



Soka Education
Student Research
Project

SOKA EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2008



Education Contributive Revolution



SOKA UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
FEBRUARY 9TH - 10TH, 2008

SOKA EDUCATION CONFERENCE 2009:

SOKA EDUCATION AND DEMOCRACY

SOKA UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
ALISO VIEJO, CALIFORNIA
FEBRUARY 7TH & 8TH, 2009
PAULING 216
12:30PM – 6PM



SOKA EDUCATION
STUDENT RESEARCH PROJECT

Dear Guests, Faculty, Staff, and Students of Soka University of America (SUA),

Our fourth annual Soka Education Conference will take place on February 9th and 10th, 2008. This year's theme, "Soka Education and Contributive Revolution," will focus on the role of education in past, present, and future revolutions. This type of revolution refers to revolutions of ideas, philosophies and practices that have the ability to transform people's lives. We raise such questions as, "Do revolutions pull away from society or change it from within?" and more specifically, "What is the role of Soka Education in bringing about social changes for the future?" We specifically emphasize "contributive" revolution in reference to the university's mission to foster global citizens committed to living a contributive life.

In this volume are the works of students and alumni, each with their own interpretation of how education can influence contributive revolutions. From Mr. Koichi Hagimoto, we will hear about Latin American intellectuals who, through pedagogy, formed resistance against European and U.S. colonialism and imperialism, while Ms. Fabiana Sanchez will present an example of new social programs in Venezuela which have worked to provide accessible education for all its citizens. Mr. Masashiro Kaleo Louis argues that the thinking and culture of corporations must be transformed into a more "ethical, humanistic, and ecological consciousness" in order to create peace. Mr. Michael Strand uses the pedagogies of Ranciere, Freire, and Makiguchi to support his argument that individuals can create, rather than absorb, culture when education is focused on the freedom to construct. Mr. Gonzalo Obelleiro and Ms. Julie Nagashima talk more about Soka Education as education for global citizenship and the importance of the teacher-student relationship, as well as dialogue. Finally Yuko Sugiyama and Masako Iwamoto will present their views on the importance of foreign language and communication in the process of education.

Our hope is that, through this conference, we will clarify the significance of incorporating Soka Education into our society. The purpose of education is not only to learn, but to put our knowledge into practice. This year, we are honored to present our keynote speaker, Christopher Strole who is an accredited Freire scholar, as well as a local 5th grade teacher, researcher, and well-known artist. He is currently working towards social change through everyday interactions with his students. His research is based on personal experiences which have proved to him that, through education, he is improving the lives of low-income and struggling students, many of whom learn English as their second language. By teaching them how to learn rather than what to learn, the students naturally realize the value of education in their individual lives. Likewise, the founder of Soka Education, Tsunesaburo Makiguchi devoted his life to that principle. He constantly searched for new ways to encourage young children in their studies. Therefore, Soka Education is an integral part of these growing contributive revolutions.

Finally, we would like to acknowledge all of the presenters and facilitators, our keynote speaker Christopher Strole, Danny Habuki, Jay Heffron, the Pacific Basin Research Center (PBRC), the IT members, Bon Appetite, and SSU, for their behind the scenes work and continuous efforts in making this conference possible. Their support and commitment are truly appreciated. We would also like to express our utmost gratitude to Tsunesaburo Makiguchi and his successors, Josei Toda and founder of SUA, Dr. Daisaku Ikeda, who have lived their lives dedicated to actualizing Soka education.

Sincerely,

SESRP Conference Committee

Soka Education Conference 2008 Program
Pauling 216

Saturday, February 9th 2008

<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Person</u>
12:30 – 12:45	Welcome words	Tomoko Takahashi
12:45 – 12:55	Introduction of conference theme	Conference committee members
12:55 – 13:55	Paper presentation	<i>Education for Global Citizenship</i> “Teacher-Student Relationship as a Philosophy of Education” Julie Nagashima & “A Dialogical Vision of the Self as Core Element of a Cosmopolitan Orientation” Gonzalo Obelleiro <i>With Professor Gail Thomas as Chair/Discussant</i>
13:55 – 14:25	Paper presentation	<i>Intellectual Emancipation and Creative Revolution: The Role of Education in Empowering Culture Creators</i> Michael Strand
14:25 – 14:40	Break	Please enjoy refreshments outside
14:40 – 15:10	Paper presentation	<i>Teaching Human Revolutions in a Foreign Language: Content-Based Language Instruction</i> Justin Yamamoto
15:10 – 15:40	Field Study Report	SuhJin Park
15:40 – 16:40	Keynote Speaker	Chris Stropole
16:40 – 16:50	Repertoire/Discussant	Prof. Phat Vu
16:50 – 17:05	Break	
17:05 – 18:05	Round Table Discussion & Closing	

Sunday, February 10th 2008

<u>Time</u>	<u>Event</u>	<u>Person</u>
13:00 – 13:05	Welcome	Conference committee members
13:05 – 13:35	Paper Presentation	<i>Revolutionizing the Corporate World: Ethical, Humanistic, and Ecological Thinking in Corporations</i> Masashiro Kaleo Louis
13:35 – 14:05	Paper Presentation	<i>Raising Language Awareness: Teaching Sociolinguistics for the Realization of Human Equality</i> Yuko Sugiyama & Masako Iwamoto
14:05 – 14:35	Professor Presentation	Prof. James Spady
14:35 – 14:50	Break	
14:50 – 15:20	Paper Presentation	<i>"Education, Revolution and Contribution: My Perspective on the History of Latin America and the Universal Philosophy of Soka Education"</i> Koichi Hagimoto
15:20 – 15:50	Paper Presentation	<i>The Combination of Manual and Intellectual Labor in Education for Social Transformation</i> Jennifer Numagami
15:50 – 16:20	Paper Presentation	<i>Education, and the Revolutionary Process in Venezuela</i> Fabiana Sanchez
16:20 – 17:20	Break into workshops	
17:20 – 17:40	Panel Discussion	
17:40 – 17:50	Repertoire and Closing	Jay Heffron

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Education for Global Citizenship Gonzalo A. Obelleiro & Julie Nagashima

Teacher-Student Relationship as a Philosophy of Education

Julie Nagashima

Teachers play a significant role in their classrooms. Their participation and contribution are beneficial to fostering positive learning environments for students to learn. In this paper, I propose the teacher-student relationship as a basis for a philosophy of education. This teacher-student relationship fosters within students a sense of belonging to their society. When such a foundation is built, the bridge of connections and understanding is formed between the students and their environment. This bridge then holds the capacity for students to learn and care about their immediate surroundings, forming a network of care which can then connect and expand to their global community. As a result, educators and students are building a caring environment that prepares students for a contributive revolution, encouraging them to take action in their immediate as well as their global community.

I first examine the conceptual teaching approaches – traditional and transformative teaching styles. Here I focus on the instructional styles advocated by Freire (2000) and Palmer (1998) and how these approaches affect students. Then I briefly explore a theory of teacher agency by introducing Freire's concept of *unfinishedness* and Palmer's concept of the *undivided self* and the influence of the teachers' whole selves. Finally, I conclude this paper by presenting concepts that focus on how teachers can nurture and fulfill the needs of the students. Based upon my analysis, I propose the importance of uniting teaching approaches, teacher agency, and student needs. This connection, grounded in a theory of teacher-student relationship, develops a philosophy of education that empowers the individual student.

Teacher quality and character in the classroom: methodology and agency

According to the tenets of progressive education, it is beneficial for students to learn in an environment that encourages them to explore and connect their own life experiences with the school curriculum. An examination of the teachers' approaches, specifically those involving traditional and transformative learning environments, can result in the fostering of this positive environment for students. Freire (2000) and Palmer (1998) study the possibilities for improving and motivating student learning within a progressive framework.

Teaching approaches: Traditional and transformative

Any educational field has both traditional and transformative teaching methods. Freire (2000) defines traditional teaching methods as the “banking system” where teachers systematically transfer knowledge to their students, and students then regurgitate that information back to their teachers. He calls this type of teaching the oppressed way of teaching where students have no voice. Freire sees the transformative teaching method as an alternative to the traditional approach. Transformative teaching is a flexible approach that allows for change and possibilities. Freire states, “To teach is not to *transfer knowledge* but to create possibilities for the production or construction of knowledge” (p.30). He believes that the teachers’ role is not only to share their knowledge but also to create the space for learners to realize their vast unlimited potential so that they can imaginatively build their own future without being oppressed. Teachers can motivate and inspire their students to thrive and find meaning in their lives. In the same context, Freire adds:

What I can and ought to do...is to challenge the students to perceive their experience of learning the experience of being a subject capable of knowing. My role as a “progressive” teacher is...helping the students to recognize themselves as the architects of their own cognitive process. (p.112)

Freire (2000) encourages teachers to go beyond the traditional way of teaching, which is the “obvious advantages of the human person” (p.32). He advocates an approach of transformative teaching in the classroom by promoting the possibilities that human beings possess – the potential to resist as well as overcome given conditions. Because many educators believe that the educational system is fixed, they feel powerless to challenge its rigidity. However, people, unlike machines, do not routinely and systematically follow given instructions. Freire asserts that human beings have the ability to create positive as well as negative possibilities:

I like being human because I am involved with others in making history out of possibility, not simply resigned to fatalistic stagnation...I like being human because in my unfinishedness I know that I am conditioned. Yet conscious of such conditioning, I know that I can go beyond it, which is the essential difference between conditioned and determined existence. (p.54)

Along the lines of Freire’s (2000) transformative approach, Palmer (1998) also believes in the importance of individuals to transform their own place and environment rather than accept the given condition: “Institutions reform slowly, and as long as we wait depending on ‘them’ to do the job for us – forgetting that institutions are also ‘us’ – we merely postpone reform and continue the slow slide into cynicism that characterizes too many teaching careers” (p.20).

Although Palmer (1998) seems to agree with Freire’s (2000) transformative method, he neither rejects the traditional nor the subject-centered teaching style. Instead,

Palmer argues that “good teachers cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher” (p.10). He stresses the heart as the most important quality that gives good teachers, whether employing the traditional lecture style or transformative discussion style, the ability to connect the subject, students, and themselves. In my understanding of Palmer, the heart defines the core of the teacher-student relationship. His theory of weaving a connection among teachers, students, and curriculum essentially entails developing a viable teacher-student relationship. This relationship, rooted in a transformative approach, places heart over methodology. To describe this relationship, Palmer introduces a metaphor:

Mentors and apprentices are partners in an ancient human dance, and one of teaching’s great rewards is the daily chance it gives us to get back on the dance floor. It is the dance of the spiraling generations, in which the old empower the young with their experience and the young empower the old with new life, reweaving the fabric of the human community as they touch and turn. (p.25)

Both Freire’s (2000) transformative approach and Palmer’s (1998) teaching-with-the-heart philosophy emphasize the students as essential players in the learning process. Based on these beliefs, I will develop a notion of teacher-student relationship.

Teacher agency: Undivided self and unfinishedness

Teaching approaches are not the only factors that are important to establishing positive teacher-student relationships. Teacher agency, specifically one that focuses on the teachers’ identity in the classroom and the impact of the teachers’ identity on the students, also emerges as a significant tool. I define this teacher agency as being an innate quality that allows teachers to see themselves as life-long learners who continue to grow in their understanding of themselves and others. It is a sense of self which fosters within teachers a feeling of confidence and competence and an insistence on human dignity.

