overwhelmingly relied on the myths of "common ancestry" (e.g. the Yellow Emperor or Huangdi) that originated in the immemorial, "primordial" past) (Leibold, 2006; Chow, 1997; Dikötter, 1992).

9) Chow (1997, 36) notes that Chinese intellectuals' understanding of Darwin's theory of evolution mainly followed Thomas Huxley who applied the idea of "survival of the fittest" and "struggle for survival" to human society and argued that, like species, races are also in competition for survival and "those races that did not come out on top in the evolutionary battle were doomed to become slave races, or worse still, disappear completely"

ideas of internationalism and transnationalism (e.g. Communism) also gained some degree of popularity during the period (Xiang Biao).¹⁰ Nevertheless, these ideas became less attractive and less popular in China after Japan's full scale of invasion in 1937. In fact, even the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) abandoned the internationalist element of proletarian revolution and instead turned to a more nationalist goal of "saving China" by unifying all the Chinese people, regardless of their class background (Leibold 2007).

Victory over the Nationalists and the establishment of the People's Republic in 1949 won the CCP the chance to enact its Communist vision in China. Under Mao's leadership, Chinese officials combined a vision of Chinese nationalism and Communist internationalism that positioned China as "the centre of world revolution" - a revolutionary version of the *tianxia* worldview (Xiang 2009). China's active role in the Bandung Conference of Asian and African states in 1955, its involvement in conflicts in South East Asian countries and Mao's theory of the "three worlds" proposed in the early 1970s all reflected China's intention of "exporting revolution" (*shuchu geming*) (ibid).¹¹

Despite the prevailing internationalist revolutionary rhetoric, China nevertheless "closed down" to the outside again during the ten years of the Cultural Revolution (1966-1976). Two years after the Cultural Revolution, Deng Xiaoping initiated the post-Mao reform and one of the key policies was "opening up to the outside" (*duiwai kaifang*). While this allowed Chinese people to "see" the world again, many of them were shocked and they realised that China actually lagged far behind the world. There was thus a very strong interest in "re-discovering" the world, not only among political elites, but among intellectuals and the mass of the people as well (Xiang 2009). This inspired a reflection on Chinese identity as represented in the popular quasi-historical documentary *Heshang* (River Elegy) broadcast in 1988 (Jones, 2005, 86). In the documentary, China, symbolically depicted as the "civilisation of the Yellow River" (yellow civilisation), was criticised as "conservative and backward", in contrast to the

10) The Chinese Communist Party was established with support from the Third ComIntern. Following the spirit of the international Communist campaign, the CCP even supported the independence of Outer Mongolia from China as it believed that this helped to liberate the Mongolian people from China's oppression. For more details see Leibold, 2007).

11) Mao proposed his theory of "three worlds" when meeting the President of Zambia in 1974. The First World refers to the U.S.A and Soviet Union. The Second World refers to Japan, Canada, Australia and European countries. China belongs to the Third World which consists of most countries in Asia (except Japan), Latin America and Africa. "The mission of Chinese government and Chinese people", as claimed in speech given by the then Vice-Premier Deng Xiaoping at the United Nations in 1974, was to "take its due responsibility" to "support all the oppressed people and nations to fight against colonialism, imperialism and hegemonism" (People's Daily, 2015).

"progressive and enlightened" West which was depicted as the "civilisation of ocean" (blue civilisation).

However, while market-oriented reforms helped China to improve economically during the 1980s, they did not really help to fill the ideological vacuum left by the decline of socialism. By the end of the 1980s, China faced a series of problems (e.g. rising inequality and growing corruption, *etc.*) that contributed to social instability, culminating in the massive protests in and around Tiananmen Square and elsewhere in 1989 and the CCP's harsh response. Meanwhile, in the ideological domain, the party also reacted quickly to condemn over-Westernisation and relied on nationalism as its absolutely dominant ruling ideology.

It was against this background that patriotism (*aiguo zhuyi*) was chosen and heavily promoted by the CCP to regain ideological control and re-establish its legitimacy. This was referred to as the Patriotic Education Campaign in official discourse and, according to Zhao (2004, 238), was a "state-led systematic engineered project" to promote patriotism. The campaign was an intensive undertaking by the CCP from 1991 - 1994 and patriotism has since become one of the fundamental, intrinsic and core values propagated through the Chinese education system (Zhao 2004).¹²⁾

Scholars noted that some core themes of the Campaign are: 1) China's special characteristics and realities (*guoqing*) (demonstrating their incompatibility with Western values); 2) China's national security and defence (against "peaceful evolutionism" and hostile forces); and 3) most importantly, CCP's leading role in saving China from the "century of national humiliation" (*bainian guochi*, from the first Opium War to the end of the Sino-Japanese War in 1945) (Vickers 2009a, 63; Zhao 2004; Callahan, 2004). Along with the narrative of a "century of humiliation" there is a sense of "victimhood" which highlighted China's experience of suffering at the hands of foreign imperialist powers who, according to the narrative, still threaten the future prospects of China by isolating or attacking China over issues like human rights.

In this way, the memory of the "century of humiliation" has not only become central

12) It should be noted that this campaign extended well beyond the classroom and intersected at many points with popular discourse in media, literature, film and the arts (Vickers, 2009a, 62). Museums, memorials and tourist attractions were also assigned a key role in the dissemination of the patriotic message (*ibid.*). Although the younger generation was especially targeted, the campaign was intended for all Chinese citizens, irrespective of ethnicity or class.

to the contested and evolving meaning of being "Chinese" today (Gries 2004, 47), but also informed both China's domestic and international politics. It is noted that narratives about the "century of humiliation" have framed Chinese attitudes towards the West in the last few decades (ibid, 46). For example, despite everyday frustrations of corruption and inequity under the CCP's leadership, many Chinese people in fact became very sensitive to foreign criticism of Chinese government, drawing parallels between these critiques and former imperialism (Zhao 2004, 244). The angry Chinese students protesting in front of the American Embassy in Beijing after the Belgrade bombing of 1999 and the spy plane collision of 2001 say much about changes in the worldview of Chinese youth since 1989 (when the U.S. was generally praised and admired as a model of democracy) (Gries 2004, 52, 57). Moreover, the CCP's ruling legitimacy is also strongly underpinned by its performance in leading China to "eliminating the century of humiliation" and regaining "the rightful place of China on the world stage" (Callahan 2004, 214; Zhao 2004, 288-9). This is shown clearly in the official discourse of the celebration of the handover of Hong Kong from Britain to China in 1997, which presented the return as a moment of "erasing the national humiliation" (Gries 2004, 52).

While the campaign presented the image of a strong Chinese state capable of "redressing past grievances, resisting current and future foreign intrusions, and wielding a high degree of influence in the international arena", Chinese people (especially students) were called upon to work hard and unite around the CCP to build a prosperous and strong China (Zhao 2004, 245; Vickers 2009a, 63). "Those who fall behind will be beaten" (*luohou jiuyao aida*) - a popular phrase derived from the narrative of the "century of humiliation" - has since been repeated often in popular media and school textbooks (Gries 2004, 50; Vickers 2009a, 63). In fact, in February 1993, the CCP Central Committee issued an "Outline of the Reform and Development of China's Education" which states clearly that "the rationale for reforming education is to win the world competition for economic and national power, which has become a competition in science and technology and over national [*minzu*] quality" (Hughes 2006, 71; Vickers, 2009a, 63). The relationship between Chinese citizens and the Chinese state is thus defined in such a way as to encourage the former to make sacrifices for the latter's strength, and this perception of citizen-state relationship is reinforced to students through school curricula.

Entering the 2010s, China has now become a major power in the global system,

economically, politically and, arguably, militarily and culturally. "We are closer to the goal of the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation than at any other time in history", claimed the Chinese President Xi Jinping at the memorial event for Sun Yat-sen - the founder of the modern Chinese state who sought a strong and modern China that could compete with imperialist powers (People 2016). It seems that China has regained much of what it had lost in status since the nineteenth century (Müller 2011, 33-4). Thus, China's current attitude towards the world has opened new lines of interest (ibid). Will the rise of China become a challenge to the international community and a threat to regional and global stability in the twenty-first century? Will a strong and modern China overcome the "shadow" of the memory of the "century of humiliation" and a Darwinist perception of the international order, and become a more confident and collaborative force in global governance?

In recent years, China has launched a series of international programmes such as the "Belt & Road Initiative" and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and has played an active role in various international cooperative plans such as the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). It seems that China has taken a new stance on the international stage, which is rather different from the strategy "hide one's capability and bide one's time" (*taoguang yanghui*) famously proposed by Deng Xiaoping in the early reform era (1980s). In 2013, President Xi Jinping initiated the idea of "a Community of Shared Future for Mankind" (*renlei mingyun gongtongti*, thereafter "the Community") and under this concept, the Chinese government proposed its vision of world order and international cooperation for the future, combatting the trend of "anti-globalisation" and nationalist movements around the world in recent years, the idea of "Community" highlights the necessity for international cooperation to tackle global problems. What is also stressed is China's "active participation" in constructing a new global governing system based on the idea of *tianxia*, which is frequently referred to in Xi's speeches (Xi 2018). In this modern version of *tianxia* system, China will "lead as a model" and share "Chinese wisdom", "Chinese solution" and "Chinese force" with the world (Xi 2019). Moreover, China also invites all other countries, especially its neighbours, to "take a ride" (*da bianche*) on China's development (Xi 2018). It seems obvious that, under Xi's leadership, China is taking a more assertive (if not aggressive) stance on global governance. How, then, are this new conception of the world and China's active role in international cooperation promoted in the school textbooks published under Xi's leadership? This is examined in the next section.

4. Representation of "International" in Chinese Morals and Rule by Law textbooks

Reading through the six volumes of the Morals and Rule by Law textbooks, it is clear that their structure corresponds to a Confucian perspective on personal relationships building outwards from the individual in concentric circles (as discussed earlier). The first two volumes concentrate on the theme of personal moralities, such as how to deal with personal emotions and friendship (i.e. cultivating oneself). The next three volumes turn to focus on ethics of citizenship e.g. the responsibilities and rights attached to being Chinese citizens (i.e. governance of the country). It is mainly in the last volume that the issue of the "international" or "world" is discussed within two Units (*danyuan*) respectively titled "Our Common World" and "China on the World Stage", though the textbooks also, occasionally, reference the issue in other parts.

1) Representing globalisation

"Globalisation" or "a globalised world" is clearly an important theme in the Morals and Rule by Law textbooks. Under the title of "Living Together in the Global Village", the first lesson of Volume Six begins with a section called "The Open and Interactive World". In this section, the texts present the current world as "open", "developing" and "closely linked" and highlight the idea that "what happens in the world affects our lives in various ways" (PEP 2017f, 3-4). To illustrate this point, the lesson provides an example that tells a story of a Chinese factory providing help to a British family which was looking for a cup that is not available in the market anymore (ibid, 4). The cup is for their son who has autism and only drinks water from this type of cup. When the cup is broken, the family post a message online to seek help and, hearing this via the internet, the Chinese factory reproduces the cup for the British family. While the story indeed delivers the message of a globalised and closely linked world, it seems that textbook editors portray an image of a more confident China providing help to others rather than receiving this kind of help from the globalised world.

The underlying message of the story also highlights China's economic power in the globalised economy. In fact, the textbooks' interpretation of globalisation focuses more on economic aspects than social or cultural aspects. The next section (entitled "Looking at Global Economy") begins with an example of the production of a pair of shoes which,

according to the lesson, are designed in Germany (appearance and functions) and China (the production process), produced in "some countries in South East Asia", and shipped by an American cargo vessel to Saudi Arabia where the shoes are sold (PEP 2017, 5). While the example clearly illustrates once again China's improving position in the global production chain, by asking students to think about why the production of the shoes is carried out in this way, the textbook editors also intend to highlight the benefits of economic globalisation. In fact, after introducing the story, the lesson uses several paragraphs to explain these benefits, one of which is efficiency (ibid 6). Up to this point economic globalisation is presented as a purely positive phenomenon in the textbook.

It is in the last paragraph of this section that the text briefly warns that economic globalisation also "makes risks and crises cross national boundaries" (again, the lesson uses an example of a Chinese factory which was badly impacted by the 2008 world financial crisis) (PEP 2017, 7). However, the lesson immediately claims that "the trend of economic globalization is irreversible" and urges students to not only "keep a positive and open mind and actively participate in competition", but also "enhance risk awareness, pay attention to national economic security, and be fully prepared to deal with various difficulties and challenges" (ibid). It seems clear from these texts that what students are to learn from textbooks is a state-centred and economic-oriented understanding of globalisation, and this globalisation is meant to be competitive. Other important issues related to globalisation, such as global capitalism and trade disputes, are nevertheless not mentioned to students at all. What students are taught is that they should be prepared to participate in global economic competition on the behalf of their nation (i.e. China).

2) International communication in a diversified world

Following the section on globalisation, the textbook then introduces a section called "Sharing Cultural Diversities". In this section, the text seems to appreciate cultural diversity as it claims that "cultural diversity is the basic feature of human society" and "each nation's culture is unique and has its own value" (PEP 2017, 7-8). However, this remains at an abstract level, and the section does not provide any concrete example to illustrate the value of cultural diversity. Instead, it only uses a cartoon to show a scenario in which several students (who, based on their appearance, may be Chinese) are discussing what dances they can perform in a show, including classical Chinese dance, Latin dance, Jazz dance and Indian dance (PEP 2017, 7). Although, below the

cartoon, the text asks "what are the other forms of culture apart from dancing?", it seems that what students will learn is a superficial and/or simplified understanding of cultural differences, and the value of diversity is neither thoroughly discussed nor illustrated in the text.

Nevertheless, following the introduction of the diversified world, the text then highlights the importance of international communication and exchange. Acknowledging that "there might be misunderstanding and conflict when people from different cultural backgrounds meet", the text encourages students to "strive to recognise cultural differences, respect each other, and reach mutual understanding and tolerance through equal exchanges and dialogue" (PEP 2017, 8). Cultural fusion is also generally seen as a positive thing in the text. Using an example of how Chinese and Western artists benefit from each other's painting techniques, the text claims that "cultural fusion stimulates new vitality" (PEP 2017, 8). Based on this point, the text concludes that "all countries should keep an open and inclusive attitude to learn from excellent foreign cultures, and promote harmonious and inclusive cultural exchanges" (ibid 9). All these seem to suggest that the textbook's editors have taken a rather open and progressive view to understand the nature of national and cultural identity as being flexible and fluid (necessary and helpful for international understanding and intercultural communication). However, as will be shown later, when it comes to the case of China, the textbook editors go on to adopt a rather essentialist understanding of Chinese cultural identity which stresses its uniqueness as compared to all other cultures.

Moreover, it seems that the editors' interpretation of international communication is still based on national rather than personal interests. To reflect current education reform in China, with its emphasis on cultivating students' skills, the volume includes a section titled "Methods and Skills". Here the textbook reminds students to not only develop awareness of international affairs, but also master relevant skills and abilities for international communication (PEP 2017, 26). The first two skills or abilities listed, however, are "learn about the culture of your own country" and "actively express views and opinions representing your own country in international communications with a firm and moderate attitude" (ibid). In other words, the objective of students' pursuit of international communication is for them to represent their country (like diplomats in a United Nations' debate or athletes in the Olympic Games), rather than to benefit themselves (as in travelling or studying abroad).

3) A "New International Order"

Following the discussion of international communication there is a section called "Complex and Changing Relations" which focuses on the issue of international order. This section has two sub-sections, titled "The Changing World Pattern" and "National Interactions in Adjustment" respectively. It can be seen immediately from the titles that the theme of this section is "changing" that leads to a "new international order". Indeed, the text claims at the beginning that, after the end of the Cold War, the old world order dominated by two superpowers, the Soviet Union and the U.S.A, disappeared, and the world entered an era of multi-polarisation (*duojihua*) (PEP 2017, 10). The text portrays this era as a period of "great development, great change and great adjustment" and claims that "the reform of the global governance system and the international order has been accelerated" (ibid). But unlike previous textbooks which stressed the role of Europe or Japan as other poles in the post-Cold War world (Müller, 2011; Vickers, 2009, 530), this text now stresses "the increasingly enhanced international status and influence" of emerging economic entities and developing countries (11). Here the text uses the BRICS countries as examples of new economic entities and praises their effort to "develop the world economy" and "promote democratisation of international relations"(PEP 2017, 11). The text cites two speeches given by Chinese President Xi Jinping to illustrate the idea of this new international order as providing for "equal status of all the countries regardless of their power" and "prohibition of the domination of one or a few powerful countries" (ibid). Although the text does not state who is the "one" or are "the powerful countries", the implication is that the old system is out of date and other countries, especially the emerging entities (including China), should have a greater say in the new international order.

Indeed, later text highlights China's efforts and its leading role in the construction of the "new type of international relations"(PEP 2017, 17). Under the title of "Constructing A Community of Shared Future for Mankind", the next lesson mainly elaborates President Xi's vision of the future world order. The lesson starts with the memory of the Second World War and highlights China's great contribution to victory and its important status in international cooperation during that war (ibid). It then turns to introduce many global challenges and thus the need to construct "the Community". Here the lesson stresses that it is China's initiative to construct the Community which "provides valuable ideas for solving the common problems faced by mankind, puts forward valuable ideas for the future development of mankind, and points out the direction for the common

and beautiful future of mankind" (ibid 24). The text stresses that this idea is included in many UN documents and is widely agreed by the international society (ibid). Later, when the textbook introduces China's important position in the world, the idea of "the Community" is introduced again, and the text claims again that China's efforts to construct a global governance system is "widely agreed" by more and more countries and will have "a profound impact on the peace and development of the world" (ibid 36). In this way, the President's vision of the future world is reinforced in textbooks. In fact, one may find that the messages delivered in the textbook are not very different from Xi's talks.

4) International cooperation

It is in the context of "a new international order" that the issue of international cooperation is introduced in the volume. As the text claims, "in the context of economic globalisation and world multi-polarisation, all the countries have to cooperate so that they can develop together" (PEP 2017, 13). The idea of international cooperation is highly praised in the textbooks and it is regarded as the key to resolving global problems. For example, the textbooks use the Second World War as an example to illustrate how international cooperation between China and other countries had helped to defeat Fascist countries (ibid, 17). In a section called "Responding to Global Problems" (ibid, 22), the text first lists many "common challenges" and "global problems that need to be resolved urgently" such as lack of growth of the world economy, the increasing gap between rich and poor, terrorism, cybersecurity, climate change and, interestingly, major infectious diseases (ibid, 23). Without nominating any particular country, the text implicitly criticises the anti-globalisation movements of recent years by claiming that "no country can cope with all the challenges facing mankind, or return to being isolated islands of self-isolation" (ibid). It further warns that any "evasion of responsibilities will lead to deterioration of problems and even bring disaster to mankind" (ibid). "The inevitable choice for solving global problems [...] lies in [...] taking joint action, assuming common responsibility and constructing a 'Community of Shared Future for Mankind'" (ibid). The President's vision of the future world is the imperative framework for carrying out international cooperation for a "peaceful, safe, prosperous, inclusive and, finally, clean and beautiful" world (ibid, 24).

While the texts above show that the idea of international cooperation is again a state-centred interpretation, national interest also becomes a crucial issue when the

textbook editors consider international cooperation. In the next section, called "Caring about the Shared Fate", using an example of the tragedies of refugees in Europe since 2011, the text asks students to think about why the suffering of the refugees can arouse people's deep sympathy and reflection (PEP, 2017, 24). Below the question, the text prompts students to "care for life and respect the value of life" so that they can "care about the fate of others, think of others as people like us, understand the pain and joy of others, and see the common desire in life" (ibid, 25). While the text here reflects a humanistic and individual approach to understanding the value of international cooperation, it then gives an example of a conversation in which a person suggests to another person who wants to help African refugees that "you should keep your focus on China because there are so many charity works to do in China. Why would you have to go abroad?" (ibid) Although the text asks students if they agree with this suggestion or can provide their own suggestion, below the conversation, the text claims that to construct the "Community", students have to not only "look at the world and pay attention to the development of the world" but also "always think about the motherland and spend their lives pursuing China's Dream (*zhongguo meng*) and the interests of [Chinese] people" (ibid). This shows that even when the issue of international cooperation is discussed in textbooks, patriotism and the nationalist message are still reinforced. In fact, on the next page, raising the issue of global public health emergencies in recent years, such as the Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS), the lesson suggests that students simulate an international conference to discuss issues of "global public health management". What students are asked is to choose a country and "state the country's principle and standpoint on this issue at the conference" (ibid, 26). The message is that national interest comes first even in pursuing international cooperation.

5) The "International" as threats

It is observed that when the textbooks discuss the issue of international communication and cooperation, international society is sometimes represented as a "model" for China to learn from. This is particularly the case when the textbooks come across practical issues (rather than issues of political systems) such as environmental protection. For example, in the lesson called "Constructing Beautiful China", the text uses London as an example to illustrate how Britain has overcome its air pollution problem (PEP 2017, 82). A similar narrative is found when the textbooks discuss the issue of waste sorting in which the text acknowledges that "in recent years our country

has drawn lessons from the experience of countries like Germany and Canada" (PEP 2017, 39). In fact, the text even claims that "we should learn from all the outstanding achievements of human civilization", though at the same time it also insists on "the principle of self-reliance and eclecticism" (ibid).

Nevertheless, apart from being a model for China to learn from, the textbook image of international society is rather complex and it is even described as a "threat" to China. It is noted that the textbooks repeatedly define the current world as "complex" and "changeable" (PEP 2017f, 1, 10, 45) which brings "various challenges" to China's development. In the lesson on "Constructing the Community", the text warns students that:

The shadow of war has never been far away. Local wars and conflicts have never ceased. Hegemonism, ethnic problems, religious conflicts, territorial disputes and terrorism still threaten peace. (PEP 2017, 18)

Facing these threats, while students are asked to "be prepared for hardship" (PEP 2017, 45), they are also reminded to "uphold the supremacy of national interests" and "always be vigilant against acts that endanger national interests and threaten national survival and development" (PEP 2017, 91). In this way, the textbooks use the study of international matters to support patriotic education. In fact, across the volumes, the theme of "some (western in particular) countries trying to collect or even steal China's security information" is repeatedly put before students, especially in the Unit called "Safeguarding National Interest" (PEP, 2017, 91, 103; 2017, 99). To safeguard national interests, the text encourages students to "be patriotic" and "feel proud of loving the motherland while feeling ashamed of harming the motherland"(PEP, 2017, 91). The core of China's national interest, according to the text, includes "national sovereignty, national security, territorial integrity, national unification, China's current political system, social stability and economic sustainable development" (ibid, 88). The implication is that any criticism from outside on these issues, such as Tibetan and Muslim ethnic minority rights, youth political movements in Hong Kong, or the CCP's undemocratic rule, are regarded as harmful to China's national interests and thus should be rejected by Chinese students. In fact, talking about China's policy of "freedom of religious belief", the text cites China's Constitution and clearly claims that "religious organisations and religious affairs are not subject to the control of foreign forces" (PEP 2017, 91).

6) The "Century of Humiliation"

To further stimulate students' patriotic sentiments, it is noted that the "century of humiliation" is frequently referred to across the volumes. The purpose of these references varies but, in general, they are used to stimulate students' patriotic sentiment and rouse their support for the CCP by reminding students of China's suffering at the hands of foreign powers. For example, in the lesson on "Establishing an Overall National Security Concept", the text begins with the statement below:

From the Opium War in 1840 to the founding of new China in 1949, China had suffered from the barbaric invasion of Western powers for a long time. National sovereignty and territorial integrity had been seriously damaged and the Chinese people had experienced unbearable suffering. (PEP 2017, 97)

Following this statement, the text claims that the establishment of the Peoples' Republic has led to "the abolishment of the unequal treaties imposed on China by the imperialist powers and all privileges of imperialists in China" and that, under the leadership of the CCP", great changes have taken place in our country and the comprehensive national strength has been greatly improved" (PEP 2017, 97). The text then talks about how important national security is (as the precondition for national development and the people's welfare). In other words, without the leadership of the CCP, national security might be threatened and Chinese people might suffer "humiliation" again. Interestingly, the same text is essentially repeated in the lesson called "Stepping on the Road to a Powerful Country." The idea is the same in that, while the "century of humiliation" has made Chinese people realise that only if China becomes strong and prosperous will it avoid further such humiliation, and it is only under the CCP's leadership that China can achieve this aim and wash away "the humiliations" (PEP 2017, 3). In the preface to the unit discussing national unity and the Chinese Dream, the text actually states that "the return of Hong Kong and Macao has washed away the national humiliation" (ibid, 89). In the same lesson, the text introduces the story of the British invasion of Tibet and the Tibetan people's heroic resistance against the invasion. The text claims that people of all ethnic groups united together to resist humiliation and save the nation from subjugation. Here the text praises the resistance of Tibetan people highly for "not allowing foreigners to touch our territory" (ibid 92). Clearly, the point of the story is to use the issue of the "century of humiliation" to inculcate patriotic fervour and motivate students to make sacrifices for their country. In fact, using the example of

one of the Communist heroes who sacrificed his life in "the brave fight against the vicious Japanese invaders", the text even claims that, "for the sake of national interests, sometimes it is necessary not only to give up personal interests, but even also to sacrifice one's own life" (PEP 2017, 93-4). Meanwhile, a Darwinist international order that threatens China's security and development is also reinforced when the textbooks discuss the issue of the "century of humiliation".

7) International competition

Indeed, international competition is also an important theme when textbooks discuss international relations. In fact, immediately after the discussion of international cooperation, the text claims that "there is not only cooperation but also competition between countries" and, "every country hopes to gain development opportunities in the new round of international relations adjustment through its own efforts" (PEP, 2017, 14). Later, the idea of international competition is reintroduced, interestingly in the lesson titled, "Developing Together with the World," the text claims that, in the current world, as global competition is constantly upgraded, China needs to grasp opportunities and improve its international competitiveness (ibid 47). It seems that the textbooks' editors are clear in their intention to describe an international order of intensive competition.

The essence of international competition, according to the textbooks, is "a contest of comprehensive national strength (*zonghe guoli*) based on economic and technological strength" (PEP 2017, 14). Extensive space has thus been devoted to China's economic achievements and technological development in the textbooks. China is also described as an active and capable player in international competition. For example, talking about some technical innovations such as biotechnology, new energy, space technology, and artificial intelligence, the text claims that "China strives for a dominant position in global technological innovation and emerging industries " (ibid 48). In the next paragraph, the text continues to claim that China should actively participate in global rule-making which will help give China the "right to speak in international competition" (ibid). China, as the text further claims, "is constructing a new international economic order by drawing up and modifying global rules" (ibid). In this way, in the context of international competition, China is described in the textbooks as a new power standing on the international stage and enjoying a prominent status in the new international order. This is in sharp contrast to the "humiliated" China that the textbooks described in stories of the "century of humiliation."