Freire (2000) and Palmer (1998) introduce essential qualities in teachers – the identity and integrity that allow teachers to share their whole selves with their students. When educators separate their professional/public identity from their personal identity, they find it difficult to bring their whole selves into the classroom. This can create an atmosphere of fear. Teachers who will not or cannot show their own vulnerabilities to their students tend to resort to complete objectivity. McIntosh (2005), another philosopher, states, “Teachers suffer from the same confinements that their students do. Many long to repair the damage...by the requirement that they leave their whole selves at home...and teach from a very narrow segment of their perceptions and capacities” (p.30).

The teachers who embrace Freire’s (2000) banking approach might leave their “selves” outside the classroom. Yet, Freire also believes that in the transformative groups, by acknowledging their incompleteness as human beings, are more likely to express themselves as unfinished learners who can respect all individuals regardless of where they stand. Not being complete is what gives humanity to human beings.

Freire (2000) further suggests the idea of unfinishedness. He stresses the importance of accepting the fact that all people are learners in life who are equal and worthy of respect; nobody is better than anybody else. As Freire asserts, “Education does

not make us educable. It is our awareness of being unfinished that make us educable. And the same awareness in which we are inserted makes us eternal seekers” (p.58).

Freire (2000) might define those teachers who confidently say that they have nothing more to improve in their teaching practice as non-teachers because they are not learning. The perseverance to learn more determines the individuals’ growth. It is almost impossible to find a single person in this world who knows everything or who is perfect and complete. Like Freire, Dewey and many philosophers have emphasized that human beings are life-long learners, not finished products. For teachers to believe that they do not have to learn any more borders on arrogance.

According to Palmer (1998), those teachers who do not allow their whole selves to be present may find it difficult to weave a connection between themselves and their students and subject matter. Palmer stresses the importance of teachers who can bring their identity and integrity to the learning environment. He defines identity and integrity, as who we are: a self that encompasses and accepts both our strengths and weaknesses as a whole. Each of us holds an identity and integrity, but many of us are unconscious of them or are disinclined to accept that we may have a self that is weak or embarrassing. For example, we tend to protect our vulnerable selves by taking the offensive. In the cases of education, this can translate to teachers criticizing or hurting students.

Because of this, teachers might consider teaching from an *undivided self*, “where every major thread of one’s life experience is honored, creating a weave of such coherence and strength that it can hold students and subject as well as self” (Palmer, 1998, p.15). The challenge in being an undivided self, according to Palmer, lies in the ability to balance personal and public life while simultaneously being true to ourselves and others. Balancing does not mean denying one over the other but rather bringing forth both in an equal and balanced way. To achieve this undivided self, Palmer calls for teachers to carry out an inner transformation by deepening their own perception of themselves. Once teachers know and accept who they are, they can present an undivided self to their students.

Therefore, both Freire (2000) and Palmer (1998) emphasize the value in understanding that we as human beings are not complete. The acknowledgment that we are unfinished, that we are better able to build a foundation of inner security and create openness towards ourselves and others, is teacher agency. These qualities of teacher agency emerge as essential aspects of teachers and their educational practice. Friere points out, “On the contrary, it (sense of security) rests on the conviction that there are some things I know and some things I do not know. [...] I feel myself secure because there is no reason to be ashamed that there may be something I do not know” (p.121). Those who do not fear being unfinished are those who understand that teaching and learning are not separate from one another. Effective teachers welcome change and possibility as ways to keep education alive and relevant for their students. Like Freire, they know they “live in history at a time of possibility and not of determinism” (p.71).

Teacher-student relationship in the classroom: meeting the needs of the student

This section presents the essential elements for fostering individuals who will have the confidence, competence, and compassion that can raise their concerns and care

for others that transcends family, community and nation-state boundaries and to the global.

Nurturing a sense of belonging.

Teachers face the challenges of recognizing their students as unique individuals who struggle to learn the academic material, develop socially, and discover their own identities. Teachers also confront the importance of understanding that their students change; second graders face different issues than their adolescent selves, while high school students do not have the real world fears of university students. Yet, no matter what stage teachers meet their students, they have the responsibility to support and nurture them. According to Grossberg (2005), this is especially important in an increasingly competitive and consumer-oriented society where children are desperate for a sense of belonging. He argues that children, who are being marginalized and blamed for many of the problems that occur in society, “want to be granted a space in which their feelings, thoughts, fears, and hopes can find expression as part of the common vocabulary of the society” (p.55). Teachers can make this space a reality. As McIntosh (2005) explains, a “global sense for belonging and making spaces for all to belong can be developed close to home by teachers bringing the wholeness of their emotions and capacities into classrooms” (p.39). Teachers “unafraid to help students also to develop the plural capacities and the wide-ranging awareness” (p.39) are those who succeed in fostering an environment favorable for other potential curriculums, such as global education, to emerge for students,

Respect from teachers.

Efficient teachers not only try to share their knowledge, but they also attempt to create the space for learners to realize their vast unlimited potential so they can imaginatively and independently build their futures. Treating their students with respect can accomplish this. Respect for students is a quality that comes from the realization that every person is unfinished. Without understanding unfinishedness, teachers cannot entirely accept students. Freire (1998) writes, “This critical evaluation of one’s practice (self-reflection) reveals the necessity for a series of attitudes and virtues without which no true evaluation or true respect for the student can exist” (p.63). Such conduct leads to true respect for the individual student.

This respect that students sense from their teachers empowers them to feel important and confident about themselves; it motivates them to do well in their daily lives. Freire (2000) emphasizes the importance of respect as a vital contributing factor to student growth. In remembering his own classroom experience, he states, “I noticed he (teacher) was looking over my text with great attention, nodding his head in an attitude of respect and consideration. His respectful and appreciative attitude...inspired in me that I too had value and could work and produce results” (p.47). Because teachers’ roles are crucial to the students’ learning process, teachers must receive their students in a nonselective manner (Noddings, 2007). When students learn from such teachers, they are more likely to believe they can contribute to and make a difference not only in their community but also in the global world.

Fostering a caring environment.

Respect from teachers not only matters to young adolescents, but also is essential in building a positive teacher-student relationship. When students can see or feel that their teachers respect them, they can also believe that their teachers care for them (Noddings, 2007). Noddings (1984) presents two different types of caring. The first, the care relationship, exists between *one-caring* and *cared-for*. The second type of caring is defined only by the one-caring; this limits caring by excluding the input of the cared-for [student] and considering only the opinion of the one-caring [teacher]. What a one-caring believes is in the best interest of the cared-for is the caring in this situation. The ideal caring environment to foster is the former type of caring, the first type, creating a mutually satisfying bond between one-caring and cared-for. When teachers acknowledge the feelings of their students, they empower them to feel important and confident about themselves. This motivates them to do well in their daily life.

In addition, Noddings (2007) introduces four major components of moral education from a care perspective. These exemplify the significant responsibility and accountability that teachers have for their students. Modeling, the first component, encourages teachers to teach caring from their own behaviors and examples. Dialogue, the second component, provides a space for both teacher and student to reflect and learn. Through dialogue, students sense how teachers care for them. Romano (2000) adds how dialogue supports the teacher-student relationship. "Through genuine dialogue of mutual respect and reciprocity, the distance between students and teachers is reduced, setting the stage for shared understandings, beliefs, and meanings. With such relations, each of us becomes obligated to respect and recognize one another" (p.115). Essentially, teachers are the mediators who can create opportunities for dialogue in the classrooms. As Benhabib (2002) states, valuing the individual requires dialogue and universal respect. The third component of moral education, practice or personal experience, gives students the opportunity to learn how to care, while the last component, confirmation, recognizes and affirms the care.

In these four models as introduced by Noddings (2007), teachers play an important role. Regardless of how much they try to care, they must always be sensitive to the feelings of their students, the cared-for. If the cared-for do not believe they are cared for, then the teachers' caring offers no value for the cared-for. In contrast, if they do believe they are cared for, this caring relationship can develop into motivation and possibilities for learning and further caring (Gaudelli, 2003; Noddings, 2007).

By establishing a caring theory in the school community, Gaudelli (2003) believes that educators can further create an environment that will transcend boundaries for global education. Noddings (2005) and Ladson-Billings (2005) emphasize the importance of teachers nurturing a caring environment for their students in the local community. Furthermore, Gaudelli and McIntosh (2005) expand the role of teachers seeing the relationship they create with their students as the core to global education. When educators foster within individuals a strong sense of belonging to their local environment, those individuals might then begin to have a sense of belonging to the global environment and a concern for the well-being of others.

This proposal itself is an educational revolution, yet, not to the extent that it remains as idealism. This paper is in hopes of reaching out and encouraging educators to

take the first step in challenging themselves for a revolution. Through this personal and educational revolution, students are for the first time presented with an opportunity to react in response, furthermore, encouraging them to take a contributive action.

This paper is a short section of the author's unpublished master's thesis which is currently being prepared to be available online through the University of Pittsburgh from Summer/Fall 2008.

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A Dialogical Vision of the Self as Core Element of a Cosmopolitan Orientation.

Gonzalo A. Obelleiro

The ideal of global citizenship has found currency numerous times in history. For Diogenes, at the inception of the idea, being a “citizen of the world” stood in contrast to citizen as defined by origin and loyalties to local groups. Kant articulated the ideal of the cosmopolitan as a response to European imperial ambitions and to Enlightenment hopes for human progress.

Today, interactions with people, consumer products and information make us keenly aware that our moral competence falls short of the global scale of our interdependence and the rapid expansion of our technological capacity. As a result, Nel Noddings claims, “Many of us are now concerned about the welfare of all human and nonhuman life, preservation of the Earth as home to that life, and the growing conflict between the appreciation of diversity and the longing for unity.”¹ As a possible response she and other scholars, among them Martha Nussbaum and Kwame Anthony Appiah, propose the promotion of global citizenship.

There are many ways to approach the question of global citizenship as a possible response to the challenges of our time including the education of world languages and cultures, a revision of history curricula, the widespread promotion of democratic spirit and practices, the establishment of international governing bodies, etc. Improvements in all these areas might represent effective, intelligent responses to specific challenges posed by our growing interdependence. However, the transformations that come with this ever deepening awareness of interdependence are changing the contours of our human condition itself. If the effects of these changes run as deep as I suspect, it might no longer be possible for any worldview to remain isolated. Conversation across worldviews might be come the mode of existence for all humans.

Even if this condition is proven to not necessarily affect all, it has certainly become inevitable for most already. Solutions offered at the levels of systems, practices or institutions, as I said, might be of help in many respects. However, I cannot help but be skeptical about their capacity to address the question of this fundamental transformation in the human condition. What is required is a transformation at the level of the human individual and human communities. In other words, we are in the face of a genuine ethical and moral challenge.

I might even be that the very notion of self must be rethought to appropriately respond to this fundamental transformation in our human condition. What I offer here is merely a starting point to begin thinking about an idea of a cosmopolitan orientation and set a framework to rethink notions of the self in relation to a cosmopolitan orientation.

(i) an awareness of the interdependence of all humans, (ii) hope in the possibility of some kind of always emerging and evolving unity or unifying element that brings all people under an idea of humanity and (iii) appreciation and respect for difference. A

¹ Nel Noddings (Ed.), *Educating Citizens for Global Awareness*. (New York: Teachers College Press, 2005), p.1

good candidate for a model to conceive of unity from difference is, of course, dialogue. This paper's task, then, shall be to articulate the hypothesis that a dialogical vision of the self can be a notion of self that fits the idea of a cosmopolitan orientation and that can offer a perspective to appropriately respond to the ethical and moral challenges of the human condition defined by our increasingly interdependent world.