What can also be concluded from the texts above is that the development of economy and technology is seen more as essential to national prosperity and strength, rather than as something beneficial to social welfare and individual livelihoods. In fact, in the lesson on "Innovation Drives Development", the text uses about two pages to briefly discuss how individuals can involve themselves in innovation, and how innovations can benefit society as a whole (PEP 2017, 15-6). However, it then devotes about eight pages to discussing the theme of "innovation makes a country strong" (*chuangxin qiangguo*) (ibid 17-24). As the text claims:

Innovation has become the focus of development strategy of major countries in the world. In the intensive international competition, only the innovator advances, only the innovator is strong, only the innovator wins ... Innovation determines the destiny of a country. (PEP 2017, 17-8)

It seems clear from the text that the textbooks still adopt a state-centred view in order to understand China's development in technologies. In other words, as Vickers also points out in his analysis, China's mastery of technologies symbolises the new status of China, and the main purpose of developing technologies is mainly for China to win the international competition and "ensure that the nation will never again suffer humiliation at the hands of foreign aggressors" (Vickers 2009, 77).

8) Uniqueness of Chinese cultural identity

Examining the discussion of Chinese cultural identity in the textbooks, it seems that the editors contradict themselves by advocating an essentialist and primordialist understanding that is fundamentally different from that of all other nations and civilisations. Seeing culture or civilisation as an important element of comprehensive national strength (*zonghe guoli*), the textbooks devote extensive spaces to introducing Chinese culture and civilisation. In a unit called *Civilisation and Home*, the text repeatedly highlights the idea of the 'uniqueness' of Chinese culture (PEP 2017, 61) and its roots in China's 5,000 years of history. For example, in a section called "Constructing Chinese Value", the text claims:

Born as Chinese, we have the unique spiritual world of Chinese people and the values that people use every day but do not realise. China's unique cultural tradition, unique historical destiny and unique basic national conditions doomed

us to adhere to the values rooted in the fertile soil of Chinese culture and with contemporary Chinese characteristics. (PEP 2017, 70)

The use of the word "unique" (*dute*) clearly shows the editors' intention to highlight the peculiar characteristics of Chineseness distinguished China from all other nations or civilisations. Although the text then claims that the Chinese value also "has absorbed the beneficial achievements of world civilization", what is also promoted in the text is the idea of "gene of Chinese culture" that fundamentally incompatible with other nations or civilisations. For instance, one of the sections in the Unit is called "Continuing the Cultural Lineage" (*yanxu wenhua xuema*). The text claims that Chinese traditional virtues have become a kind of culture gene (*jiyin*) (PEP 2017, 64). Later in the same lesson, the text also claims that "Chinese excellent traditional culture has become the gene of the Chinese nation, rooted in the heart of the Chinese people, and has a subtle influence on the way of thinking and behaviour of Chinese people" (ibid, 70). In this way, although the textbooks seem to appreciate the value of international communications and cultural exchange, the barriers between Chinese culture and "foreign/international" are seen as rigid or even sacred (Vickers 2009, 72).

9) China's new status on the international stage

Having presented a new international order, seen as governed by Darwinian laws of competition, the textbooks then turn to discuss the status of "China on the International Stage" (the title of Unit Two in volume six). In fact, even in other volumes, the idea of "China's new and prominent status on the international stage" is also a repeated theme. The narrative often starts with an emphasis on China's various achievements under the leadership of the CCP, and then stresses China's rising or improved status in international society. For example, in a section called "Feeling Proud of the Achievements of Our Motherland" in the lesson "Constructing the Beautiful Motherland", the text first lists various "huge advances of our country" such as its economic growth (as the second-largest economy in the world), and its technological development and reform of national defence, and then claims:

As its comprehensive national strength has significantly improved, our country is playing an increasingly important role on the international stage ... The great achievements of our motherland have attracted the attention of the world, and we are very proud of it. (PEP 2017, 105)

In fact, statements such as "'The China miracle' makes the Chinese nation stand tall in the world", and "(China's) international status improved significantly" are frequent reminders to students, often presented along with a list of China's various achievements in relation to its aviation and space technologies (PEP 2017, 1, 3).¹³⁾

China is thus represented as a rising power in the international arena with an increasing impact in the world. The text also tries to construct the image of China as a "responsible" "great power" (*daguo*) (PEP 2017, 31). In the section called "China's Responsibilities", the text uses several examples to illustrate that China has "actively taken its responsibilities" and "participated in global governance in an all-round way" (such as China's support to African countries in coping with the Ebola epidemic and its contribution to the UN peacekeeping force) (ibid, 29-30). Moreover, praising China's participation in global governance, the text now stresses the idea that, while the development of the world needs "new ideas" and "great wisdom", China has contributed "China's solution" (*zhongguo fangan*) and "China's wisdom" (*zhongguo zhihui*) to global governance (ibid, 32). In other words, China is not passively involved in global governance, but rather is now playing a leading role. For example, in the section called "Contributing China's Wisdom", the text uses three examples (*e.g.* the G20 conference in Hangzhou, Iran's nuclear negotiation, and global climate governance) to highlight China's leading role in solving these problems. As the text claims, China has used its "wisdom" to "resolve various difficulties and crises of international society" and has shown "the demeanour of a great power (*daguo*)" (ibid 31-2).

Interestingly, it seems the text now intends to present China as a new and modern version of the "civilised" "centre" (i.e. *zhonghua*, or China) in the world (i.e. *tianxia*). Talking about China's technological achievements and its contribution to world development, the textbooks indeed briefly refer to the idea of China as an "ancient civilised country" (*wenming guguo*) (PEP 2017, 28) and claim that "China ranked No. 1 in more than a hundred areas of technologies and innovations" (PEP 2017, 17). As a

13) For example, in the lesson on "Stepping on the Road to a Powerful Country", the text makes the following statement: "Today, China has become the world's second largest economy, the largest country for manufacturing industry and trade goods, the second largest country for commodity consumption and foreign capital inflow. China's foreign exchange reserves have ranked first in the world for many years and its science and technology, education and culture are developing vigorously. Under the leadership of the CCP, the Chinese people have created a great miracle in the history of human development, fully demonstrating China's strength" (PEP 2017, 6).

modern version of being "civilised", in the textbooks China is then described as a "model" for other countries to learn from. This is illustrated in various ways. For example, talking about China's recent achievements in development, the text first states that "In modern times, the Chinese nation, which suffered for a long time, has ushered in a great leap forward, first standing up, then getting rich and becoming strong" (ibid 108). Following this statement, the text then claims:

The continuous development of the road, theory, system and culture of socialism with Chinese characteristics [i.e. civilisation] has expanded the way for developing countries to move towards modernisation, providing a new choice for those countries and nations in the world who want to accelerate development and maintain their own independence at the same time. It contributes Chinese wisdom and China's solution to solving problems of human society. (PEP 2017, 108)

It is clear from the statement above that China's development is seen by the textbooks' editors as a model for other countries (especially developing countries) to learn from. In another case, the text first reminds students that more and more important international conferences (such as the G20 conference and Summer Davos Forum) have been held in China (PEP 2017, 42). It then claims:

With [China's] improving international status and influence, China has gained obvious development advantages in many fields, [so] experts from various industries and fields are willing to come to China to discuss and communicate issues, listen to China's voice and consult China's opinions. (ibid)

In this way, China is depicted in the textbooks as a modern version of the "civilised" which is admired by others. Like the tributary system in ancient China, those who respect and admire modern China would also benefit from relations with China. As the textbook claims: "in order to seek economic stability and growth, many countries need to carry out in-depth cooperation with China" (ibid). Later, the text introduces the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank and the Belt & Road Initiative and tells students how other countries have benefited from the two projects (ibid 49-50). The text then concludes:

China's development has provided countries in the world with a broader market, more sufficient capital, richer products and more valuable opportunities for

cooperation. China shares development opportunities and achievements with other countries in the world. The Chinese people are willing to work with the people of other countries to jointly open up a more prosperous, more peaceful and beautiful future for mankind. (ibid 51)

Clearly, the text above describes China's relationship with other countries as "reciprocal" (Bell & Wang 2020), and in this way, it implies the idea of a modern version of the "*tianxia*" system which has China as the "civilised" "centre" with a mission to help other countries to develop (*i.e.* "civilise"). This vision of "international", however, has become the core idea of education for international understanding and cooperation in Chinese schools since 2017.

5. Conclusion

In this paper, I have examined how the current Chinese citizenship textbooks (*Morals and Rule by Law*) reconceptualise the idea of 'international' against the background of China as a rising power in recent years. As I have shown, the textbooks contain elements that seek to endow students with international understanding and skills for international cooperation. However, there is also an overriding emphasis on 'strengthening of the state for securing China's position within an international order seen as governed by Darwinian laws of competition' (Vickers, 2009, 524). While this Darwinian world view has its roots in early modern China's experiences of encountering the imperialist powers during the 'century of humiliation', this memory is repeatedly invoked to stimulate students' patriotic and nationalist sentiments. In this way, international society is depicted as offering a great opportunity to China, while also posing actual or potential threats to China's status on the international stage (ibid 530).

My analysis also shows that although the textbooks aim to promote the idea of international communication and intercultural exchange, what students learn from them is an essentialist understanding of Chinese identity which is distinct from other cultures or nations by nature. Chinese identity is mainly conceived as ethnocultural in the textbooks and is seen as having originated in the distant past. International communication and cooperation in the textbooks take a state-oriented approach and students are frequently reminded to prioritise national interests when pursuing

international communication and cooperation. This is unhelpful to the building of international trust and cooperation in times of common peril for humanity such as the current pandemic.

This indoctrination makes it difficult for many Chinese students to understand the complexity of relations between their country and the rest of the world and their own relationships with their state and the world. China's opening policy has made it more interdependent with other countries and it has benefited hugely from its links with the world, at least in terms of economic growth, but students are repeatedly warned that the outside world is hostile to China's resurgence as a great power and its determination to reclaim its rightful position in the world. The result is 'a confusion of beliefs and emotions' towards the outside world (Unger 2015, xvii).

Of course, we should not exaggerate the role of textbooks in shaping students' political identity and the way they make sense of international issues. Today, students' understanding of the world is affected by a range of factors such as media, popular culture and, most importantly, the internet (Vickers 2009, 524). What they are told in school textbooks is not necessarily fully absorbed. However, previous research shows that 'most of the [Chinese] students were so locked into a mindset about the "truth" on such topics as history and international relations [as defined by the government] that they could almost not comprehend an alternative viewpoint, much less accept it' (Ogden 2002, 104, cited in Vickers, 2009, 78). Although internet access is widely available in China, since the Chinese government controls and censors its contents, the world Chinese students can access through the internet is a limited version. This means that students' understanding of the world outside China remains powerfully mediated by official discourse (Vickers 2009, 524). This is shown in the experience of Fang Fang who was intensively abused and insulted by 'patriotic' Chinese netizens for the publication in English of her records of the city Wuhan (where the coronavirus was first detected) during lock-down. They criticised Fang for being 'unpatriotic' and 'handing knives to enemies' (Yan 2020). Even elite Chinese students studying abroad are also hyper-patriotic and they become very sensitive to any criticisms of China, for example, on issues like Tibet. They have not developed international understanding even though they have studied and lived overseas.

This paper focuses on revealing the subtext of nationalist ideologies when Chinese

textbooks promote international understanding and cooperation but there is 'nothing uncommon in this' (Unger 2015, xi). As Calhoun (2007) points out, international is not non-national, and the nation-state is still the dominant legitimised form of political organisation in the world. Sugar (1981, 69, cited in Unger, 2015, xi) also notes that 'there is no corner on the globe where the leaders of the most significant or the most insignificant state do not constantly use all the means of communication (in the widest sense) at their disposal to foster nationalism, the state-supporting loyalty'. Billig (1995) also reminds us that everyday education activities in many countries are imbued with nationalist messages such as hanging the national flag in the classroom, which may contribute to radicalisation. Despite its banality, education is inevitably assigned the task to produce national citizens who are expected to put their country's interests before a more cosmopolitan dream. The pandemic we are experiencing now is a catalyst for the prevailing populist nationalism, racism and xenophobia seen in many countries across the world. To rebuild global solidarity and international cooperation in the post-corona world, it will be necessary for us as educators, researchers and practitioners to pay attention to the nature of education for international understanding and cooperation in specific national education systems. Only in this way could the pandemic be turned into a rare opportunity to reflect and address more fundamental problems when we educate students across the world as responsible global citizens.

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The implications of democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education in South Korea for the post-corona era

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The implications of democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education in South Korea for the post-corona era

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I . Introduction

Every year when the year-end approaches, some press companies and publishers select the most topical word during the year and announce it as the 'Word of the Year'. Regardless of who makes the choice, the 'Word of the Year' for 2020 will most likely be 'COVID-19'. In South Korea, too, the most frequently used new word in 2020 will most likely be 'due to COVID-19'.

The COVID-19 has changed not just the daily life of individuals but how the world operates. When we go out, we have to bring not only our mobile phone but also a face mask. The masks have become an essential part of our bodies. When we meet others, we make minimal handshakes while online school classes and corporate meetings are ubiquitous. The operation of various international transportation means and the number of passengers have dropped drastically. Both in- and out-bound travelers are met with a suspicious look.