Dewey's Self as Interest

Prof. David Hansen lists two conditions for a cosmopolitan outlook: "a) Cultivating a "sense of stability" through change; and b) Critical appreciation for the unfathomability of life." He claims that the education of a cosmopolitan outlook when actively permeating ideas and practices represents a kind of ethical and moral ascending path grounded on the identity of self and interest. He draws upon Dewey when in his *Democracy and Education* provocatively claims that: "[S]elf and interest are two names for the same fact."²

The particular characteristic of dialogue as appropriate model for conceiving unity from difference is implied in its etymology: *dia* (across) *legein* (speech). The speech as taking place across two or more speakers; the meaning is located in *between* the speakers. The between requires difference as its foundation in the speakers as opposite poles with respect to which the between is defined. But it also exists *in* that which the different share, a point where they relate. John Dewey's notion of self as interest offers a provocative, unexpected turn that proves to be a profound insight: the self is not located in one of the poles, but in the between.

For Dewey, interest is that which brings the individual and the world together: "[C]hanges in things are not alien to the activities of a self, and that the career and welfare of the self are bound up with the movement of persons and things. Interest, concern, mean that self and world are engaged with each other in a developing situation."³

Here, Dewey uses the word "self" to refer to the individual in opposition to the world; later, however, "self" will come to mean the way in which the individual relates to the world, where individual is identified with the physical body.⁴ For the sake of consistency,

² John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*. In J.A. Boydston (Ed.). *The Middle Works 1899-1924: Vol 9. Democracy and Education 1916*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), p.361.

³ *Ibid*, p.132.

⁴ It is characteristic of Dewey's style not to define his terms partly to avoid fixation of meanings. Instead, he starts from common uses of words and gradually "massages" them, liberating them from their rigidity and "shaping" them into forms of his choice to reveal the particular meanings he wants from them. In some cases, the meaning he wants to "extract" from a word is quite unusual, like in the case of the word "self" in *Democracy and Education*, which, as I noted before, will not be identified with the physical body of an individual, but with the ways in which that individual exists in relation to his or her environment at particular moment. In cases like that, the "shaping" takes him longer. We must remember that the intention is that the intended meaning emerges from the words gradually and seamlessly. Dewey does not want to create his own vocabulary, because that would mean that he would be the only one with a right to define the terms. He wants to work with an organic language, which he "shapes" in the very use of the language itself, gradually. This, in turn, is an open invitation to the reader to engage in philosophical thinking without the need of a specialized arsenal of special words. It is interesting to note that this gradual

I use “individual” when referring to the entity that is opposed to the world. It is interesting to note that the unity of individual and world is not a primordial stasis prior to experience which we deduce from a kind of transcendental, rational reflection or which we know through revelation. This unity is the situation of experience itself: “self (individual) and world are engaged with each other in a developing situation.”⁵

A dialogue is exactly that kind of developing situation where individual and world are engaged with each other. One could say, then, that “interest, concern, mean that self is engaged in dialogue, a developing situation, with the world.” Such language makes metaphorical use of the word “dialogue” and, metaphorically, personifies the world. However, when the relationship between individual and environment that concerns us is an interpersonal relationship, then the idea of dialogue is a perfect fit. We could say, then, that the self of the cosmopolitan orientation resides in the interest and concern of an individual for another when engaged with each other in a developing situation.⁶ We call this dialogue. Then, from the notion of dialogue as a kind of relationship between the individual and another and the self as located precisely in that relationship, we arrive at a dialogical vision of self. This is, clearly, an adaptation of Dewey’s notion of self as interest to a situation of relationship between people. At this point, many terms have been introduced and it is not yet clear what Dewey’s self as interest or my idea of the dialogical vision of the self really mean. I will approach the question from a slightly different angle.

Dialogue.

Dialogue as a model of interaction between individual and world is central to the idea of a cosmopolitan orientation. It is through dialogue that the cosmopolitan self expands itself reaching beyond its own limits. A relational self finds expression in a dialogical engagement with the world. I thus call this vision of the self *dialogical*. The Deweyan notion of self as interest, that “self (individual) and world are engaged with each other in a developing situation,”⁷ is a vision of the individual in dialogue with the world. The dialogical vision of self that I propose as core element of a cosmopolitan orientation is an appropriate way to account for a self that is in constant transformation in its engagement with the world.

The key idea here is that of transformation in engagement. The master move in Dewey’s relocation of the self from the individual to the between is that it characterizes it

“shaping” of the meanings of words through the use of language itself is what characterized Plato’s dialectic method as well.

⁵ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*. In J.A. Boydston (Ed.). *The Middle Works 1899-1924: Vol 9. Democracy and Education 1916*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), p.132.

⁶ Needless to say, a cosmopolitan orientation is not only relevant for interpersonal relationships. There are dimensions of relationship with the world of non-human sentient and non-sentient beings that, as Noddings’s concern echoes, are defining cosmopolitan concerns. A dialogical vision of the self does in fact encompass all of those dimensions of concern and interaction. However, the metaphor being dialogue, it is the interpersonal relationship that constitutes the model for interacting with the world as a whole.

⁷ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*. In J.A. Boydston (Ed.). *The Middle Works 1899-1924: Vol 9. Democracy and Education 1916*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), p.132.

as a constant becoming, not a fixed being, allowing for its constant transformation. He describes it wonderfully with the image of losing and finding oneself:

“To be interested is to be absorbed in, wrapped up in, carried away by, some object. To take an interest is to be on the alert, to care about, to be attentive. We say of an interested person both that he has lost himself in some affair and that he has found himself in it. Both terms express the engrossment of the self in an object.”⁸

Being absorbed, losing oneself, is the starting point of self transformation. In a sense it could be said that self emerges in its own self-transformation. As long as there is no transformation in the self, responses to the environment may be mere expressions of developed habits or routine. When there is interest involved, there is self; when interest is intensified, so is the self. Saying that the self emerges in its own self-transformation, however, is another way of saying that the self is not something fixed and stable, separate from ever changing circumstances, but that the self is located in the relation of the individual, the human being, and the world. Self, then, as relation, emerges into existence as it perishes at every moment. Dewey writes:

“[T]he self is not something ready-made, but something in continuous formation through choice of action...A man’s interest in keeping at his work in spite of danger to life means that his self is found *in* that work; if he finally gave up, and preferred his personal safety of comfort, it would mean that he preferred to be *that* kind of a self.”⁹

And as I already noted, he goes on to even claim that: “In fact, self and interest are two names for the same fact; the kind and amount of interest actively taken in a thing reveals and measures the quality of selfhood which exists.”¹⁰

The self that emerges is the self that is found in interest; *that* is to find oneself. That emerging self is experienced as care, alertness or attentiveness. Losing and finding oneself is the rhythm of interest as relation between individual and world. That rhythm is the only possible mode of existence for the self. The moment that rhythm ceases, so does the self. Presumably, one could say that a minimum of self is found even in vegetative life, or unconscious life. In that case, the cessation of the rhythm of losing and finding oneself would mean death.

This is of great significance for our understanding of the dialogical vision of the self, for it means that regardless who the other individual is and what have been the modes of interaction between us, we can always lose the selves of discord, hatred and misunderstanding and find selves of sympathy, respect and understanding. In fact, that possibility is available at every single instant. When we uphold a dialogical vision of the self, there are, literally, millions of hopeful possibilities every day. Moreover, given that the rhythm of losing and finding oneself is in fact the rhythm of life itself, as long as I am alive, I can find within me interest in the other, concern for the other, I can find *that* self.

⁸ Ibid, p.133.

⁹ Ibid, 361.

¹⁰ Ibid, pp.361-362.

Another way Dewey characterizes interest is as finding connections between present powers and objects and modes of action: “[The educational task is] to discover objects and modes of action, which are connected with present powers. The function of this material in engaging activity and carrying it on consistently and continuously *is* its interest.”¹¹ Discovering objects and modes of action in connection to present powers is to reveal the potential inherent in the self. The powers are present, and as such they must find some measure of expression through objects and modes of action. To *discover* objects and modes of action through which present powers can find expression means to understand the nature of such powers so that its connection with *other* objects and modes of action can be revealed. Needless to say, such discovery amounts to an expansion of the present powers. This is another way of saying that lesser, present powers expand into fuller, future powers. Since fuller, future powers are anticipated *in* lesser, present powers, as if present powers contained the seed of future powers, this movement can also be understood as the realization of potential.

Dewey is writing in the context of a philosophy of education and the word “objects” presumably refers to objects of study, possibly actual materials employed in instruction such as textbooks. Now, when considering the Deweyan notion of self as interest in a context of dialogue, what there is to discover is not objects, but *others*, and modes not of action, but of *interaction*. The other to be discovered is not necessarily a different individual (identified with this or that human body), but another self. This means, in the context of the present discussion on self, that the potential to be revealed from an interaction with another is infinite. This is because that other can exhibit a virtually infinite number of kinds of selves eliciting an infinite number of possible interactions. The dialogical self is the self interested in that creative mode of association between two selves where lesser, present powers are expanded into fuller, future powers creating meaning and value together. The dialogical self, insofar as it is becoming, is interested not only in what the self of the other is, but also in what can be, in its potential.¹²

Now it is time to return to the notion of the between and see what *kind* of between this is. Dewey writes: “The word interest suggests, etymologically, what is *between*,— that which connects two things otherwise distant.”¹³ Dewey continues,

“In education, the distance covered may be looked at as temporal. The fact that a process takes time to mature is so obvious a fact that we rarely make it explicit. We overlook the fact that in growth there is ground to be covered between an initial stage of process and the completing period; that there is something intervening.”¹⁴

In dialogue, the distance covered is also temporal. The initial stage is the selves, interested in each other to at least the minimum extent that brought them into such a situation of encounter. The completing period is the selves that reach a deeper

¹¹ Ibid, p.133.

¹² At this point it is evident that a theory of cosmopolitan imagination is required.

¹³ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*. In J.A. Boydston (Ed.). *The Middle Works 1899-1924: Vol 9. Democracy and Education 1916*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), p.134.

¹⁴ Ibid.

understanding of each other and the circumstances that they share. This way of understanding dialogue as a process of transformation of the self through another self, is an educational conception of dialogue. This is because this transformation represents an act of learning and stands in contrast with a conception of dialogue as negotiation between positions in a relation of struggle for control.

It is interesting that when the separation between my self and the other in a metaphor of struggle for control is represented it is in spatial terms, not temporal. “This is my *position*”; “On which *side* of the issue do you stand?”; “I feel like and *outsider* talking to them”; etc. Lakoff and Johnson say: “Metaphor is primarily a matter of thought and action and only derivatively a matter of language”¹⁵, the implication of this is that as long as we continue to understand the self as located in the body, as fixed in a particular position, that is what the self will *actually* be. By introducing a new metaphor, that of self as interest, as formed and developed in a situation, Dewey is actually opening the door to a new kind of reality. I chose Dewey’s notion of the self as interest as starting point for my dialogical vision of the self because I believe that Dewey’s metaphor of self as formed and developed in a situation is the right kind of metaphor to understand genuine dialogue.

Dewey writes: “When material has to be made interesting, it signifies that as presented, it lacks connection with purposes and present power: or that if the connection be there, it is not perceived.”¹⁶ The dialogical self at the core of the cosmopolitan orientation pursues meaningful connections between the realities of the selves involved, their powers, and their purposes. The key is that the connections are real and not artificial and forced. In other words, the struggle of genuine dialogue is to probe into the interest of the other as well as into one’s own, until a robust foundation of deep connections is revealed. On the contrary, inauthentic dialogue, introduces external elements like promises of reward or threats, to create a kind of interest on the part of the other that drives the course of their actions in the direction of one’s interests. The old diplomatic strategy of sticks and carrots is an example of such inauthentic dialogue, always operating from a fixed notion of the self within a framework of struggle for control.