These phenomena can be observed all around the world, including in Korea, albeit with some national differences. The distinction of so-called developed and developing countries is arguably not clear when it comes to COVID-19. The developed countries have also been experiencing difficulties in living up to their status as 'developed countries' when preventing the massive spread of the infections. As the pandemic is prolonged indefinitely, nearly every country is experiencing anxiety over the infection, fears of death, the burden and fatigue of quarantine, and economic damages.

South Korea is widely regarded as a case of freeing two birds with one key, ensuring the quarantine and protecting the economy without impairing democracy amidst the global pandemic (New York Times 2020; Guardian 2020). This outcome is often attributed to the government's systematic preventive measures, dedications of high-quality health professionals, and public trust in the government and civil compliance with infection prevention guidelines.

In order to respond to COVID-19 more rationally and democratically based on the outcomes Korea has achieved so far and to share them with the rest of the world, we need to look at the problems of COVID-19 from the educational perspective. Disasters of national and global nature, such as COVID-19, and the necessary efforts needed to overcome those issues belong to the topics democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education can actively deal with. Democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education need to ponder on how to respond to the risks and challenges of COVID-19, which are fundamentally different from those of former global disasters.

This study aims to present the directions and agendas for democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education in South Korea under the changes and challenges resulted by COVID-19. The discussions will proceed as follows: Section 2 investigates the meaning and significance of democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education in Korea; Section 3 addresses the risks caused by COVID-19 and challenges it poses to education. Section 4 deals with implications and future tasks of democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education in Korea, and Section 5 offers a conclusion.

2. The meaning and significance of Democratic Citizenship Education and Global Citizenship Education in South Korea

1) The meaning and change of Democratic Citizenship Education in South Korea

It can be said that in Korea democratic citizenship education was initiated during the period of the issuance of syllabus (1948) after the liberation. However, at that time, the concepts of 'citizenship' and 'citizenship education' had not been in place, so Korea resorted to adopting and emulating social studies which had been originally generated for citizenship education in the United States of America. The educational goal of the era to cultivate 'faithful and capable nation' of the newly founded democratic country continued, more or less, until the 1980s. Through using expressions such as 'education for the nation' or 'moral education for the nation' in place of 'democratic citizenship education', the government tried to emphasize the state regime's legitimacy and individuals' duties for the country. In the backdrop, where the focus of education was laid on establishing the model nation who would conform to the domination of the

government rather than the model citizenry empowered to decide the course of life for themselves and take responsibility for it, were the country's confrontation with North Korea, the need for building up national power, and enforcement of authoritarian state power (Gwak Byeong-seon et al., 1991: 3, 21).

The conventional form of state-centered (or government-led) education, or to be more precise, 'education for the cultivation of nation' began to change gradually with the development of the democratization movement during the 1980s. Civil society, which had been under the grip of the authoritarian governments, stepped up its demand for democratic values such as autonomy, responsibility, participation, and respect for diversity (Shin Myeong-soon 1995: 85). Particularly, after the Democratic Uprising of June 1987, democratic citizenship education was stressed more strongly in Korea (Jeong Moon-seong et al., 2018: 12).

The Korean Educational Development Institute's implementation of comprehensive studies from 1989 to 1993 on democratic citizenship education, including the development of textbooks, was closely related to this demand. Moreover, from the Sixth National Curriculum (1992), the focus of school education shifted from 'nation' to 'democratic citizens', with the goal of social studies set on 'nurturing democratic citizens' who would contribute to the development of individuals, society, country and humankind. With the further progress of democratization in the 1990s, the previous statist overtone in democratic citizenship education conceded to a newer form, which was reflective of school democracy and social change. The core contents of social studies covered human rights, globalization and civic qualities in the informatization era from the Seventh National Curriculum (1997). It was during this period that democratic citizenship education began to be incorporated into cross-curricular subjects (Park Soon-gyeong 2008, 55).

In line with this trend, democratic citizenship education was dealt with as an important topic in the domain of education by so-called conservative and progressive governments alike. In the Measures for the Vitalization of Democratic Citizenship Education prepared by the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology in 2010 under a conservative government, democratic citizenship education was set out as "education to nourish the capacities required of members of the community for continuous development of democratic society (participation and responsibility, communication, mediation of conflicts, problem-solving, etc.) and put them into action (the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology of Korea 2010). In 2018, the Ministry of Education under the progressive government had the Comprehensive Plans for the Vitalization of

Democratic Citizenship Education, and the document defines democratic citizenship education as "education that pursues to enhance the capabilities of democratic citizens to be autonomous and think critically, to respect the values of democracy and coexist in harmony" (the Ministry of Education of Korea 2018). These facts confirm that governments of either political tendency have commonly accentuated democracy and the community members' active role in it through democratic citizenship education.

Meanwhile, the regional and local Offices of Education and research organizations have made efforts to contemplate on and reformulate the conceptualization, principles of implementation, and curricula with regards to democratic citizenship education (Jeong Moon-seong et al., 2018; Jeong Weon-gyu et al. 2019; Lee Ssang-cheol et al., 2019). Particularly, the notion of 'autonomous citizen' stressed by the Ministry of Education was concretized to be 'citizen as the master of oneself' in the reports by Jeong Weon-gyu et al. (2019) and Lee Ssang-cheol et al., 2019). The former defined democratic citizenship education in school as "education which lends maximum support for students to view themselves as their own masters and on that basis, fully understand and utilize the ideals and institutions of democracy as well as extend and apply them to the problems of their own and society at large." Here the term 'masters' does not refer to sovereign people as defined by the state, but those who can make decisions on their own lives situated in an array of communities (Seol Kyu-joo et al., 2020). To become citizens as their own masters means to not only attain knowledge on the political system surrounding them, but also acquire the abilities to comprehend and assess social phenomena (e.g. critical thinking skills and problem-solving skills) and attitudes of respecting and practicing the values of democracy—such as rights and duties, political participation, human rights, and respect for diversity—as members of various communities, including the country and the world.

To summarize, previously, democratic citizenship education in Korea used to focus on fostering nation who would devote themselves to the country as its sovereign members. Accordingly, the state played a leading role in its implementation and used it at times as a means to publicize the regime's legitimacy and ideologies (Han Seung-heui et al., 2002). With the steady progress of democratization, however, criticism and reflection on the statist brand of democratic citizenship education ensued, spurring the growth of a different form oriented toward essential values of democracy. Furthermore, today's democratic citizenship education in Korea moves beyond national ideologies and values and has transformed to emphasize human rights, freedom, equality, and solidarity in various communities, embracing the regional community and the global village (Kang

Yeong-hye et al., 2015, 3).

2) The meaning and significance of Global Citizenship Education in South Korea

Generally speaking, citizenship of the nation-state was dominant from the 19th century to the mid-20th century. Citizens were viewed as holding an identical status with one another and having the same rights and duties within the clearly defined spatial boundary of the nation-state. It was due to this awareness of 'same nation or people of same nationality' that the nation-state's citizens could be brought together as one. In this setting, world history evolved around nationalism and nation-states till the second half of the 20th century.

Along with the expansion of the global market driven by transnational capital and the collapse of the communist bloc in Eastern Europe, the trend of globalization grew widespread, binding the whole world like one gigantic entity. In the current of globalization, various actors other than states, such as individuals, NGOs, and regions, crossed borders to set out in the world, increasing interdependence of the planet even further. This transformation worked out to alter the mode of resolving global problems. Issues which had been previously decided and dealt with independently by nation-states are now tackled by a significant number of related actors, including states, joining efforts together.

Korea began to respond actively to globalization following the government's "Declaration of Globalization" in 1995. It was from the Seventh National Curriculum (1997), that GCED was introduced in full scale. Although expressions such as "contribute to world peace and co-prosperity of the human race" (1973) or "realization of the idea of co-prosperity of humankind" (1987) appeared in the previous national curricula, "qualities to be equipped with as world citizens" was mentioned explicitly for the first time in the seventh national curriculum.

This attribute can also be found in the social studies curricula. While up to the 1980s social studies education portrayed the world as a setting in which to strengthen Korea's national competitiveness, it addressed the topics of globalization and global citizens squarely from the seventh national curriculum. In the subsequent rounds of the national curricula on social studies, they are emphasized over and over in both the overall goal and detailed standards of achievement.

Globalization and global citizens are closely tied in Korea's global citizenship education. That is because the advancement of globalization calls for global citizenship for the rational control and guiding of globalization. Global citizenship is accentuated to

allow effective response to the duality of globalization. On the one hand, globalization brings the world together via active global exchange and makes life more convenient; on the other hand, it tends to deepen inequalities. Not all individuals or countries benefit from it; some people and some regions may be vulnerable to damage and hardships. To adequately respond to the problems, we need to take a step back from particular settings, e.g. groups, localities, or nations, and consider and appraise them in the perspective of universal values to be pursued by 'human beings'.

In this regard, global citizenship can be defined as supranational reflection and participation in pursuit of universal values such as democracy, human rights, etc. Global citizens with these qualities approach issues like the environment, human rights, peace, antiwar, relief, and infectious diseases from the viewpoint of entire humankind beyond the stance of specific groups, localities, or nations, and engage actively for their resolution. It is global citizenship of this nature which Korea aims to promote in its global citizenship education.

Elements of global citizenship which are the objectives global citizenship education may be composed in several ways, one of which is presented in Table 1 (Lee Seung-yeon et al., 2015). The three elements below are in equal and circular relations rather than suppose any causality or order; it would be appropriate to view that one element essentially requires the others.

Firstly, love of humanity is based on human dignity, which is an ideal of democracy. Democracy is not just a political system supposed at an individual national level but a principle of social constitution geared to preserve the universal value of respect for humans, and it forms the foundation of global citizenship.

Secondly, global identity means that one is not just confined by a specific context of a group or nation and but finds oneself as a member of the global community. As a global citizen exercises the ability to connect his/her world view (shaped in everyday life) with global problems, he/she attaches global-level meanings to particular matters as well as projects his/her own views onto them, thus developing an identity as a global citizen.

Thirdly, global participation refers to efforts to reorient the course of global issues in a more desirable direction based on sincere concerns with them. Based on an extended (global) identity, global citizens connect their world views with the global community, understand major issues taking place in the global village, regard them as their own and form alliance, and participate in improving and resolving them (Sant et al., 2018).

Table 1. Elements of Global Citizenship

Elements of global citizenship		Knowledge relating to global citizenship	Skills/values/attitudes relating to global citizenship
Humanity	⇒	Understanding of democracy and fundamental democratic values	Respect for human rights; orientation towards tolerance and social justice
Global identity	⇒	Understanding of globalization and global interactions	Awareness of the global community; recognition of self and others as global citizens and related attitudes
Global participation	⇒	Understanding of problems facing the global village	Exploration and participation in actions to resolve global problems

3. National and international changes and challenges due to COVID-19: challenges and opportunities

Global disasters such as COVID-19 pose questions as to how Korea's democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education should proceed in the future. Before answering, let me examine the changes and challenges it has brought about in Korea and the world in terms of its risks and challenges.

1) Risks caused by COVID-19

Disconnection and lockdown

COVID-19 has caused disconnection in relations among people, localities, and nations. Here, disconnection means physical, not psychological cutoff. The disconnection between localities or countries can also be expressed as lock-down. The world's first COVID-19-caused lock-down took place in Wuhan, China. As the virus infections spread out of control, the Chinese government locked the city down in January 2020. Although quite a few people were left to die helplessly in the isolated municipality, the government noted that it was an unavoidable action to contain the spread before it became worse.

The lockdown measure was criticized severely by Western societies. However, as the infections spread rapidly across the world, a large number of countries, including those in the West, took the same course of action. When the infections concentrated in certain

areas in a country, they were closed down. When confirmed coronavirus cases increased rapidly in a country, other countries reacted by locking down their borders against entrants from that country. Airways began to be blocked one after another. In some cases, flights already in the air bound for a foreign destination were denied landing in the country of arrival and had to be rerouted to where it came from. Large cruise ships with thousands of passengers on board roamed the sea, unable to obtain a disembarkation permit from any country. Lockdowns continued for several weeks to months and had the cycles of lifting and reinforcement depending on the development of the situation.

In the case of Korea, when the number of confirmed coronavirus cases spiked in Daegu Metropolitan City and North Gyeongsang Province in February 2020, public opinion on the need for closing both areas down surfaced briefly. However, it was never implemented. The residents were neither prohibited from going out nor was there a curfew. To some relief, people refrained from visiting the region, while the locals limited themselves from going out and stayed at home as much as they could. Instead of a regional shutdown, the 'social distancing' measure, which the public complied to voluntarily, produced a deterrent effect as powerful as a lockdown. From then on, Korea managed to maintain a relatively stable condition.

It was, to some extent, unavoidable that many countries turned to the measure of lockdowns to block the spread of the infectious disease. As the quarantine system and circumstances differ from state to state, it is difficult to make a sweeping criticism. However, one thing is clear: lockdown restricts civil liberty, a fundamental value of democratic society, as well as causes inconvenience in daily life and economic damage. Moreover, 'physical' disconnection and closedown can lead to 'emotional' isolation and estrangement, depending on the circumstances of a country or region. These problems pose a fundamental question about how to strike a balance between 'security of society at large' and individual rights, in the face of a situation to control the spread of an infectious disease.

Stigma and Hatred

COVID-19 caused stigmatization and hatred against certain states, nationalities, groups, and individuals. The facets and targets of hatred, stigma, and discrimination ran a wide gamut. Firstly, there was hatred against the Chinese. Believing that the disease originated in China, not a few people were wary of or resistance to Chinese people, whether or not they were infected with the coronavirus (Ahn Heui-gyeong 2020: 127).

Some Koreans expressed repulsion even against the Korean-Chinese community which has been in Korea for a long time

Secondly, as the number of people tested positive for COVID-19 rose sharply in Daegu and North Gyeongsang Province, a large share of which was taken up by members of a religious group known as 'Shincheonji' (New Heaven and Earth), a stigma against its followers and the region emerged. In particular, the stigma and hostility intensified as it was known that Shincheonji believers tried to conceal information on their itineraries and the people whom they were in close contact with, going against the quarantine authorities' guidelines featuring swift testing, isolation of infected persons and treatment.

Thirdly, in May 2020, when the COVID-19 situation was managed stably in Korea, the news about some patients infected with the coronavirus in gay clubs broke out. As a result, negative public views were formed against sexual minorities. Even if they had nothing to do with the coronavirus, the mere fact that some infected people visited gay bars generated hostility towards the sexual minority community as a whole.

Fourthly, there was, perhaps more than anything else, stigma against the infected people themselves. While some were infected for not taking sufficient caution, most were inflicted from incidental contacts with other infected persons. However, the stigma was attached to them indiscriminately. Whether it was due to lack of caution or simply for bad luck, they were stigmatized merely because they were infected with the disease. Moreover, the physical isolation of infected people for treatment led to psychological and emotional estrangement and made them into targets of hostility.

Disparities and Inequalities

COVID-19 has deepened disparities and inequalities between people and countries. First, it confirms the undeniable presence of inequality between classes. The same phenomenon has occurred in the outbreak of the Spanish flu as well (Kim Seok-hyeon et al., 2020, 309). The coronavirus has spread in both developed and developing countries, but within a country, it tends to affect the lower-income classes more severely than the upper class. For example, in the United States, underpaid blacks were found to be exposed to greater risks of the infection and suffer the most (Baik Yeong-gyeong 2020, 113). This pattern was not much different in other countries, such as the United Kingdom (Ahn Heui-gyeong 2020, 155). Moreover, the low-income group undergoing economic hardships were more likely to have a lack of information and means to prevent infection or fail to comply with prevention guidance as they may have a misconception about the pandemic or inappropriate habits. Similarly, confirmed

coronavirus cases in Korea are more pronounced among people with less favorable working conditions, such as a small, closed space with bad airflow (Workers Solidarity 2020).

Secondly, COVID-19 has intensified income disparity. Those who are having stable jobs, e.g. government employees and large corporate workers, experienced a slight decrease in income even in the pandemic. In contrast, those who are working in the industries of culture, arts, and performance were hit hard. Several countries, including Korea, distributed 'disaster relief funds' in the form of cash or voucher as a part of the efforts to alleviate income gaps. However, as this form of support is only temporary, income inequality is very likely to worsen as the COVID-19 situation is protracted. (Hankoreh, 2020)

Thirdly, COVID-19 also caused gaps and inequalities in education. Many countries in the world, including Korea, implemented full or partial online school classes. To ensure its effectiveness, online classes require some conditions, such as the distribution of relevant equipment, the ability to utilize the equipment, and the availability of online contents. Some students could not access online classes resulted from a lack of equipment or relevant ability, depending on the conditions of the families, individuals, or localities. Even in Korea, which is renowned for its position as an IT powerhouse, single-parent families and grandparent-grandchild families which consist of grandparents and grandchildren had difficulties in ensuring students can participate fully in online classes (Save the Children 2020; Dongailbo 2020). These problems can also occur at the international level. According to the Internet World Stats, Africa's Internet connectivity rate remained at 40% in 2019, much lower than those of Europe (88%) and the United States (95%) (Pak Soon-Yong 2020, 194-195). This finding implies that students' rights to education in certain regions could be compromised more seriously.

Controversy on human rights violation

COVID-19 generated a debate on the violation of human rights. In Korea, the patients' itineraries were traced through epidemiological investigations, which were then posted on relevant local governments' homepages for public view. Moreover, people who were in close contact with the patient were required to be tested for the virus. These actions stirred up a controversy on 'quarantine vs human rights', i.e. whether publicization of private information of the infected should be allowed for infection control.

As a matter of fact, public notification of information relating to infected persons in Korea may not be regarded as an excessive measure. Their names, ages, and

occupations were not revealed; serial numbers assigned to them in the order of the confirmation of infection were released in addition to the names of places they visited at which date and time. However, information of the infected people disclosed by the press generally carries more details. For instance, when there were news reports that someone was infected while having a meal in a group after playing golf, or people were infected collectively in a religious gathering, golf club members or specific religious groups, were targeted for criticism. Irrespective of the quarantine authorities' initial intent to identify those who were in close contact with infected persons and have them tested on the virus preemptively, information on their itineraries and routes of infection was used for blaming them, touching off the issue of human rights violation. In addition, large-scale outdoor rallies were banned for concerns about transmitting the infectious disease, which also raised the dispute of infringement of human rights.

At the global level, the issue of restricting individual autonomy concerning mask-wearing in public places, for example, on public transportation, arose. It was not much of an issue in East Asian countries, including Korea, where mask-wearing was mostly voluntary (ChosunBiz 2020). However, in some Western societies such as the United States, mandatory mask-wearing is refused or protested as an infringement of individual liberty. In those societies, many were resistant to masks, as they were often associated with terrorism or illness (ChosunBiz 2020). Also, rallies against lockdowns by the central and local governments in Western countries could be understood as a request to stop undermining individual freedom and rights.

2) Opportunities and challenges due to COVID-19

Realization of the interconnectedness of the global village

Disconnections and lockdowns around the world due to COVID-19, paradoxically, have offered us an opportunity to realize how we are closely connected. Needless to say, the connectedness of the world was prevalent before the coronavirus pandemic. Under the tide of globalization, the world functioned as an immense market and exhibited a high level of interdependence across various domains, e.g. technology, economy, culture, environment, and politics.

However, before the pandemic outbreak, we did not realize how deeply the world had penetrated our lives. For instance, although we had been told for decades that the world should work together to respond to the environmental crisis, we did not feel its urgency. When a war or a natural disaster erupted somewhere in the global village, we expressed sympathy or made donations as an act of solidarity, but still there existed some distance

between ourselves and the world. The world, as we perceived in those contexts, was much more abstract and distant than how we felt about the world during the pandemic. COVID-19 clearly made us feel that the world is a 'global village' literally, not metaphorically. It felt as if an asteroid or an extraterrestrial was intruding into the earth like in the movies.

This serves as an important resource for global citizenship education. That is because, through our confrontation with the fact that a disaster originated somewhere in the world could make enormous impacts on the whole world simultaneously, we came to realize more clearly than any previous knowledge or imploration that our planet is 'indeed' one unit. Hoping that one's country would be an exception, he or she could try desperately to prevent the disease, but sooner or later he or she would realize that it would be ultimately impossible and entirely inescapable.

Practice of solidarity

As the global community is so closely connected, each individual can respond in different ways when faced with a disaster or hardship that is spread to people all around the world. One type of responses is 'despair'. It is the approach to face the fact that there is little an individual or nation could do to prevent the immense global disaster and wait it out. Another response is to form 'solidarity'; hold hands and respond collectively because global problems such as COVID-19 cannot be, in nature, contained by a single country's or individual's effort. No country has been utterly successful in controlling it, but more successful and less successful ones can share their experiences to learn from each other and reduce trials-and-errors. Of course, we should choose the latter.

Here, solidarity can be considered in two dimensions. One is national solidarity. In January and February 2020, hundreds of Koreans in Wuhan had evacuated and returned home on chartered flights arranged by the Korean government, and they needed places to stay for 2-week compulsory isolation. Some residents of the cities selected as the temporary quarantine facilities initially resisted the idea strongly over the fear of infection. However, they soon changed their attitudes and embraced them warmly. It was the same as those of other selected cities. No matter how dreadful the disease might be, people hoping to return to their homelands could not be rejected. They had to be housed somewhere in the country. The residents of areas designated for quarantine might have thought 'why here?', but they overcame it with solidarity and tolerance, which was appreciated by the Wuhan evacuees and other Koreans at home.

The second is international solidarity. Although in the early stage of COVID-19, countries were focusing solely on their own quarantine measures before considering other countries. However, international support for those having a weak quarantine system and lack of quarantine materials gradually emerged. Korea assisted vulnerable and needy countries with quarantine materials such as the COVID-19 diagnosis kits and masks (Hankukgyeongje 2020; Yonhap News TV 2020). The Cambodian government welcomed the Westerdam cruise ship to disembark, which had been wandering in the sea as no country wanted to accept it. The World Health Organization praised the country for demonstrating international solidarity (Son Cheol-seong 2020, 211). Moreover, the Israeli government extended emergency support to Palestinians, with whom it has hostile relations, and asked for their cooperation with infection control at the same time (Zizek 2020; Kang U-seong trans. 2020, 31).

These cases of solidarity in the face of the global disaster lay important foundation for democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education. If residents of the cities selected for housing Korean evacuees from disease-spreading regions had refused to accept them to the end, the government should have turned to other cities with the same request. However, they showed solidarity and welcomed them warmly. This can be a good example of practicing democracy, which puts the highest priority on human dignity. Likewise, the donation of quarantine materials overseas and permission of disembarkation of cruise ships would have been inconceivable without the sense of identity and responsibility as members of the global community. These actions were also practiced based on respect for basic human rights. Therefore, they can be excellent cases illustrating the *raison d'être* and the value of global citizenship education.

Rapid increase of non-face-to-face contacts

One of the most frequently employed guidelines for coronavirus infection control is to refrain from going out or gathering with others. In the initial phase of the pandemic, people responded mostly by postponing it, but as the situation prolonged, non-face-to-face contacts were employed more and more. Many firms and organizations opted for the work-at-home regime for social distancing, replacing conventional meeting rooms with Google Meet or Zoom. Even if video calls and video conferences had been in use before the pandemic, we only get used to the non-face-to-face environment now.

Education was no exception. The non-face-to-face mode was introduced in full scale in education, which is often cited as a domain where change is rather slow. In 2020,

elementary and secondary schools in Korea delayed the starting date of the semester by a month and a half from the original schedule and then tried the 'back to school online'. It is highly possible that everyone in the field of public education, including teachers, parents, students, or educational officials, must have felt pressure and burden before this new learning setting started. In the beginning, both teachers and students of online lessons felt as if they were wearing ill-fitting clothes, but it became the main trend gradually. A considerable number of elementary schools had more non-face-to-face classes than face-to-face, while many universities had only non-face-to-face classes through the entire spring semester.

How people felt about non-face-to-face gatherings or online classes would differ from one to another, e.g. strange, curious, uncomfortable, inconvenient, annoying, convenient, etc. However, everyone would agree that it has become a feature of our lives and we are getting used to it. It is because we experience in person that non-face-to-face gatherings can be held at any time in any setting, late at night, over lunch, at home, in a cafe, in a car, or even while walking.

The rapid growth of non-face-to-face contacts can work out as a new environment for democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education. While the weight of online interaction in our lives is increasing, democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education have been implemented mostly based on in-person contact. Although a non-face-to-face contact does not give as much liveliness and present sense as face-to-face contact, its feature of providing communication opportunities unbound by time and space can present a critical setting for education.

Affirmation of the importance of educational response

Due to COVID-19, the world became disconnected and closed down, while hatred and stigmatization were on the increase. Disparities and inequalities deepened, and the debate on human rights violation emerged. Economic fallouts and complaints of depression heightened. However, it is challenging to find short-term remedies to fix these problems. Even if effective vaccines and cures are developed, it will take quite a while for us to overcome its scars and reverberations and return to the daily routines we used to have.

Nevertheless, it is doubtful whether the turmoil and sufferings we have gone through will be gone as time goes by. At this juncture, we look to the role of education. Many have recognized the need to engage in educational discussions and actions to address and tackle various problems caused by COVID-19; how each individual, state, and

humankind should respond if a problem of this sort happens again in the future, and more fundamentally, how to prepare to prevent it from recurring. Along with this, the importance and role of democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education, which Korean society is currently drawing attention to, are expected to grow further.

4. The post-COVID-19 era: Direction and agendas for democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education

1) Emphasis on the power of intra- and inter-country solidarity

Democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education of the future need to put a greater focus on the power of intra-and inter-country in response to disconnection, lockdown and fragmentation caused by COVID-19. The infectious disease cannot be coped individually; the way to address this problem is through cooperation by sharing information, knowledge, diagnosis test kits, quarantine know-how and materials, vaccines and cures. The collective effort is also required when vaccines and cures are put to use, which are under development around the world. The demand for them will be enormous globally. Even if they are developed, they may be only a 'pie in the sky' to a certain group of people. Therefore, cooperation is critical to ensure that a certain proportion of the vaccines and cures are allocated and used for people in disadvantaged countries who do not have access to medicine because of financial limitation. Even if the action is not for the great cause of humanity, it is an inevitable choice for the survival of all human beings (Zizek 2020; Kang U-seong trans., 2020, 31). Hatred and discrimination divide people, but the reality that people are extremely vulnerable to a formidable virus makes them unite (Ahn Heui-gyeong 2020, 131).

In this regard, democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education need to shed light on inequalities in health and hygiene conditions within Korea and around the world. Education should pick up the point that all places are equally vulnerable to infection transmission. However, there is a discrepancy in terms of their respective capacity for managing and controlling the disease. This relates to what Karel Vasak referred to the rights of solidarity (the right to development), or a third-generation of human rights (Kim Yeong-in et al., 2017). People in disadvantaged countries should also be able to have rights to health and safety as human beings. Education should underline that if their countries do not fully ensure their rights, the rights should be met through

solidarity of peoples in other countries. Through this process, democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education can contribute to building global health networks.