The educational bias in our understanding of the cosmopolitan is not accidental, but intentional. I am interested in a cosmopolitan orientation with a dialogical self at the core from a perspective centered on educational concerns because I believe that the cosmopolitan orientation, that is, the way of approaching and responding to the world that is characteristically cosmopolitan is one of learning and teaching. Learning from the world, from anything and anyone in the world; teaching as a response to a world that demands change. Teaching, in this case, is understood as offering a new perspective of meaningful connections and revealing potential to be unleashed. A good example is found in Dewey’s own introduction of the notion of self as interest, opening up a world of possibilities of interaction between individual and world. The cosmopolitan orientation is centered on educational concerns because it is mainly concerned with the

¹⁵ George Lakoff and Mark Johnson. *Metaphors We Live By*. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1980), p. 153

¹⁶ John Dewey, *Democracy and Education*. In J.A. Boydston (Ed.). *The Middle Works 1899-1924: Vol 9. Democracy and Education 1916*. (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1985), p.134.

transformation of the self as it engages with the world, and that transformation is educational.

The disposition for genuine dialogue that characterizes the cosmopolitan orientation stands in sharp contrast with an orientation towards the world defined by a metaphor of struggle for control. In the former, encounter with the unknown represents opportunities for self-transformation and growth; in the latter, it represents opportunities to incorporate (dominate) the other under one's influence, being incorporated (being dominated) under the influence of another. Dewey reflects on the conception of the self operating in understandings of self-world relations in terms of struggle for domination as follows:

“If the self is something fixed antecedent to action, then acting from interest means trying to get more in the way of possessions for the self—whether in the way of fame, approval of others, power over others, pecuniary profit, or pleasure. Then the reaction from this view as a cynical depreciation of human nature leads to the view that men who act nobly act with no interest at all.”¹⁷

The former, the dialogical vision of the self, presents a hopeful view of human nature, the latter, a cynical one.

From these considerations on a cosmopolitan orientation, with the dialogical vision of the self at its core, we can begin to perceive the contours of its ethical and moral implications. On the one hand, this orientation is characterized by an inclination to dialogue in a broad sense as encompassing all interactions with others and the environment. On the other hand, it is marked by openness to self-transformation in the pursuit of meaning and value.

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¹⁷ Ibid, p.361.

Learning to use the Power of Love: Knowing and Doing in Freire's Praxis and Makiguchi's Pedagogy of Value Creation

Michael Strand

Introduction

“Force-feeding or self-enlightenment? Organizing information or arousing interest? Which is it to be? Educators can cram information or instill awareness, transmit bits of knowledge or guide the learning process...What we choose will prove the single most important factor toward reforming the school system and, even more, in shaping our entire conception of the how of education” (Makiguchi 167).

The creative dialectic between self and other underlying the process of education is, philosophically speaking, the fundamental building block of human consciousness.¹⁸ Thus, education must be seen as the means by which individuals construct themselves, and is therefore also the means by which society is constructed by individuals. Makiguchi states that the role of the educator must be: “to *enable* children to become responsible, healthy cells in the social organism, to contribute the happiness of society, and by doing so find meaning, purpose, and happiness in their own lives.” (Makiguchi 22) Healthy cells contribute to life, while malignant cells twist and destroy life. If society is to change positively, then the collective actions of individual ‘cells’ in the social organism must also change. Education is the process that individuals use to formulate choice, it is how we change ourselves, and is thus a path toward changing society. In essence, education is a means of gathering knowledge for the sake of creating values which will contribute to one’s own humanity as well as the human organism as a whole.

In this paper I will use Berger and Luckmann’s book *The Social Construction of Reality* to describe the paradox of the self in society. This paradox is used to describe the ‘banking’ method of education as the one-way transmission of knowledge. I will then use the ideas of Makiguchi in *Education for Creative Living* and Freire in *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* to discuss how education can nourish the creative capacity of students to create value within the context of daily life. Finally, I will use Freire’s idea of Praxis, and Makiguchi’s ideas about truth and the creation of value, to justify my argument that teachers should not simply explicate knowledge as objective fact, but rather inspire students’ creative capacity to construct value.

¹⁸ This idea emerged from my study of another philosopher, Jacques Ranciere in his book *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* and his critique of Descartes’ Cogito. Particularly in reference to the dialectical relationship between mind and body and how this dialogue formulates our personal construction of our selves, and therefore reality itself.

Social Construction of Reality

From infancy to adulthood we define ourselves against the external world. Every day we change and re-construct our understanding based on other people and our environments. Berger and Luckmann argue that we are each unique and subjective existential entities living together in the organic creative process we call society (B&L 51-52). Society is thus “an ongoing human production.” (52) We are each united by the process – becoming, changing, growing, living, and contributing our individual essence to the “human organism.” (49)

Education is the medium through which social norms and institutions are perpetuated (67). Every day the human project does not simply start over re-creating every habit and piece of common knowledge. We live as a society which must function in basic ways, and agree that educating people as to specific knowledge about social institutions is important (67). However, this need to educate young humans about social institutions can, and often has, perpetuated knowledge as “objective truth” and fostered attempts to inculcate individuals “with a certain set of generally valid truths about reality” through a process of “educative socialization” (66-67).

Given that knowledge of social institutions is perpetuated through education as objective truth, Berger and Luckmann argue that: “An institutional world is experienced as an objective reality. It has a history that antedates the individual’s birth...And it will exist after his [or her] death...The institutions are *there*, external to him [or her], persistent in their reality, he [or she] cannot wish them away” (60). Social reality gains an “ontological status apart from the human activity that produced it. This sets up a *paradox* that humanity is capable of producing a world that is then experienced as something other than a human product.” (61)

Paulo Freire argues that the paradox of human society as a static, unchanging, objective entity creates a mechanistic approach to education (Freire 77). He calls the simple one-way transmission of facts supporting the objective social order “the banking method” of education (72). He says that the banking method is inherently built on the inequality among teachers and learners and stifles the creative capacity of individuals to grow as living beings (73). Education in this context thus becomes “necrophilic” or destructive to life (77).¹⁹ When people are not respected as unique individuals, but rather as cogs or wheels in the social machinery, education becomes a mode of oppression rather than liberation (78). Knowledge is never objective. Power relations established through the transmission of knowledge are used to maintain the dominion of one group over another. Freire’s ‘pedagogy of the oppressed’ is an educative method designed to help individuals re-construct power relations and thereby free themselves from intellectual tyranny (44).

Makiguchi shares Freire’s disdain for the banking method: “Teachers, thinking only of adult needs, tend to keep cramming their students with information that has no meaning or relevance for their current lives...The excessive bulk [of information] passes through the system as undigested waste...slowly putrefying and poisoning.” (21) This

¹⁹ Freire heavily relies on the ideas of Erich Fromm for his philosophical foundation. Fromm’s social philosophy focuses on the causes of fascism and human destructiveness. His views on love and the personal actualization of humanity are fundamental to the question of Soka Education and are an intriguing avenue for further research.

statement implies that learning information without purpose is detrimental to a child's humanity. Therefore, Makiguchi argues, "schooling that sacrifices children's present happiness, and makes some future happiness its goal, violates the personalities of the children as well as the learning process itself." (21) In this passage Makiguchi is focusing more on the learner's self-created happiness rather than reforming power relations in society.

So far we have defined the banking method of education as the one-way transmission of knowledge. Makiguchi argues that when learning is divorced from daily experience, it becomes detrimental to the happiness of students. Freire argues that the banking method supports an objective view of the social order and is thus a means of maintaining dominion over others (Makiguchi 17, Freire 48). The rest of this paper will discuss Makiguchi and Freire's approach to defining a method of education which helps individuals to live in a larger social reality without being oppressed by that reality, and rather exercise the intellectual *freedom* to contribute positively to the human organism.

Happiness as the Focus of Education

Fundamentally, Makiguchi and Freire base their pedagogical systems on empowering learners with the freedom to know and create. With this spirit, Makiguchi writes, "we must oppose enforced uniformity that would press people into a mold against their nature and in violation of their humanity... It would be more reasonable instead if we were to make a thorough study of people in all their individuality the focus of education." (Makiguchi 164) Drawing from Dewey's theory of experience and education,²⁰ Makiguchi felt that learning in school "must emerge from the realities of daily life. [And] must take into account the scope of human life." (17) Thus, for Makiguchi, "happiness is the central factor in human learning." (17) By making the daily happiness of the individual his focus, Makiguchi puts the rights of the learner before the needs of society. His simple premise is that learning with no readily apparent purpose violates the rights of the student and is detrimental to his or her happiness.

However, Makiguchi is also very clear that individual happiness cannot be separated from one's community: "No matter how exulted we make individuality out to be, we are unable to pursue it except within our humanity, that is, within the context of self-awareness and self-acceptance of membership in the human community... Thus, the pursuit of individuality becomes a pursuit common to all humanity" (164). This statement is significant because it places the reciprocal relationship between the self and other into the context of daily life and interaction with the lives and minds of others (165).

In addition, by defining happiness as the 'pursuit of individuality' Makiguchi is not speaking of a fixed point. There is no specific set of objective items that can be memorized in order to be happily educated. Nor does he define happiness as a pure physical comfort such as material wealth. Rather, Makiguchi defines happiness as, "a sense of *becoming*. It is the dynamic, growthful, nature of happiness that most concerns

²⁰ Dewey was a contemporary of Makiguchi and his theories of experiential learning found in *Democracy and Education* closely echo the themes of this paper: "Truth exists ready-made somewhere. Study is the process by which an individual draws on what is in storage. On the other hand, learning is something that the individual *does* when he [or she] studies. The dualism here is between knowledge as something external, or, as it is often called, objective; and knowing as something purely internal, subjective" (Dewey 335).

true educators... [by] understanding living and learning as a *process*.” (23) Freire echoes this sentiment when he calls the “process” of living and educating as one of “constant transformation”²¹ driven by the “struggle for liberation.” (Freire 75) The common element uniting these ideas is that education cannot be divorced from life. As we grow and transform as beings, we employ education to construct our selves. The idea of being ‘in-process’ or ‘becoming’ something new essentially means that we are alive. Now we must investigate *how* education proctors the ‘sense of becoming’ and guides healthy human development without ‘banking’ learners full of useless information.

Praxis and Value Creation: Knowing and Doing

Education, as a creative process, is predicated on the understanding that one’s own humanity, and the social project as a whole, is never complete. “The unfinished character of human beings and the transformational character of reality necessitate that education be an ongoing activity.” (Freire 84) Therefore, Freire argues, education must reconcile the interplay of permanence and change (84). Each individual must define his or her individuality against a greater humanity, and the comparison between self and other is what instigates change in both (89). In chapter three, Freire uses the word *praxis* to describe the dialectic process which individuals undergo in order to reconcile the self and the other. When presented with a problem, one must acquire information and then take action based on understanding. Freire argues that there can be “no transformation without action” ergo transformative praxis is defined simply as *reflection* and *action* (87). Reflection refers to knowing, while action refers to creating something new from understanding (88-89).

Makiguchi does not use the word praxis to describe the creative process of knowing and doing. And I am not attempting to make a one-to-one comparison of Freire’s praxis and Makiguchi’s theory of value. However, praxis and value creation are similar because they both necessarily *require* that reflection and action transpire within the world “in order to transform it.” (Freire 79) Makiguchi argues that the transformative focus of ‘praxis’ comes because, “humans cannot increase or decrease the quantum forces of matter found in nature. However, they can control these forces to create what is of value to themselves.” (50) The combination of these ideas implies that change, and the creation of value, are similar processes. However, in order to better understand the significance of the word value, and the kind of change it implies, Makiguchi was very careful to separate it from the idea of truth.