2) Focus on the power of democracy and civic participation

Democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education need to give more attention to the power of democracy and civic participation in reaction to discrimination, hatred and human rights violation caused by COVID-19. Neither lockdowns nor hatred and discrimination can control it effectively. We should lean on democracy, even if it involved a slow and weary process. Holding on to the belief that "democracy is mighty," we should take utmost care to protect democratic values (Allen et al., 2020; Ahn Heui-gyeong 2020, 208). Democracy built on the tenet of human dignity is the principal starting point and the goal of democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education.

One of the feats that Korea is noted for in its response to COVID-19 is that it has not undermined democracy, e.g. individual freedom and human rights (Kim Seok-hyeon et al. 2020). This is, indeed, of high significance. In 1951, a few years after the establishment of the Korean government, a journalist with The Times in the United Kingdom commented that the expectation of democracy to bloom in Korea is like hoping for a rose to bloom in a garbage can (Seol Kyu-joo 2018, 121). However, decades later, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit Democracy Index 2019, Korea was ranked 23rd with a score of 8 out of 10 (EIU 2019). It was the highest in Asia. How Korea has responded in the pandemic proves that the ranking was not just numerical.

The values of democracy must be extended broadly without disregarding minorities and foreigners at home and abroad. Although Korea is still not very tolerant towards sexual minorities, they were arranged to be tested safely without disclosing their identities when they accounted for a majority of newly confirmed coronavirus cases which were rising sharply over a period. Moreover, unregistered foreigners received tests without fears of deportation. These actions were made based on the principle that the provision of coronavirus tests to those in need of them is not a matter of sexual orientation or nationality, but human rights and democracy. Democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education should highlight this point.

It was mentioned in Section 2 that democratic citizenship education emphasizes citizens as their own masters and global citizenship education draws attention to supranational reflection and participation. For the life of individuals, safety in society,

and sustainable coexistence of members of the global village, citizens should be able to decide and practice what is essential and meaningful in the lives of themselves and community from the perspective of democracy which imparts the prime value to human beings.

3) Focus on the power of critical thinking and debate

Democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education should emphasize the power of critical thinking and debate in response to the increase of various issues internally and externally (Levinson 2020). In relation with this, it is important to acknowledge in Korea during the pandemic. At some point in the outbreak, people coming from overseas recorded a high rate of confirmed cases in the quarantine process. On certain days, they exceeded the number of domestic people tested positive for COVID-19, and such days were not few. Under the circumstances, some argued for the need to prohibit entries of foreigners or to close the border at least for specific countries having a large number of newly confirmed cases. This sort of claim may be raised. What is important is how to respond to it in terms of education.

As a matter of fact, banning foreigners from entering into the country or closing down the border might be somewhat helpful in diminishing anxiety for infectious disease and curtailing the quarantine workload. However, it can hardly be a radical measure to control the disease per se. That is because the chains of infections already in operation within a state will not be severed completely by blocking the overseas inflow. To the contrary, as long as the status of infected persons from overseas is thoroughly managed, it is easier to identify the routes of transmission and prepare for actions to follow. Therefore, the matter of whether to permit or prohibit foreigners' entrance should not be approached emotionally, but with critical thinking. This is also related to the power of science and information. To control the spread of infectious disease, relying on the power of objective science is more important than inciting unwarranted fear and anxiety. Sufficient information regarding the disease, e.g., possible symptoms, conditions for infection, preventive measures, and the percentage of infected persons from overseas in the total number of confirmed cases should be provided and shared through education.

It is desirable that the solution for the problem is found through debate, instead of being prefixed and given. Representation of controversial issues, which is emphasized as one of the principles of democratic citizenship education, may be applied to it. According to this principle, students should learn and explore the ongoing issues which

are actually debated in the political and academic areas. (Schiele and Schneider 1996; Jeon Mi-hye trans., 2009). An issue-centered debate can be raised on the topic of restriction of overseas entrants for the prevention of the spread of infectious disease. Democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education need to offer students educational experiences in which they select real issues in national and international contexts, critically examine accurate facts, values and the grounds of competing views, and present their own views with reasonable evidence (Pohl 2018). As Li Wenliang, the Chinese doctor who reported on COVID-19 for the first time noted, diverse voices should exist in a healthy society (Zizek 2020; Kang U-seong trans., 2020, 26).

4) Attention to the power of digital literacy

Democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education need to emphasize the power of digital literacy in the light of the reality that digital devices and non-face-to-face contacts are employed more and more. Digital literacy refers to the ability to access various types of digital media with autonomy, critically assess and use the information on offer, and express and communicate their thoughts and experiences effectively via digital media (Kim Yeong-in et al., 2017). Literacy in various types of media, including digital equipment, is a crucial feature for citizens to attain for now and the future (Burroughs et al., 2009; Mihailidis 2014).

Non-face-to-face contacts via digital devices have increased extensively in the pandemic. People need to be able to use the digital devices proactively in order to respond to the pandemic adequately. Meanwhile, it is important to promote the ability to discern false information and fake news which are transmitted and shared rapidly on digital devices. Fake news was particularly rampant as the pandemic is spreading and people are responding to it. Fake news associating the infectious disease with specific religions, individuals, regions or countries using groundless and misleading information was more readily consumed by many people, instigating anxiety, hatred and discrimination. In this aspect, fake news can be perceived as vicious as the coronavirus.

Democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education should foster citizens' citizens to recognize and respond to problems that currently exist. It aims to enable them to utilize digital technology where users actively control the devices and rationally discern the information, not controlled by the technology. Furthermore, efforts are required to develop and distribute contents on democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education, which are suitable for online platforms, e.g. digital online citizenship education programs.

5. Conclusion

Korea received universal recognition for effectively controlling the spread of COVID-19 without retreating democracy. This was possible due to devotion, trust, and collaboration of the government, health professionals and citizens. Setting out the 'cultivation of democratic citizens' as the educational goal, the country has implemented democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education especially since the 1980s and the 1990s. Although these educations have a relatively short history and a long way to go, it is notable that they have steadily emphasized democracy along the way.

If the Korean government had restricted the life of citizens in a non-democratic way and exposed excessive personal information, or if it had not made open and shared information concerning the infectious disease in its possession, the citizens might not have cooperated voluntarily with the infection prevention efforts. Even if they might have participated for some time, sooner or later they would have resisted it. Moreover, the government would not have received civic support if it had failed to continuously emphasize democracy and human rights through accepting overseas entrants and foreigners with coronavirus testing and treatment and sending quarantine materials to countries which are particularly vulnerable to the disease. It could be asserted that the government's operation of the quarantine system and civic cooperation could be realized because it is grounded on democracy, human rights, and global citizenship awareness which are accentuated in democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education. Here lies the very reason to continue practising these educations, whether a problematic situation is to occur or not right now. It is also critical to continue the two education by focusing on the planet, not as a gigantic 'market' where capital chases after profit, but as a place of living where 'humans' with dignity live (Ahn Heui-gyeong 2020, 208).

While the Word of the Year in 2020 might be 'COVID-19', As a researcher in education, I would like to suggest 'education' as the word which prevails not just 'this year' but for 'eternity', and also as the remedy to numerous problems that we will face in the future. In particular, democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education can function as the vaccines and cures in response to disconnection, lockdown, hatred, stigmatization, disparity, inequality, human rights violation, etc. in future global disasters as well as in the ongoing COVID-19 situation.

While the Korean government and people should have pride in their successful

infection control up to now, it should not lead to superiority to or degradation of other countries that have experienced more difficulties in tackling it. A party's successful experience or knowledge, if exercised wrongly, can become violence. It is what democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education take special caution against. Korea's democratic citizenship education and global citizenship education can contribute greatly to the COVID-19 situation by providing global public goods, instead of proposing Korea's educational model as a standard (Kim Seok-hyeon et al., 2020, 315). This can be done by sharing in an open-minded manner the exertions to reflect on and respond to global issues and challenges from the perspective of democracy.

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What can we learn from the pandemic of COVID-19?: An attempt to develop teaching materials for international understanding and cooperation based on Japanese educational issues



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What can we learn from the pandemic of COVID-19?:

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Kyoko Nakayama

What has changed and what has not changed because of the new coronavirus pandemic? The new coronavirus (COVID-19) has given us an opportunity to pause and reflect on our increasingly fast-paced society. At the same time, many people have become concerned about health care, family life and employment. In these times, how can we hope for the future? What can we learn from COVID-19? The global spread of the disease has led to racism, increased use of Internet Communication Technology (ICT) and a return to manual labor. In Japan, there was a controversy over “self-restraint”, and the sudden closure of schools caused social chaos. After the initial panic period, people calmed down, observed their lives and social movements, and realized they have something to learn.

1. Corona disaster and racism

Several factors influenced the prevalence of racism during the onset of the crisis, including COVID-19's outbreak in the Wuhan market in China, the fact that the market dealt with food that Westerners did not like to eat, the alleged problems with the Chinese government's initial response, and the tension between American President Trump and the Chinese government.

Even after COVID-19 was recognized, Chinese tourists continued to visit Japan and there were fears that they might be infected with COVID-19, which led to criticism of Chinese tourists in Japan as well. Unfortunately, Chinese people living in Japan were also shunned by Japanese society. Meanwhile, news of the outbreak on the cruise ship “Diamond Princess”, docked in the Port of Yokohama, drew the world's attention, and the Japanese began to face prejudice abroad. News of discrimination against the Japanese in Europe was reported in Japan (New York Times, 2020). In fact, I was once avoided by a child in Guam, saying “Japanese, is she Corona? In the United States, the

discrimination against “Asians” spread. Nationalism may lie behind this.

As the infection spread in New York City, “infection rates by race” were released. Infection rates were higher among people with low incomes and lack of medical insurance, which delayed treatment, and because many of their jobs did not involve remote work. However, there was also a nuanced discourse as if “blacks” were “spreading the infection”. Racism may lie behind this.

Eventually the infection spread worldwide, and many countries shut down public travel. Foreign students and expatriates returned to their countries from all over the world. Those from Japan who had the financial resources and opportunities to return to their home countries went home, while the remaining “foreigners” lived quietly. Some universities began offering face-to-face classes on campus in June for small classes only, but most colleges and universities continue to offer online classes and international students remain back in their home countries. There are few international students on the limited-access university campuses, and the atmosphere is quiet and “homogeneous”, with only Japanese students.

The spread of COVID-19 has caused instability in people’s lives and minds, and racism has become overt in many parts of the world. Japan is no different. In Japan, mid-August is a special period known as “Obon”. Relatives and families gather to welcome the spirits of their ancestors and spend time together. It is an important national event for young people living in the city to return home and spend time with their parents and the elderly. Every year the bullet trains are filled to capacity, the stations are overflowing, and the highways are jammed. This year, however, the scene was quite different. The younger generation was reluctant to return home. This was not only because of a conscious effort to avoid infecting the elderly, but also because of the unique Japanese “eyes of the local community”. People were reluctant to look upon the “urban youths” for fear of infection, blaming those who moved across the region, blaming the young people who returned home, and criticizing the families who welcomed them. Many people willingly put up invisible barriers in an attempt to isolate themselves from unnecessary trouble. Exclusive words and behavior toward people living in other areas occurred in many places. In rural areas, people were harassed and some were menaced by phone calls to their places of work whenever they became infected.

Daniel Defoe’s (1722) “Die Pest in London” details a story by Uchida (2020,16) of rural residents fleeing London during the plague epidemic and being turned away by rural residents who told them not to come. Uchida points out that, except for the fatality rate, the plague scourge in London and the corona scourge in Japan are very similar indeed.

This is a “racialization” that treats the “infected” exclusively. In other words, a situation similar to racism has arisen in the country. This can be seen in the problem of the segregation of people affected by leprosy.

2. Transition to a new world and a return to manual labor

By the end of March, the movement of people across the border was restricted to prevent the virus from entering the country. A political blame war erupted between nations over the restrictions on entry into the country. Disconnections in the name of national security management occurred in many parts of the world, giving the appearance of a global “isolation”. Logistics on a global scale were stalled. A package sent from Japan to the U.S., which normally would take a week, took four months to reach the U.S.

Day after day the Japanese media reported on the situation of the people of Wuhan, China, the medical collapse crisis in Italy, and the comments of New York Governor Andrew Cuomo. The Japanese public was horrified by the creeping outbreak of infectious diseases in Japan. Finally, a “state of emergency” was declared in Japan and people were asked to stay home.

As the “Stay Home” slogan spread and limited people’s interaction, social networking sites became even more active. Zoom became heavily used in communication, and most meetings took place on Zoom. Meetings were held online, meetings were cancelled or online, events were cancelled, and fireworks displays were virtual. Shopping depended on the Internet. Amazon gained market share, courier companies were busy, and truck drivers and deliverymen could not rest on their laurels for fear of infection. Japan’s online system had lagged behind the rest of Asia, but the rapid rollout of online classes in schools brought online systems into the home and revolutionized the Japanese educational landscape, which had always placed a high value on face-to-face education.

The gap between those belonging to the digital native generation, who are adept with ICT, and the analog native generation has widened. The older generation, who do not use the Internet, lined up at pharmacies before they opened to buy masks for their own safety and for their grandchildren and children. The working generation then complained that the elderly people were buying all the masks and that they couldn’t afford them, and the hours of mask sales became irregular, leaving the elderly unable to buy masks.

After a little while, people realized that their lives continued to function thanks to bus and truck drivers, food salesmen, and farmers who rarely get the attention of the public in their normal lives, and some people showed their gratitude to them. These appearances made news in several countries. As people became more disconnected from each other and spent more time at home, homemade masks became popular, home-cooking became a fad, growing vegetables on balconies became popular, home improvement stores became overcrowded, and a return to analog manual work took place. Many Japanese began to find value and fulfillment in “manual work”. A similar situation seemed to have occurred in other developed countries.

In Japan, the transition to a new online world and a return to manual work has occurred simultaneously in three months. Until now, even if “sustainable development” was called for and the SDGs were recognized, it was difficult to change methods and values in the real world at a rapid pace. However, the return to manual work caused by COVID-19 allowed people to take a deep breath and get a vision of the coexistence of the pursuit of convenience and slow life. It was a valuable experience in the COVID-19 Disaster.

3. “Self-soft lockdown” in Japan and the educational issues after World War II

In Japan, elementary schools, junior high schools, high schools, and special-needs schools across the country have been asked to close their schools since March 2. The suddenness of the request caused a great deal of confusion in the schools. March is the end of the school year in Japan, and teachers and children alike were busy wrapping up the year. The shock was particularly devastating to the teachers and children who were approaching the end of the school year. The suddenness of the situation forced parents to stay home, and companies across the country that handled food for school lunches cancelled orders, devastating food producers and causing social and economic chaos. Daily life, especially in schools, came to a halt. The public, while understanding the purpose of preventing an infectious explosion, smothered their discontent. Then, on March 29, as discontent grew, news of the death of a famous Japanese comedian who died of the infection at the age of 70 reached the nation. This was the first time the Japanese realized the terrible effects of corona infection. On April 7, the Japanese government declared a “state of emergency”. This marked the beginning of a cooperative

“Jishuku”, or self-restraint on the part of the Japanese people.

Japan’s “state of emergency” declaration was not enforceable. It was a “request” to cooperate, stay home and work remotely. This is different from the so-called “Lock Down” in other countries. It is not legally enforceable, but rather a “request” from the Japanese government for cooperation in “restricting” the people’s activities. It was made possible by the public’s “self-restraint” cooperation, which began with the “pain and shock” of the sudden closure of schools and the death of a famous person. “Self-restraint” means refraining from action of one’s own choice. Self-soft lockdown might be a more appropriate term.

The term “self-restraint fatigue” became popular due to having children at home, not being able to go to work, having to close shops, being asked to do favors but receiving little or no income compensation, and not being able to walk out. People began to make comments and ask questions to the government such as, “I don’t know what the criteria for self-restraint are”, “There should be a mandatory lockdown like in foreign countries”, “People who don’t accept requests are spreading the infection and there is no point in putting up with them”, and “Why don’t the police crack down on people who go out to play despite the corona clusters?”. Anger began to manifest itself.

I understand the frustrations smoldering in society and the claims of young people. At the same time, however, the challenges of social studies education have been exposed. Based on the remorse of falling into militarism, after World War II, Japan did not allow power to be concentrated in the hands of the “state” and created a democratic society in which the military and state power could not forcibly control the people. It was the “freedom” and “rights” that the people gained after the pain of war. Even though there are economic disparities and people living in poverty in a competitive society, there is still “uncontrolled freedom” and that is valuable. Nevertheless, many people blamed the government, saying that the government should punish those who did not cooperate, that the government was ambiguous, and that the military or police should control them like in other countries. There was a challenge in post-war social studies education with regard to teaching students the historical context of the founding of a Japanese democratic state and society that had renounced war and the value of having freedom of decision-making and choice of action as citizens. Frustration and criticism of the government and administration was common in the media and in the public conversation. However, citizens lacked a sense of participation in their own society and a sense of protecting their own society with their freedoms and rights. Very few young people expressed the will that it was their responsibility as citizens to protect society.

One of the goals of social studies education has been to develop civic qualities. If this is accomplished in schooling, we will see proactive action, not complaining, and an awareness and action to protect society.

Rather than complaining about the state's lack of control in this global coronavirus outbreak, people should understand the value of freedom, be grateful that they still have a home, a family, friends, food, and the ability to work, and develop an open mind to support those around them. It is desirable to develop citizenship in education so that the younger generation will not simply say "the state should control them", ignoring the generation that defended Japan's freedom and human rights in the post-war period, based on their reflection on the war. Moreover, that citizenship should not be about "as a Japanese citizen", but rather about global citizenship in the case of matters occurring on a global scale. In any case, we need to cultivate awareness as citizens who protect "society".

4. Children and school

On the other hand, there were some positive changes in the community as a result of the schools closing. Before the epidemic, children went to lessons or cram school after school and not many of them played in the park. However, cram schools were closed and classes for lessons were also closed, so children had more time and energy to spare. Around two or three o'clock children would come out of their homes to play, and then return home at five o'clock, as local broadcasts encouraged them to do so. The sight of children of all ages and grade levels outside playing in the park is a reminder of what Japan was like 40 years ago. When observing the parks, I saw children who at first played individually or in groups of a few people playing, but now they were spending time in groups of different ages, and their social skills were growing stronger and more resilient. Children were rather more active in the community during the closure than during normal times, when they were more individualistic. Adults who went out for a walk to get some exercise exchanged greetings with each other. COVID-19 did not only cause a disconnection between people. A more aware sense of community had arisen in people who had become increasingly individualistic.

The infectious disease pandemic caused school closures in many countries and regions around the world. In Japan, when public schools were closed, teachers were ordered to work from home. The teachers' main job at home was to research teaching materials,

make printouts for self-study for students who stayed at home, and grade them. Some teachers were required to email the principal in the morning to inform him or her of the start of work and to report for duty in the evening. Public school teachers with civil servant status are not allowed to go shopping or other activities during work hours. Teachers living in cramped apartments were not allowed to go out in the bright daytime and were forced to spend their days in solitude. Some serious teachers lamented that they could not even go out on the balcony to hang their laundry out to dry because it was “during work hours” and they didn’t want to be seen doing so. They were almost under house arrest.

At the same time, in some cases, teachers were required to print out copies for home study and distribute them on bicycles, as some families did not have Internet access. Once school reopened, teachers were forced to work long hours and were exhausted by the disinfecting work, meetings, and days spent digesting lessons and ensuring academic achievement. There was no time to think globally. Most of the teachers whose actions were restricted, who were required to report, and who were faced with the question of how to guarantee learning during their absences could not have the perspective that they were now living global history. I wonder if the situation is similar in other parts of the world.

In school education, the history of infectious diseases such as the plague and the Spanish flu have been told and remembered by people in world history textbooks. If professional educators are sensitive to the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic around the world, then teachers can give students and parents the opportunity to learn valuable lessons from a global perspective, rather than complaining about the inconveniences brought about by the corona pandemic.

Researchers and practitioners should show students and teachers the significance and importance of learning from this global issue. If we can make students think that we are connected to the rest of the world, that our country can only solve its problems in cooperation with other countries, that someone else’s suffering is coming to us, and that’s why we should do what we can do now, then we will become global citizens and be much better prepared to deal with future crises.

5. Considering COVID-19 as a teaching resource for international understanding

One of the reasons why new infectious diseases have become more frequent in recent years is due to the global destruction of the environment. As the number of species dying off due to global warming and environmental destruction caused by development increases and biodiversity is lost, this affects the hosts of the viruses, causing them to change to survive (Amagasa, 2020). The world must come together in solidarity, which is something that countries are now realizing. Humanity must respect the common values of humanity and work for mutual understanding and not be obsessed with its own greed.

For this purpose, global citizenship education is paramount, and we propose a lesson plan for cultivating sensitivity as a global citizen by considering the issues of racism, the progress of ICT, the value of manual work, the awareness of protecting society and citizenship mentioned above, with COVID-19 as the theme. The following seven ideas for lesson design present the core ideas. The teacher should organize the unit according to the level of developmental stage, subject matter and number of hours.

What has “Stay Home” made us realize?

- (1) Think about what changes occurred in our lives when we couldn't go outside to avoid getting infected. Students make a list of what actually happened in their community and abroad.
- (2) Ask students to talk about the differences between staying at home because of their own decisions and staying at home because they are required to.
- (3) Conversely, ask students to reflect on what kinds of people had to continue to work instead of staying home, and how they felt about themselves having to spend time at home compared to those people.
- (4) Have students discuss what they have noticed about staying home longer.
- (5) Have students discuss what they thought about while watching the news about the world's infection situation from home.

Description

“Stay home” became a watchword for the whole world. And people around the world shared their pain and a sense of shared “endurance” of having to stay home instead of the free life they had taken for granted. In this lesson, people can consider both the

pain of being restricted in their actions, and the responsibility and irresponsibility of acting freely. Students can reflect on the fact that there are people in the world who are not able to act freely due to political circumstances and their rights. In the COVID-19 disaster, some people must go to work to support the lives of others, and we want students to learn to respect those people. By watching the news of the infection around the world from the safety of their homes and contemplating how they perceive the world, students can understand connections to the world they would not normally be aware of.

“There’s no mask!” Thinking from this crazy situation

- (1) Students will find out the price of masks before COVID-19 spread to their country or region.
- (2) Students will find out how much they cost when they were the most expensive and how much they cost now. Ask students to think about why masks are in short supply.
- (3) Students discuss other items that have become scarce and have emptied supermarket shelves in addition to masks.
- (4) Ask students to think about why their country has not produced goods that protect health and safety, and discuss how it should be done in the future.
- (5) Have students think about why handmade masks and fashionable cloth masks have become so popular and think about “sustainable production”.

Description

In many countries there was a shortage of masks. In Japan, the price of masks rose abnormally high and the people learned the dangers of relying on imports. A phenomenon known as “hoarding” occurred and masks as well as toilet paper disappeared from shelves. Students discussed the herd mentality in which hoarding occurs, and the opportunity to learn the importance of sharing rather than individualism in times of uncertainty in life, such as in times of disaster. The shortage of non-woven masks has led to an increase in the number of people around the world making their own masks, and a wide variety of mask designs have been sold. I was able to reevaluate the value of the slow life. In this class, students can think about sustainable production through the case of masks.

The World's Infectious Diseases: "Humanity" has been battling infectious diseases

- (1) Students investigate infectious diseases that have spread in the past, such as cholera, malaria, smallpox, tuberculosis, plague, leprosy, syphilis, and influenza.
- (2) Students notice that infectious diseases have grown in scale due to contact and exchange of peoples and cultures, the expansion of the European world, and the unification of the world.
- (3) Students will notice that war has spread infectious diseases.
- (4) Students will understand that infectious diseases are not the problem of one nation, but rather a challenge that must be faced by the world in cooperation, and that it may happen again in the future.
- (5) Students will write an essay on the theme of globalism and infectious diseases.

Description

Humans have been battling viruses since ancient times. Traces of smallpox have been found in Egyptian mummies. Smallpox became a pandemic with Columbus' arrival in the Americas, but was declared eradicated by the WHO in 1980. Infectious disease pandemics have been occurring since the 18th century due to the accelerated global migration of people. I want to remind students that human behavior is also causing infectious diseases. As the environment changes due to overwhelming development, viruses evolve for survival. Epidemics have affected global history (McNeill, W.H., 1976). Some common viruses such as chicken pox are usually mild and short lived, but will reemerge decades later in the form of "shingles" in older adults.

Herpes is another common virus that can be treated but it never leaves the body. It will reemerge throughout a person's life in the form of "cold sores".

Measles, mumps, and other infectious diseases continue to affect, sometimes seriously, millions throughout the world and may never be eradicated. As long as global movement of goods and people and development continues, it is an opportunity to understand that humanity must be prepared to confront infectious diseases, while at the same time thinking about sustainable development.

Has the problem of leprosy isolation been overcome?

- (1) Students will investigate what kind of disease leprosy is.
- (2) Students will research the history of leprosy isolation around the world.
- (3) Students will discuss how the isolation of people with leprosy is a violation of their rights.

- (4) Have students discuss what rights are being violated by the isolation of leprosy patients.
- (5) Students will investigate whether former patients and their families suffered discrimination.
- (6) Students will identify what is common to COVID-19 and what is not.
- (7) Students will investigate whether incidents of discrimination against COVID-19-positive patients, their families, or people living in the affected area have occurred in the area where they live or in other areas.
- (8) Students discuss what people have learned from their experiences with leprosy and what they can use today.

Description

Leprosy, one of the oldest and most feared diseases in human history, is a chronic infection caused by *Mycobacterium leprae*, a bacterium that primarily affects the skin and nerves. Isolation is inevitable when the cause of the disease is unknown, but there is a history of continued isolation and discrimination even after a cure has been established, and families have been excluded from the community. In the case of COVID-19, quarantine was reasonable, but there was also the fact that in Japan, people who had been cured and their families were discriminated against, asked not to go to work, and had disparaging phone calls made to their workplaces. In the U.S., many people of Asian heritage are discriminated against, sometimes violently attacked, because of a fear of COVID-19. Even in cases where a person is a native born U.S. Citizen, because they look Asian (and in some cases all Asians are assumed to be Chinese and the President continues to refer to COVID-19 as the “Chinese Virus”) they are discriminated against, attacked physically, shunned, etc. This lesson provides students with the opportunity to gain proper knowledge about infectious diseases and confirm the value of building a better society.

World Solidarity

- (1) Students will examine what accusations and acts of discrimination have occurred in the world as a result of the COVID-19 outbreak. They will then consider whether or not it is justified.
- (2) Ask students to consider why COVID-19 spread and why countries restricted entry and exit from the country.
- (3) Ask students to discuss whether COVID-19 is a domestic or global problem, making

clear the reasons why.