Makiguchi argues that one can know something to be true, and count on the fact that truth is not liable to change (e.g. the truth that $1+1=2$). Truth is immutable,²² and the process of truth knowing “stops at the point of discovery.” (57) Value, on the other hand,

²¹ Freire briefly references French philosopher Henri Bergson and his idea that the evolution of all living beings is driven by love in a shared project of becoming. Bergson was a contemporary of Fromm, Makiguchi, and Dewey and his ideas further add to the early 20th century’s contemplations of what it means to live in a world of modernity. His ideas offer yet another avenue of potential research regarding the philosophical underpinnings of Soka Education.

²² I must mention here that the idea of truth knowing and the construction of values is a philosophical question well beyond the scope of this paper. And that the epistemological role of the subject-object dichotomy between knower and known is a more fundamental question to the idea of education than what is being investigated here and, for the moment, must be relegated to future research.

is actively *created* by the individual based on known facts within subjective circumstances (57). Makiguchi describes value creation as, “the *capacity* to construct as well as compare and discriminate.” (64) Thus, value is defined by the individual through a ‘subject-object relationship’ where daily events become the basis of constructing notions of what is useful to human life. Value “cannot be proven through intellectual activity [like truth]... the strength of the subject-object relationship qualifying value must be tested in actual practice.” (58) Here the *relationship* between ‘subject’ and ‘object’ is what is important, particularly how this relationship affects one’s life and the lives of others. Therefore, one’s level of knowledge is not as important as what that knowledge is *used* for. From this analysis we can conclude that knowing truth is auxiliary to the creation of value; it is necessary, but should not be the *goal* of education (56).

Truth can be verified in the crucible of consciousness, or by empirical tests, but value must be tested in the crucible of daily life—value must be lived (Makiguchi 59). Ergo the actions and outcomes of daily life are the true test of value. Because Makiguchi defined value with construction in mind, he says that education must “foster the abilities of students to create value toward the well-being of society as well as themselves.” (50) It is possible to be intellectually creative, (such as the case of nuclear weapons) but still utterly destructive to human life if one does not consider the well being of others. Likewise, even an incredibly knowledgeable person will be unable to create value in actual practice if he or she uses his or her knowledge to destroy the lives of others. For Makiguchi, a fully integrated person is one who is able to focus the daily learning process of knowing and doing with the conscious ethical intention of constructing values which nourish life (87). Thus, if one recognizes one’s own capacity to create values, one *must* also recognize and respect the equal capacity of others to do the same—regardless of one’s level of knowledge (64). With this knowledge comes the frightening awareness of one’s own capacity to destroy as well as create, and therefore the *imperative* for ethical action toward others.²³

Freire echoes the ethical trajectory of knowing when he further defines praxis as an act of courage, love, and respect between persons (89). It takes compassion to consciously work for the sake of contributive revolution in society, especially if the actions of certain individuals within society oppress the lives of others, causing pain, fear, anger, and ill will. Thus, Freire argues that, “the oppressed must not, in seeking to regain their humanity (which is a way of creating it), become in turn oppressors of the oppressors, but rather the restorers of the humanity of both.” (44) Contributive change comes only if one uses one’s knowledge ethically, based on the emotion of love and respect for others (45). This idea marks a significant difference between Freire’s idea of Praxis and Makiguchi’s value creation. Though each implies change following from reflection and action, Freire focuses on overcoming oppression as the *outcome* of this educative process; whereas Makiguchi stresses the creation of new values which contribute to the lives of others.

²³ This view that education focused on the creation of new values must necessarily include the feelings and well being of others is an ethical question which arose from a class I took with Professor Robert Elliot Allinson in fall 2007. In his book *Saving Human Lives* he argues that capital gain is predicated on the creation of social value and thus ethics is not antithetical to earning profit, quite the opposite, and the respect for persons is what underlies the ethical activity of individuals as well as corporate institutions. In addition, Dewey and Ranciere also include moral or ethical *self*-education as necessary parts of their pedagogies.

Teaching as Empowering Value Creators

Makiguchi argues that because the creation of value is based on the needs of subjective circumstances, educators “must not make the acquisition of information the ultimate objective of education, but instead cultivate interest whereby people will be motivated to learn for themselves.” (168) Makiguchi in chapter four, and Freire in chapter three, argue that dialogue between teachers and students must underlie the learning process. However, they also make it clear that by dialogue they do not simply mean conversation-based classroom interaction. But rather true educative dialogue implies that the ideas of students affect how teachers teach, and the ideas of teachers affect how students learn, so there is a conversation in action as well as words. Praxis between teachers and students must transpire on an egalitarian playing field (Freire, 93). Freire calls the kind of relationship which solves “the dilemma between teacher and student” “problem posing education” where “teacher-students” and “student-teachers” work in community to solve common problems (93). The “culture of learning”²⁴ which develops among teachers and learners, within subjective circumstances, models and contributes to the larger dialectical processes of social change where individuals work collectively to solve common social dilemmas.

Makiguchi in chapter four is clear that there is certainly a difference between the level of knowledge between teachers and students; but that there is no difference in the capacity of students to create value. He states that teachers must “guide the learning process, and put the responsibility for study in the students’ own hands.” (Makiguchi 168) Therefore, he encourages teachers to methodically improve their ability to inspire the creative will of students²⁵ (176). And allow students to develop, for themselves, “keys that will allow [them] to unlock the vault of knowledge on their own” (168). And therefore teachers “must place people on their own path of discovery and invention... [Through the] guided acquisition of skills of observation, comprehension, and application.” (168)

The process of knowing and doing is common to all, and is inherently how all people learn their native tongue, along with billions of other pieces of information.²⁶ And likewise the ability to create value from pieces of information is also an inherent quality of all people. But the will to exercise these capacities is not a constant force; it must be inspired by the actions of others. Makiguchi argues that inspiration does not come from simple words, but through a deep reciprocal relationship between mentor and disciple (176). Only someone who holds a powerful desire to create value for the sake of others, and acts on that desire in his or her daily life, is capable of inspiring others to do the same. Makiguchi says that “teachers must practice, and experience in their own lives, the

²⁴ The term “culture of learning” came from the title of a class I took with Professor James Spady in Fall 2007. Together we studied Makiguchi’s ideas in class, as a rigorous academic exercise, for the first time in the history of SUA. I think it is important to mention that I first investigated Berger and Luckmann as well as Freire’s ideas in his classroom.

²⁵ Makiguchi writes extensively in *The Geography of Human Life* on how the individual is a macrocosm of the world and that the “creative will” is the life force which brings about the actualization of human value creation.

²⁶ I must mention that Ranciere argues at length in *The Ignorant Schoolmaster* for the equality of intelligence, that learning is common to all, and that one doesn’t need an expert to “explicate” the truth. Rather human beings, through the application of will to the learning process, are capable of learning something as complex as language without necessarily being actively taught by anyone.

principles and techniques of learning that they are seeking to help their students understand and acquire” (179).

Conclusion: Education as Contributive Revolution

“When faced with the ultimate questions of life and death, we stand humbled before the vast and unknowable universe. Even our wisest sages and scholars, our heroes of creative talents, are helpless specks in the totality of creation” (Makiguchi 48).

I have argued in this paper that humanity is a living organism made up of the collective activity of individual human beings. And that if our shared humanity is to grow, improve, and survive in the future, we each must be willing to use our hearts and knowledge to make choices that will affect not just ourselves, but society as a whole. In the 21st century, new dilemmas such as global climate change and shortages of oil and water will affect every country on earth, forcing the human organism to fundamentally change how it lives. War, enmity, and economic strife will only work to further divide humanity, and circumscribe our ability to survive as a society. We no longer can afford to educate our children simply to accept the world ‘as it is’. Rather, we must educate our children to dream of the world ‘as it could be’, and inspire their creative will to construct values which will manifest as a more just, equitable, and sustainable society. Fundamentally, education which nourishes the prodigious power of love within the human heart can provide the foundation for individual happiness, as well as a means for diagnosing and healing the ailments of the human organism as a whole.

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Field Study Report: Putting Soka Education in Practice

SuhJin Park

Introduction

What is the essence of Soka education and exactly how should it take shape in the form of curriculum, classroom structure, and instruction? How do we translate the values and principles of Soka education into specific techniques, actual behaviors within the context of real classroom setting and instruction? These have been my unceasing questions ever since I entered Soka University of America (SUA) and all the more since I started working in the field of curriculum and teaching.

This paper is a field study report and critical assessment of the experience I gained from working as a teacher during the pioneering stages of Microcosmos School, a new and still growing international preschool and kindergarten in Japan. Making principles of Soka education as the basis of our search for effective teaching principles and techniques, the teachers at the school gained a first-hand experience of Soka education in action in our efforts to revolutionize the school.

Identifying the progress the school has made over the past two and a half years, this paper examines ways in which the school underwent changes in structure, objectives and classroom practices, and as a result in children. In doing so, it discusses the challenges of founding an educational institution based on Soka education, and the effort to actualize Soka education into specific educational practices.

The Challenge at Microcosmos School

May 30, 2005, only a week after my graduation from SUA, I flew to Tokyo to begin working as a teacher at Microcosmos Preschool and Kindergarten. The school was founded in 2004 as a private English-speaking school for early childhood learners with the goal of equipping preschoolers with language, cognitive, and moral skills.

Teacher training consisted of none other than having to observe the school in session for one week. Other than that, there was no provision of specific guideline or professional training in teaching English as a Second Language, let alone in early childhood education. As was the case for the teachers that joined the school before me, I was given much freedom, if not too much to the point of ambiguity and frustration, to jump right in and interact with the children and decide the details of the program and activities. Not knowing any other ways, I resorted to what was already there for me replicate.

My days consisted of getting two and three year old children to sit down and concentrate on “learning English.” Children would talk to me in Japanese and I would respond back in English. Circle time in the mornings consisted of going over the usual greetings, songs, and dances. We would then have lessons focusing either on vocabulary drills or phonics, mainly using flashcards and worksheets as our teaching material. On days that were not for vocabulary or phonics, children did art, cooking, or went to the park. Everyday children got an abundant amount of time for free-play. This was intended to be a time for teachers to interact individually with students and teach English through play. However, given that there was hardly any structure or guide from the teachers, free

play became a time of the day when children ran around the room and went wild. On top of that, this was a chance for them to play with each other using Japanese, hence only making it even more frustrating for the teachers who were trying to get them to speak English.

After a good two-weeks of feeling disoriented and burnt from my experience of vain attempts at trying to get these young Japanese children to speak English, these very words of Makiguchi's pierced through my heart.

“..most teachers, thinking only of adult needs, tend to keep cramming their students with information that has no meaning or relevance for their current lives. It is little wonder, then, that children are not interested in their studies and, more often than not, fail to understand them. The compulsory English curriculum as it exists in the Japanese educational system is a first-rate example of this” (Makiguchi, 1989).

The situation at Microcosmos school could not seem to depict more accurately this very problematic situation of where “teachers, thinking only of adult needs, tend to keep cramming their students with information that has no meaning or relevance for their current lives.” With these children put in school out of their parent's fervent wish for their child to learn to speak English, teachers could not help but feel the constant pressure that came from parents to provide immediate results.