- (4) Develop a vaccine to contain COVID-19, but ask students to predict what will happen if economically rich countries get the vaccine and poor countries do not receive it. Ask students to consider who will get priority for receiving the vaccine in their country.
- (5) Students will consider whether healthy and safe living was a reality in the world before the spread of COVID-19.
- (6) Students will discuss what exactly needs to be done to help people around the world achieve a healthy and safe life.

Description

When COVID-19 was spreading around the world, there were words and actions between nations that condemned each other and discriminated against people from certain countries and regions. There was racism lurking in the air. Ask students to think about the problems that have occurred and what could have been prevented by the restrictions on immigration around the world. Students will understand that in the global age, infectious diseases are not only a problem for the spread of disease, but also have a significant impact on logistics and economics. It is expected that a vaccine will eventually be developed, but already the trade (bargaining) between nations for a vaccine has begun. Think about the differences between countries that have access to vaccines and those that do not, and encourage students to think about how to solve the global problem. Even within Japan, who will be first in line to get the vaccine. Enough vaccine to treat everyone in Japan at the same time will not be available. Who gets the vaccine first? Old people? Children? Medical staff who are treating patients with COVID-19? Police? Ambulance drivers? Will those who have lost their jobs and become homeless because of the virus be the last ones in line for the vaccine? All countries have same situation and issues.

The Universal Teaching in “A Message from an Italian High School Principal”

- (1) Remind students of their initial feelings when school was closed, and how they felt two weeks later, and how they will feel and live a month later.
- (2) Students read a letter sent to the students by the principal of the Alessandro Volta High School in Milano, Mr. Squillace.
- (3) Students discuss which parts of the principal’s letter (message) have stayed with them.

- (4) Students think about what efforts the school teachers made to get the class online.
- (5) Have students discuss what efforts the school's teachers and staff made to get the school back in session and what efforts the students made to do so.
- (6) Students discuss what the principal meant when he said, "This pain will be an asset to you one day".
- (7) Think about the virtues of writing letters, even though the expansion of COVID-19 has made email and video calls the normal means of communication.
- (8) Write and send a letter to someone. (If possible, to someone living in a foreign country.)

Description

A letter (message) published by Domenico Squillace, the principal of a high school in Milano, Italy, in the school newsletter, has been introduced and translated in several countries. The contents of the letter would have calmed the students, who suddenly stopped school life and were filled with anxiety and frustration. No matter which country the students are from, they need to stay calm and understand their situation and stay positive. And in the midst of the massive amount of information being sent out in the advanced communication environment, "The Message" realizes the benefits of feeling the warmth of people. Until vaccines are developed, it is not possible for students to engage in international exchange at the pupil's level, so it is good to engage in exchange activities that are not only mechanical, but also give them a sense of warmth.

To The Students Of These Times,

"The pestilence, as the Tribunal of Health had feared, did enter the Milanese with the German troops. It is also known that it was not limited to that territory, but that it spread over and desolated a great part of Italy..."

The words just written above are those that open Chapter 31 of *The Betrothed* (*I promessi sposi*), a chapter that is, just as the next, entirely dedicated to the plague epidemic that hit Milan in 1630. It is an illuminating and extraordinary modern text that I recommend one reads carefully, especially in these confusing times. Everything we are experiencing now has already happened on those pages: the certainty of the danger of foreigners, the violent clash between the authorities, the spasmodic search for the so-called zero patient, the contempt for experts, the hunt for greasers, the uncontrolled voices, the most absurd remedies, the raid on basic necessities, the health emergencies. And in those pages you will come across, among other things, names that you certainly

know by frequenting the streets around our high school which, let's not forget, stands at the center of what was the lazaretto in Milan: via Ludovico Settala, via Alessandro Tadino, and via Felice Casati to list a few famous street names. You will also realize that the words and ideas from Manzoni's novel seem to have appeared from the very pages of our newspapers today.

Dear children, there is nothing new under the sun, and yet, the closing of our school requires me to send a message to you. Ours is one of those institutions that, with its rhythms and rituals, marks the passage of time and the orderly unfolding of civilian life, and the forced closure of a school is something that the authorities resort to in rare and truly exceptional cases. It is not for me to evaluate the appropriateness of this measure as I am not an expert nor do I pretend to be. I respect and trust the authorities and I scrupulously observe the indications.

What I want to tell you, however, is to keep a cool head, and to not let yourself be dragged by the collective delusion, to continue — with due precautions — to lead a normal life.

Take advantage of these days to go for walks, to read a good book, there is no reason — if you are well — to stay indoors. There is no reason to storm supermarkets and pharmacies, the masks left to those who are sick, they are only for them. The speed with which a disease can move from one end of the world to another is a sign of the times: there are no walls that can stop it, and centuries ago they moved equally, only a little slower.

One of the greatest risks in such events, Manzoni teaches us (and perhaps even more so Boccaccio), is the poisoning of social life and human relationships, along with the barbarism of civilian life. The atavistic instinct when you feel threatened by an invisible enemy is to see him everywhere, and with this comes the danger of looking at each of our fellow citizens as threats, as potential aggressors. Compared to the epidemics of the fourteenth and seventeenth centuries, we have modern medicine on our side, and believe me, its progress and its certainties are not small. Let us use the rational thought that allowed us to create said medicine so that we may preserve the most precious asset we possess, our social fabric, our humanity. If we can't do this, then the plague will have really won.

I will see you all at school,

Domenico Squillace

Restrictions on Global Human Mobility and the Global Environment

- (1) Students will examine domestic examples of environmental problems that have been improved by limiting the movement of people.
- (2) Students should study examples from other countries where environmental problems have been improved by limiting the movement of people.
- (3) Students discuss whether humanity should return to the same scale of movement of people and goods after the corona epidemic subsides.
- (4) Students discuss what humanity should and can do after the decline of the COVID-19 epidemic.

Description

There have been reported changes in the environment due to lockdowns and reduced tourism. For example, there was a decrease in vehicle emissions in cities, an improvement in trash problems in tourist areas, an easing of air pollution in Beijing, an improvement in water quality in the Venice Canal, an easing of air pollution in Honolulu, and the appearance of wildlife in the city. Although the spread of infectious diseases restricted free life, there were some good outcomes regarding the global environment. In light of this, ask students to consider whether or not people should aim to return to their traditional lives after COVID-19. In doing so, it is vital that they feel the dilemma that returning to the conventional traffic of people and goods may accelerate climate change, which is not sustainable, and that they will have to accept a restricted lifestyle if they want to maintain the environment. It is worthwhile to understand the dilemmas involved in solving global problems, and to promote the experience of making decisions based on these dilemmas in the context of international understanding.

The peace of mind brought by online education popularized by the Corona disaster

- (1) Have students discuss the changes in the use of the online education system before and after the spread of the corona infection.
- (2) Have students list the benefits of an online education system.
- (3) Have students discuss what should be done for children in environments without devices or online learning systems and the cost of maintaining them.
- (4) Ask students to consider whether schools and teachers would be unnecessary if

online education were enhanced.

Description

Online learning has been promoted in schools around the world to prevent the spread of infection. This has allowed many students to maintain their access to education. Students are able to attend classes safely, centrally and from anywhere. In addition, students who are not attending school, children with medical care needs, and children in areas where there is no school can also receive an education.

If a disaster closes a school, students can still attend classes with their classmates. In September 2020, during the Corona Disaster, extreme weather conditions caused massive wildfires in several parts of the world. In Berry Creek, California, USA, a wildfire burned down an entire town and a school. Children and teachers who were preparing for remote classes were barely able to stay connected from their evacuated locations, allowing them to stay in "school" and maintain a sense of normalcy in their familiar relationships (New York Times, September 13, 2020).

This is a model case in Japan, where disasters are frequent. Students can have relief and hope in the chaos of a disaster. Children's education can be protected in the midst of disasters around the world caused by climate change. But we must not forget the children in countries and regions that do not have these online education systems in place. As the "packaging of lessons" becomes a reality, we must also remember the respect for the teachers who look after their students and the schools that provide them with a spiritual home.

Thus, the knowledge learned and the value realized on the subject of COVID-19 will be beneficial even after corona. COVID-19 is a universal experience. There could be an exchange of international understanding in which students take the same classes and share what they have learned with each other across countries and continents. We can understand each other and feel a sense of camaraderie because we have the same experiences around the world. This may open the door to solidarity as global citizens.

6. Thinking about the way of international exchange during COVID-19

In the midst of the COVID-19 epidemic, the priorities for people are food supply, exercise and health care, and income. In this context, why are the arts important now?

Why is theatre important now? Why is international exchange important now? Some may argue that this is the case. Some might argue that keeping life together is a priority and that we don't have the time or money for art and culture. However, humans need not only a biological life-supporting supply of life, but also a sense of spiritual excitement in order to live. We can live on frozen foods for a short period of time without problems, but they are not rich in a variety of nutrients. It may not keep you healthy for long. Communicating on Zoom can be useful, but it can be difficult to build trust and create new projects.

Until now, international exchange programmes have had to work out funds for travel, accommodation, and activities, and coordinate schedules over several days in order to cross the ocean or invite guests. The online conferencing system that was made popular by COVID-19 has had a huge impact on the way people connect.

I have been conducting an international exchange program between Japan and Guam for 10 years. Guam is the southernmost island in the Mariana Islands and has a close relationship with Japan. After World War I, Japan gained control of the Northern Mariana Islands and attacked Guam on December 8, 1941, the same day it attacked Pearl Harbor. Since the 1970s, Japanese business has been largely involved in the development of Guam's resorts, and Guam has attracted about 900,000 Japanese tourists a year in most years. Guam, like Okinawa, is dominated by a U.S. military base and faces common problems. In Guam, which has been closely related to the island both historically and industrially, I have been conducting educational tours for university students and international exchange activities.

During the educational tour, the students got to know the indigenous Chamorro people of Guam in particular; just before the COVID-19 outbreak spread, Japanese students visited Guam in February 2020 and spent time with local high school students and senior citizens. The experience of visiting homes, hearing from the elderly about their memories of the Japanese colonial era, visiting actual war sites, and sharing in a Chamorro dance, an indigenous dance, brought a wealth of awareness to the students. Based on this experience, a group of high school students from Guam was scheduled to come to Japan next for an international exchange program. However, due to the spread of the infection in March, the planned visit from Guam to Japan was cancelled.

I explored new methods of interaction and used Zoom to create several opportunities for students to communicate with diverse people on Guam. For example, I invited an author from Guam to read a picture book to my students. I made some unplanned time for students in Japan and Guam to talk to each other about the weather and other

unremarkable topics of daily life. At a time when direct interaction with people is restricted, the participants found it stimulating to be able to “stay connected to the rest of the world without leaving home” through the screen. Until now, online conference systems have only been used in “formal occasions” at schools and other special institutions, but to suddenly be connected to multiple people from all over the world, and to have the living room of one’s home become a place of international exchange, was revolutionary.

At first, the students were fascinated by the fun of international communication through the screen in a large group. However, they were unable to experience the happiness of finally meeting each other, the joy of sharing a space together, the fun of understanding each other through activities, and the experience of being moved to tears together. They can’t feel the tropical atmosphere or strong sunshine, and they lack a sense of place. There is a Japanese proverb, “eating rice from the same pot”. This means to value the camaraderie and bonds that are created when people eat and sleep together. Receiving all sorts of signals from the people around you, palpable signals, gestures, and nuances of understanding are very important for people from different cultures to understand each other, and in Zoom you can’t eat the same food from the same bowl of rice, even if you can connect through a screen.

Online conferencing tools such as Zoom are one of the new methods of international exchange in the corona and post-corona era. It allows for the exchange of information without financial and time burdens. It allows us to express international understanding in a new way, through collaborative works using video images. In the post-Corona era, we will need to make effective use of these tools to increase opportunities for exchange between foreigners at a low cost, while at the same time cherishing the value of a “eating rice from the same pot”. After experiencing the convenience of “easy connections”, people may become weary of methods that are financially and time-consuming.

But the experience of meeting people from a foreign country away from their daily lives, doing something together with people from different cultures, and experiencing the restlessness and stimulation of spending time with people from different political, social and religious backgrounds will be qualities of cooperation and coexistence.



Left: Students from Guam and Japan communicated via Zoom at their own homes.

Right: Author and artist, Judy Flores introduced her art book to Japanese students via Zoom.

7 . Conclusion

STEM subjects (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) are essential for the development of science and the sustainability of modern life. At the same time, global citizenship education is needed in the global era to develop human social skills and to pursue human interests beyond nationalism. In order to face the global issues and maintain a sustainable society, it is necessary to develop the ability to recognize and protect the common values, or common property that cannot be valued.

I would like to make a suggestion at the end of this paper: To organize an international project to collect lesson plans and practice reports on the theme of COVID-19 with educators and practitioners from around the world sharing the results of the project. One idea is to promote international exchange classes using the lesson plans. Children in classrooms around the world sharing their same pain, considering this global issue, and deepening international understanding will be an inheritance for future generations. The children of today can send a message to the next generation of children.

In recent years, more and more people in Japan are not advocating nationalism or cosmopolitanism, but rather individualism. In the media, there are many articles that state both sides of the issue, and the number of opinion leaders is decreasing. In this post-Corona, increasingly global era, I believe that the Asia Pacific needs to develop opinion leaders who can think globally and speak out for international cooperation and collaboration.

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