The father of Soka education, Makiguchi, stressed the importance of making learning relevant to students' lives and heightening students' sense of social consciousness. He insisted that rather than passively absorbing knowledge, children should be introduced to the joys of learning. “Education must never be coercive.” He proposed ideas for educational reform in order to change bored, apathetic learners into eager, self-directed students.

What did we need to do to give meaning and relevance to English-learning for these children who lived in a non-English speaking environment? What was the key to changing these “bored, apathetic learners into eager, self-directed students?” Clearly, we needed to reform and revitalize our lessons and teaching approach.

While it was vital to look at our lessons and teaching approach, I also realized that the school itself needed to undergo a change, especially a reorganization in the school system to support this revitalization of classroom practices. First of all, we needed to have a team of dedicated teachers. When I got there, the school consisted of five teachers, one full-time and the rest part-time who came only on selected days of the week. Communication between the teachers was inefficient, as part-time teachers were only in school during the hours lessons were in session. Teachers rarely spent time talking about the curriculum or lesson plans together. Part-time teachers left as soon as children were dismissed from school, which made it difficult for the vital daily reflection and evaluation to take place between the teachers. There was no real sense of unity amongst the teachers.

I learned that the school was not grounded on a clear educational objective or a firm philosophy guiding teachers and administrator toward mutual goals. As a result, lessons were often marked by arbitrary application of teaching materials and activities without a clear educational objective in sight. Teachers came into the classroom with their own set of agenda and approach, at times contradicting each others' practices. Without clear

objectives, teachers' efforts were inevitably going to be "labor-intensive yet essentially inconsequential" (Makiguchi, 1989).

Granted that "it is no easy matter to spot successes or failures until considerable time has passed," as Makiguchi suggested, and it probably did require at least a good two year period for any valid evaluation to take place, I could not help but feel the futility of our efforts, as if we were running through an endless maze with no real sense of direction.

Inefficient division of roles and responsibilities was yet another issue at the school. There were no definite distinctions in the teachers' roles and responsibilities. For example, as a small, private school, a full-time teacher was expected to do almost everything in order to keep the school going. Apart from teaching both the morning classes and afternoon ESL classes, as a full-time, I also did administrative and secretarial work—cleaned the school, picked up phones, advertised the school, filed, worked on the school website, and a lot of this had to take place in Japanese. Having been spread so thin, we struggled to fully focus on crucial aspects of the school. We failed to take the necessary critical look at our lessons, teaching approach, or seek out better techniques and methodologies. Makiguchi's following statement describes the situation we were in: The "kill-two-birds-with-one-stone approach, lacking definite distinctions, will continue to work against effective education" (p.132).

Revolutionizing Microcosmos Preschool & Kindergarten

Over the course of the two years that I was at Microcosmos, I have not only seen but was a part of the considerable changes that took place in every possible sense: modification in the school's name, school logo, curriculum, class structure, enrollment policy, classroom practices and our approach to teaching. I would like to highlight and introduce some of these changes which I feel played significant roles in the development of the school and children.

Educational Goals & Philosophy

First of all, things really started rolling once we finally had three full-time teachers. The three of us had daily opportunities to sit together and reflect on each child, how our lessons and the day went in general, and discuss ways in which we could improve the school as a preschool and kindergarten. We talked a lot about the direction our school should take. We felt that our focus should not be merely on teaching English, but on cultivating the whole child. Ultimately, we were aiming for Microcosmos to become an International Preschool and Kindergarten. We developed our school's mottos and educational objectives. The current philosophy and mottos of the school are as follows:

Philosophy.

At Microcosmos International Preschool & Kindergarten, we bring out the great potential in each child. We aim to raise our children into people who can contribute to their family, society and the world.

Mottos:

To be children who are joyful, caring, and courageous.

Enrollment Policy

We changed the enrollment policy from allowing the option of children to come to school only once a week to requiring that students come at least three times a week. The decision was based on our own observation of how much harder it was for children that came once or twice a week to develop a sense of belonging at school, or a connection with peers and teachers. Not being emotionally invested in the school, affected how they felt about English-learning. By having children come to school on a more regular basis, we started to see not only a positive difference in their English acquisition, but also in their attitude toward teachers, peers and school in general.

Teacher Training

Teacher training was something that Makiguchi stressed as a basic and vital element of education. According to Ikeda (2001), “the teacher is the most important element of the educational environment. This creed of Makiguchi’s is the unchanging spirit of Soka education.” Improving teacher education facilities and practices had proposed at the time when he presented his ideas for a revitalization of education in Japan.

One of the ways the teachers at Microcosmos School tried to engage in teacher training was by taking the initiative to visit and learn from other schools.

Sapporo Soka kindergarten was one of the schools we had an opportunity to visit. Moved by the vibrant and happy faces of the students at the kindergarten, we were determined to make sure the students at our very own school looked as happy, confident, and enthusiastic to be at school. Upon being asked what he thought was the essence of Soka education at Sapporo Soka Kindergarten, Mr. Hiranuma, who is the principal, told us about the teachers who were earnestly committed to realizing each student’s happiness. Every morning teachers at Sapporo Soka Kindergarten would get together and send prayers for every single child. In essence, the act of teachers praying for every single child each morning represents teacher’s dedication and effort to embrace every single child and wish for their growth and happiness. We started to engage in the same effort to

Because the nature of our school was essentially different from Sapporo Soka Kindergarten, more than teaching us a specific technique for the classrooms, our visit to the kindergarten ignited a sense of passion in the teachers and became a vital incentive to seriously start putting our energies to revitalizing the school.

In our search for effective teaching principles and techniques, we came across another valuable opportunity to visit and observe a preschool that was very similar to Microcosmos school, in that it was fairly new, enrolled a small number of students and there were four teachers in total. We learned a great deal about the basic structure, daily flow, and classroom practices of an international preschool and kindergarten.

Curriculum and Methodology

Finally, I would like to talk about some of the ways in which we attempted to translate the values and principles of Soka education into specific techniques, curriculum, actual behaviors within the context of real classroom setting and instruction.

I will look at how we attempted at making learning relevant to students' lives (Makiguchi, 1989) and manifesting the students' potential (Ikeda, 2001).

First of all, we divided up the children by age groups. We developed a separate curriculum for each group—caterpillars (age 2 to 3), bumblebees (age 3 to 4), ladybugs (age 4 to 5), butterflies (age 5 to 6). Previously, children of all the ages were put together in one class, which made lessons less effective due to the range in developmental stages, hence interests, attention span, and abilities. By dividing them up, we were able to devise and modify activities and teaching approaches based on their developmental stage and interests.

Home visitation was another aspect of our curriculum we decided to implement. It was amazing to see how much the home environment influenced children's behavior, interests, and attitude toward school and learning. It allowed us to better understand our students. This vital experience allowed us to take into consideration these different conditions and backgrounds children were carrying when interacting and guiding them in their learning. We also noticed considerable change in students' attitudes toward school after the home visitation had taken place. We could see in their behaviors that they opened up more to the teachers, and felt safer to be at school.

Ikeda (2001) talked about the role of education as one that “encourages youth to realize their precious potential to display their unique individuality with enthusiasm and vigor.” In line with this principle, we altered our classroom practices by basing it more on student-centered activities rather than teacher-centered activities. We abandoned lessons on vocabulary drills that were arbitrary and irrelevant. We also tried to avoid making lessons that required children to sit, listen, and replicate the information that was being presented to them. Individual notebooks were used as opposed to filling out identical loose worksheets, in order to get children to experience and recreate the new knowledge in ways that made sense to them. Makiguchi (1989) pointed out that “the adult may well get the child to listen, but listening does not lead to understanding unless the child has the experience to appreciate what is being said.” Once children were done with their work, everybody would get together on the rug and take turns sharing their work with their peers. These are a few of the ways teachers at Microcosmos tried to encourage children to take ownership of their learning, become empowered and learn from their peers.

In addition, teachers created more opportunities for children to take responsibility at school. One example was creating the “leader rotating system.” Every child got a chance to be a leader, in other words, the classroom monitor. Each day the leader would be a different child, simply based on the rotation system. By doing this, we encouraged in children self-management of their own behaviors. I consider this to be a significant change from the school's old ways of enforcing classroom management, which revolved around the reward and punishment system. A leader would be chosen by the teachers at the end of the day, depending on who seemed to exhibit “good” learning behaviors. Most of the time the same few children would get the leader's badge, and eventually this method proved to be not only inefficient but possibly negative to children's self-esteem.

The new adopted method for classroom management was based on respect and faith for children potential to exhibit positive behaviors.

Conclusion

Microcosmos school is still developing and there are yet areas for improvement. However, I cannot deny the fact that the fruits of efforts of the teachers to revitalize the school have been born in many ways. One obvious evidence of this is in student's amazing growth and progress we have all witnessed!

Through this experience I have come to understand that Soka education has been articulated as a series of general principles rather than as a specific systematic method, so as not to confine teaching practices into one rigid set of instruction. Every classroom is going to be different as each class is inevitably going to consist of teachers and students who are unique and different. Implementing Soka education consequently will not necessarily look the same for every class and school.

It would be reasonable to say that any teaching practices, curriculum, classroom structure, and instruction that ultimately introduce children to the joys of learning, and teach them to value the acquisition of knowledge so as to give meaning and value to one's own life and the lives of others *is* Soka education.

Based on the endeavor to practice Soka education in the unique context of Microcosmos Preschool and Kindergarten, I was able to examine one of the many possible cases of Soka education in action.

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Revolutionizing the Self into a Value Creator: Applying Value Creation & Ethics to the Principle of Economic Activity

Masashiro Louis

Makiguchi's ideas and efforts as an educational reformist are fundamentally philosophical and social arguments to what defines the individual. In *Education for Creative Living*, Makiguchi calls the individual "[a] healthy cell²⁷ in the social organism." (22) Makiguchi employs this analogy while describing life's purposes as fulfilling the happiness of the individual and society. Value Creation education aims to re-make the human individual into one that lives "to fulfill personal life and the network of interdependent relationships that constitutes the individual's communal life."⁽⁶⁾²⁸ This type of *eudaimonia*,²⁹ one with a Soka flavor, constitutes Makiguchi's belief that all people ought to be creators of value or creators of good for humanity's sake.

All individuals, upon 'entering' human life are born into social networks whereby their origination and subsistence depend on. From an individual's conception, prenatal development, birth, and nursing, social networks from the family to the hospital play an active and intimate role in sustaining the individual's life. As Aristotle rightly said, "the state is a creation of nature and prior to the individual" and thus a "social instinct is implanted in all men by nature." Later on in life, the individual becomes part of a greater social network, or the capitalist economy.³⁰ The survival of the individual depends on his ability to accumulate capital. The individual would then partake in the process of creating social value for others (or goods) in repay for his own needs. The definition of economics below hints at the social nature of economics:

Economics is the science of choice. It studies how people choose to use scarce or limited productive resources (land, labor, equipment, technical knowledge) to produce various commodities (such as wheat, beef, overcoats, concerts, roads, missiles) and distribute these good to various members of society for their consumption (Samuelson and Nordhaus, 4).

The above ethic of an individual acting with a social consciousness (or ethical consciousness), however, seems to have faded from popular business and economic ideology (Allinson, 21). Actors engaged in economic activity often forget the ethical nature of their interaction, and are driven by the pursuit of self-interests alone. Contrary to popular dogma, there is no inherent rivalry between ethical behavior and economic behavior (23). All economic activity is between social actors, and in order to be a self-

²⁷ The actual phrase is "healthy cells in the social organism."

²⁸ This statement is taken from the Introduction, written by Dayle M. Bethel, a specialist on Makiguchi's works.

²⁹ Eudaimonia is roughly translated as happiness, but denotes a *process of being/becoming* rather than an achieving a temporary state of being through the satisfaction of a desire. The good life is one of a happy means and ends. (See the *Nicomachean Ethics* by Aristotle).

³⁰ The author does note that this is not necessarily the case. Political scientist Majid Tehranian mentions the progression of human societies as such: 1) Nomadic 2) Agrarian 3) Commercial 4) Industrial 5) Digital. The economy of our age is largely centered on Commercial, Industrial, and Digital modes. While an individual may be born into a non-capitalist market system, he will always originate and depend upon a social system of some form.

sustaining organism, all actors must act in interest toward both the public and personal good. The process of economics, however, has disguised the fact that economic activity intends to provide for the greater good and the individual. Satisfying the needs of the individual alone is a misconstrued notion to the existence of the social organism, and is antithetical to the role of the value creator. The author has pondered why economics without ethics has remained an unquestioned notion of within popular/contemporary thought. In order to fully investigate such an inquiry, the historical evolution of modern economic thought must be traced from Adam Smith, Bernard Mandeville, Benjamin Franklin, and Max Weber. The thoughts of influential contemporary economist would also require analysis. For the purposes of this paper alone, the author has chosen to analyze the most famous defense of the modern economics,³¹ *Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith. Noting that Smith's work is still considered the greatest authority of economic thought, the author finds the critique of his arguments to be of considerable value. A product of intellectual thought during the Scottish Enlightenment, the author finds Smith's articulation of self-interest problematic for achieving the greater good of society. Applying the ethics of Makiguchi and authors of similar ethical foundations, this paper intends to create a dialogue between Soka education and Economics.

Smith, Selfishness, and the Mythical, Invisible Hand

In the work, Smith defines political economy³² to consider "two distinct objects: first to enable ...[people] to provide such a revenue or subsistence for themselves; and secondly, to supply the state or commonwealth with a revenue sufficient for the public services." This paper will focus on the first object of Smith's definition. What does he mean by to 'provide people with subsistence for themselves?' It is important to note that the term defined contains the word 'political' thus it involves the role of the government. Thus he is saying that the government must provide people with revenue/subsistence for themselves, clearly advising a government to take a passive role. Individuals would then seem to provide for themselves rather than having the government provide for them. The government however would be responsible for allowing individuals to do so. So how then, do individuals go about providing for themselves?

The answer to this question first appears in his explanation of the division of labor. According to Smith, the division of labor exists to satisfy the self-interest of the individual. In his chapter, *Of the Principle Which Gives Occasion to the Division of Labor*, he states that the 'arrowhead' maker devotes himself to the trade of creating arrowheads since it is to his self-interest. By only making arrowheads, he is able to trade arrowheads for items he has occasion for. For example, if he were in need of meat, he would trade arrowheads for meat. He could then obtain meat more proficiently than if he were to hunt for it himself. In this way, he could trade arrow heads to obtain food, shelter, and services such as dwelling repairs. In this way, individuals would naturally form a society consisting of a division of labor. To pursue self-interests then is the principle that gives rise to the division of labor. But what about pursuing the common interest? Smith dismisses this question with the following argument:

³¹ This assertion was taken from Prometheus Books' version of the *Wealth of Nations*, 1991.

³² 'Political Economy' was taken synonymously for 'Economy'

[I]t is in vain for him (the individual) to expect it from their benevolence only. He will be more likely to prevail if he can interest their self-love in his favour, and show them that it is for their own advantage to do for him what he requires of them. Whoever offers to another a bargain of any kind, proposes to do this. Give me that which I want, and you shall have this which you want, is the meaning of every such offer; and it is in this manner that we obtain from one another the far greater part of those good offices which we stand in need of....It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages (20).

Here Smith argues that exchanging on the basis of providing one another with a good (what he calls benevolence or humanity), is unreliable. Our self-interests can only be satisfied if we intentionally act upon it, and not expect it to be fulfilled by another's humanity. In a later section, he outrightly dismisses the possibility by saying "I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good" (352). For Smith, the possibility of individuals pursuing the common interest is dismissed.

But if the pursuit of self-interest is the principle for why there is a division of labor and the reason why individuals engage in trade, doesn't this principle render the market system unethical? Smith tries to reassure us however that this is not the case. He is famous for stating the following:

He generally, indeed, neither intends to promote the public interest, nor knows how much he is promoting it... he intends only his own gain, and he is in this, as in many other cases, led by an invisible hand to promote an end (public good) which was no part of his intention (351).

His assertion is that intentional selfish actions of the individual will result in an ethical result. Interestingly enough, he provides no empirical or rational proof to why this must be the case! He then, is proclaiming a belief and nothing more.³³ The father of modern economics' failure to incorporate ethics into his principle of exchange presents a dangerous unethical flaw in this foundational work. Moreover, his unsuccessful attempt to ethically justify the principle of self-interest may display his awareness that ethics is missing from his formulation. Although one may argue that he is mentioning the pursuit of the common good within economic activity, he categorically places the interests of the individual above and prior to the common good.

If the term 'self-interest' is transferred to Makiguchi's idea of the self, economic activity would constitute for the good of the individual and the self. Although Smith has established a principle for why individuals should engage in trade, he has clearly established a market system upon an unethical foundation. Smith attempts to evade this glaring fact by attempting to give the 'means justifies the end' argument. However in this case, the 'ethical' end is not an end at all, but rather, a myth of an ethical end. It is not based on logical nor empirical proof! This myth will not be sufficient in ethically

³³ This assertion is echoed by Robert E. Allinson in his article *Circles Within a Circle*.

justifying the market system. A look into the overall argument of the work may tell us why Smith took this dangerous leap of faith.

Self-interest and Freedom: A Misconstrued Relationship

Smith's work and is based on the idea that human interests are best served by a government that abstains from interference in a free enterprise. Government allows this freedom so that individuals may decide for themselves what is to their best interest. From this assertion, however, the author speculates that Smith doesn't trust government intervention to be on behalf of human interest. He seems to want to do away with government intervention all together, regardless if intervening for the common good or not. This seems to work against the idea of a Communist system, where self-interest is eliminated and individuals work entirely for the common good. Freedom, then, seems to be the ultimate value that he is arguing for. Secondly, he may be accepting the popular belief that man by nature is driven by self-interests. Freedom however which is often tied to the idea of self-interest shares no logical connection. Dostoyevsky, in his work *Notes from the Underground* addresses that free action doesn't correlate to self-interest. According to Dostoyevsky, man when free, often chooses to act against his self-interests (42). If the speculation of the author is correct, then as Dostoyevsky proves, one not need act upon self-interest in order to act freely.

Consequence of Selfishness in Economics

According to Edward Freeman, Kirsen Martin, and Bidhan Parmar, all coauthors of the article "Stakeholder's Capitalism" a naïve understanding of self-interest (belief that an individual's self-interest doesn't take into account the self-interest of others) has led to a society of consumerism. Consumerism is the idea that happiness equals the accumulation of a good. It is a one-way, taking-centered relationship. Robert E. Allinson offers a very similar view in his article "Circles within a Circle" and that consumerism has given individuals a consumer mentality, a mentality he equates with infantilism. The infant, he warns, pursues self-interest to the point of neglecting others and even pursuing self-interest to its own detriment. His allegory adequately explains the demise of individuals who place the pursuit of self-interest above all others.

If we take the definition of capitalism being about consumerism, a problem arises when the object of desire [good(s)] is scarce or limited. Consumerism in such an environment obviously leads to competition. With competition, individuals now seek their self-interest at the conscious expense of others. Often, the idea of competition has been accepted as a prerequisite for a capitalist society. If such an idea is deemed a necessary condition for capitalism, all participants engaged in self-interest and worse, competition, would be accepting a self-destructive ethos. A successful competitor would maximize all its profits and benefits. In such a case, no ethical hand will direct the actions of participating actors. Such open acceptance to competition out rules mutually beneficial solutions/alternatives. According to Makiguchi's philosophy, this would be creating negative value / non-value since the self is perpetuating a self-destructive ethos for the social organism. This could be likened to a cancerous cell in the human body that

brings the detriment of other cells to sustain its own existence.³⁴ Clearly, the principle of self-interest leads to unethical consequences of greedy and irresponsible individuals. Furthermore, to equate the good life (or happiness) with only fulfilling a desire doesn't qualify it as happiness in the eudemonic sense of the word. Classical Greek philosopher Aristotle states that happiness must entail both the means and the ends. With consumerism, the individual is not happy in the process of acquiring (the means) and is only happy upon obtaining the object of desire (ends). With the consumerist mentality, the superficial satisfaction of desire is equated with being happy. Moreover, valuing your gains over the sufferings of another (competition) has led individuals to a mentality that is antithetical to the idea of society itself. Basing self-interest as the principle for exchange has opened a Pandora's box of unethical, human-caused disasters.

Makiguchi, Aristotle, and Creating Value

With Smith's unsuccessful attempt to apply ethics to economics, do we rule ethics out of the realm of economics? Some economists advocate this standpoint. It is the opinion of the author, however, that allowing the existence of an unethical social system (in this case, a market system) is unjust. To make amends to this problem we must 1) dismiss the market system and find a new alternative or 2) transform the market system so that it has an ethical foundation. The author recommends the latter of the two alternatives.

In order to remedy the ethically ill market system, a new, ethically-based principle must be established. Makiguchi's idea of value creation would solve Smith's mistake. The individual is both a self-entity and a social-entity. The pursuit of creating good for both oneself and others is the process of value creation. According to Aristotle's philosophy, man is by nature both an individual and a social entity. This is the case since the individual cannot survive without society. Due to his interdependency with society, it is also within the self-interest of the individual to work towards the public good. Both agree that the interests of the individual and society must be met mutually for they are inseparable halves of the self.

If Smith is against the idea of a communist system, on this point he and Aristotle agree. Aristotle argues that if there is no notion of private property, individuals cannot engage in the act of giving and sharing. In the *Politics*, he states:

It is clearly better that property should be private; *but its use of it common*...Again, how immeasurable greater is the pleasure, when a man feel as thing to be his own for surely the love of self is a feeling implanted by nature and not given in vain., although selfishness is rightly censured; this however is not the mere love of self, but the love of self in excess... further, *there is the greatest pleasure in doing a kindness or service* (296).

This idea of private property is similar to pursuing one's self-interest. But pursuing self-interest alone is an incomplete pursuit. The joy of private property would be realized when it is shared. This may be translated to the ultimate joy of self-interest is realized when it is extended to others. Makiguchi would second this realization of fulfilling the

³⁴ Taken from Daisaku Ikeda's book *Life: an Enigma, a Precious Jewel*, 1982.

needs of the ‘cell’ and the ‘social organism.’ The idea that to peruse self-interest is apart from the pursuit of the public interest is a false paradox. This is a dogma that must be removed from economic thought so that ethical thinking may prevail in the market system. Smith, the so-called father of modern economics, may be blamed for the sinister conception of this false paradox. Individuals who have accepted this idea without a critical eye however, must accept responsibility for perpetuating this disease that is eating away the ethical consciousness of economics today.

In short, Makiguchi would advocate all activities to be approached in the ‘humanitarian way.’ In Makiguchi’s first work, *A Geography of Human Life*, he elucidates this point:

It should be understood that ‘humanitarian approach’ does not imply that there is a specific method which can be designated as such. Rather it is an effort to plan and conduct whatever strategies, whether political, military or economic, in a more humanitarian way. The important thing is the setting of a goal of well being and protection of all people, including oneself but not at the increase of self interest alone....Consequently, the forces which either link or separate states all derive from selfish economic interest (286).

Looking back at the example between the butcher and the customer, the principle causing the butcher to sell food to his customer would not only be out of his self-interest. The principle would be of value production or value creation. He would undergo the purchase (or exchange) while being aware that he is providing a social good. From providing the social good, he too would benefit from the exchange. According to this, the self-interest and the public interest, both aspect of the individual’s nature, would be met. Instead of leaving with less money, the customer would leave with a full-sense of appreciation. This process of providing a social good and thus receiving becomes a process the author chooses apply to Makiguchi’s idea of “value creation.”

Value creation is not the same as value accumulation or satisfying the needs of the individual (or even the person on the receiving end). Value creation emphasizes that the exchange amongst individuals is a process rather an end fulfilled through satisfying a desire. Instead, value creation emphasizes the activity, or the exchange itself. At that moment of exchange what is emphasized is the activity of doing good (or creating value) regardless of the object of desire. As in value creation, the relationship between subject and object is emphasized over the subjects and objects themselves (77). Over the idea of satisfying the desire of the individual or the desire of society, the participants engage in doing good disregarding desire and its objects. The idea of disregarding a relationship amongst engaged actors is related to Martin Buber’s I-It and I-Thou relationship. Makiguchi’s pedagogy aims to cultivate value creators who focus on the creative process of doing good for humanity’s sake. In short, the process of value creation is to live SUA’s motto of ‘*living a contributive life.*’

In conclusion, the father of modern economics may have planted an unethical seed (pursuit of self-interest) that resulted in a crooked tree (unethical market system) with blemished fruits (tainted profit). Adam Smith’s argument is inherently unethical and creates negative value. When applying the educational philosophy of Makiguchi and

the philosophy of Aristotle, we may perhaps rectify a dangerous mistake originally stemming from Smith. The false paradox between the individual interest and the public interest needs to be banished from economic thought since this dogma promotes economic activity of negative value. The power of ideas, even bad ideas such as the false paradox, influences the way social actors may chose to behave. If Makiguchi's idea of value creation is applied to all economic activity, there would be no room to separate ethics from economics. All economic actors, from the individual to the corporation ought to acknowledge their interdependency as a part of the 'social organism.' Thus, the idea of value creation has the potential to cause a contributive revolution³⁵ in both the economic thought and the system itself.

³⁵ Taken from the Theme of this year's 2008 Soka Education Conference

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Raising Language Awareness: Teaching Sociolinguistics for the Realization of Human Equality

Masako Iwamoto and Yuko Sugiyama

Language is intricately woven into the fabric of human life. It is closely linked to the relationship between mother and child, between self and society, between thought and action, between war and peace. It is all-pervasive. We use it, misuse it, and abuse it. And yet, we seldom think about it.

(Kumaravadivelu, 2003, p. 156)

As the quote expresses, language plays such a crucial role in our lives; yet, its role is all too often overlooked. Sociolinguistics is a field of study that examines this role of language in our lives and in society. It examines the function of language in society, and how society as an entity affects language in turn. (Trudgill, 2000; Mesthrie, Swann, Deumert, & Leap, 2000)

In this paper, we investigate some issues involving the lack of language awareness in our society and how it often misleads people to unconsciously judge others based on the way they speak. First, we will introduce various issues discussed in the field of sociolinguistics, such as language policies and language attitudes, and examine the roots behind them. Then, we will discuss the teaching of sociolinguistics as a potential solution to existing social issues and as a significant step forward towards the establishment of a society that emphasizes equality among all people.

One of the frequently discussed topics in the circle of sociolinguists is the English Only Movement. It is sometimes misunderstood that English is the official language of the United States. However, this is not true – in reality, the United States as a nation has no language policy (Crawford, 2000). In fact, since the establishment of the country, the United States has never had an official language by law. Currently, however, twenty-seven states in the America have laws declaring English as their official language. On the other hand, there are a few states that have endorsed the usage of other languages, such as Spanish in New Mexico, French in Maine, and Hawaiian in Hawaii. However, there has been a constant debate over whether or not to legislate English as the official language of the country. This attempt to make English the only official language is known as the English Only Movement. Although the sentiment had existed previously, it was not until Senator S. I. Hayakawa proposed an amendment to make English the only official language of the United States in 1981 that this movement was moved into clear sight (Crawford, 2000). During the past two decades, over twenty states have chosen English to be the only official language in their respective states. Gaining momentum from these state level legislations as well as anti-bilingual education movements and anti-immigrant movements, many amendments and bills continued to be proposed at the federal level, but none has passed to date. (Crawford, 2000; González, 2000)

The main justification of advocates of the English Only Movement is that the English language would serve as a unifying force of the country and encourage incoming foreigners to learn English. While this appears to be a legitimate and practical rationale, others express that “it is a belief in freedom, including linguistic freedom that binds the

United States.” (Goldstein, 1999, p. 235) Many of the leading opponents of the English Only Movement are sociolinguists.

Then, the question would be, why are sociolinguists against the English Only Movement? They express deep concerns about the potential consequences a language policy may incur. For example, in the Philippines, there is a language policy which individuals need to learn a second language in order to work, and the well-paid jobs in the Philippines require being able to speak English fluently. However, most people are not able to attain such high proficiency, and many end up having poorly paid jobs (Tollefson, 1991). This portrays how a language policy promoting the idea of the obtaining of a second language creates a social class system in society, oppressing those who are in less privileged situations and speak only one language. If English becomes the official language of the United States, similar consequences are anticipated to occur. Furthermore, what this may imply is that a person who speaks English is superior to those who do not. Sociolinguists fear the real danger of this movement — “its strategic and unrelenting use of a series of prevalent myths and stereotypes upon which predicates its ideology.” (Gonzalez, Schott, and Vasquez, 1988 as cited in Gonzalez, 2000, p. xxviii) Moreover, it may result in the further reinforcement of existing stereotypes and marginalize those who do not belong in the “mainstream society.”

Proponents of the English Only Movement also argue that having a language policy will encourage non-native English speakers to learn English. However, this argument is grounded in the misconception that immigrants do not seem to learn English and that many foreigners usually form their own communities and rarely step out of it. However, it is often overlooked that the children of the immigrants, the second generation, do learn the language. In fact, many of them lose their proficiency in their parents’ native languages. Then, why do we hear people say that immigrants do not learn to speak English? The answer to this question is that most of these immigrants are first generation immigrants; in other words, there is a continual influx of incoming immigrants that create the image that immigrants never learn to speak English.

Therefore, with or without a language policy, immigrants will eventually learn the common language. Rather, it is possible that a language policy may trigger sentiments of resistance to learn English.

Another common topic in sociolinguistics is the issue of language attitude and stereotypes. Various sociolinguists have corroborated the existence of linguistic stereotypes. Rosenthal (1974) conducted a study with 136 pre-school children (both white and black children) to investigate the children’s reaction toward two types of speech: Standard English and African American Vernacular English (AAVE, also known as African American English, Ebonics or Black English). The participants were shown two identical cardboard boxes with paintings of faces with each box containing a tape recorder and a present hidden in the box. The tapes were recordings of a description of what the present was and both tapes had the same claims about its attractions. The only difference between the two boxes was that one recording was in Standard English, whereas the other was in AAVE. After listening to these tapes, the children were asked to choose which present they wanted. As a result, Rosenthal found that 79 percent of the children said that the Standard box spoke better, and 73 percent said that the Standard box contained a better present than the AAVE box. She also discovered that the children as young as three years old distinguished Standard English and nonstandard English and

the white children openly expressed highly pejorative attitudes towards nonstandard English speakers.

Another group of sociolinguists, Williams, Whitehead, and Miller (1972), conducted a study that showed the severity of linguistic prejudice. The researchers prepared three videos that portrayed a side-view of the face of three students: one Anglo, one Black, and one Mexican-American. They then edited the video so that the three students were all speaking in Standard English. The participants of this study were school teachers (both Anglo and Black), and they were asked to view the video to evaluate the performance of the three students' speech. The audio-clip was the exact same for all three students; nonetheless, the three students received different evaluations for their speech performance with the Anglo student scoring the highest, followed by the Black student and Mexican student. What is particularly striking is that these teachers in this study were not conscious of the decisions they were making. It was not their deliberate intention to assess the three students based on their ethnicities; nevertheless, the findings show a clear sign of stereotype and prejudice.

Cooper and Fishman (1977) also concluded from a study using Arabic and Hebrew that standard language is generally rated more positively than non-standard language. In addition, their study demonstrated that people's willingness to listen or their evaluations of a speaker's argument changes depending on the speaker's accent. These studies and numerous others have illustrated how people judge or even discriminate others based on preconceived notions of certain groups who speak a certain language, variety, or accent.

Thus far, we have introduced some of the major topics discussed in sociolinguistics. What do all of these topics and issues tell us? We believe that the fundamental issue that sociolinguists are touching upon reflects our personal belief that each individual should be regarded equal despite all differences. Since the Civil Rights Movement in the late twentieth century, much attention has been paid to prejudices and discriminations based on skin color, ethnicity, religion, and sexual orientation. Deutsch (1975) elaborated that "language is an automatic signaling system, second only to race in identifying targets for possible privilege or discrimination." (as cited in Marshall, 1986, p. 14) Yet, prejudice based on language remains largely unrecognized in society.

The aspiration to become prejudice-free has become in part of a social norm; and presumably, most people, just like the teachers in Williams, Whiteheads, and Miller's study, do not have the intention to discriminate against others on the basis of the aforementioned traits. However, even when unintended, the lack of language awareness often manifests itself in the form of discriminatory behavior and speech without being noticed.

Then, where do these prejudices come from? How do people "acquire" these linguistic stereotypes? Some scholars have pointed out that these issues of language attitudes and beliefs are implicitly yet repeatedly "taught" in schools. The majority of the general public goes through schooling during their childhood and teenage years. During these early years in life, many of our beliefs regarding language, dialect, and accent are formed. For instance, we are often exposed to the notion of "correct" language or correct grammar, pronunciation, or spelling at school. "'Ain't' is wrong; you should always use 'isn't,'" or, "you should spell 'organize,' not 'organise.'" The language taught at school

is *the correct one*, and everything else is either inappropriate or unacceptable. There is little room for variation, if any at all exists.

This notion of a correct language becomes ingrained in us during our school years, but its influence goes beyond the schools. Those students who are able to speak and write using the “correct form,” or the so-called Standard variety, generally are the ones who receive better grades, enter more prestigious schools, obtain higher-paying jobs, and “succeed in life.” Being able to speak the Standard variety, hence, is implicitly portrayed as a key to such success. In other words, this underlying message that reflects the prevalent values and ideologies in society is repeatedly disseminated to the pupils through the educational systems. Pennycook (2001) addresses the role of schooling in the broader context of society:

What we need...is an understanding of how schools operate within the larger field of social relations, how, as a key social institution, they ultimately serve to maintain the social, economic, cultural, and political status quo rather than upset it. (p. 121)

Nonetheless, we must also acknowledge that schools and teachers are oftentimes put into positions where they have no choice but to promote the Standard language. Knowing that the ability to use the standard language is an important criterion for success once students enter society, if schools or teachers do not teach them the Standard variety, they would be doing a disservice to their students. Thus, we find ourselves in an excruciating dilemma; must we become part of this cycle of social reproduction? Or is there a way to break away from this cycle and bring about social change?

Here, we believe that teaching sociolinguistics can play a pivotal role in spreading the understanding that all languages, varieties, accents—and by extension, their speakers—are inherently equal. All languages, dialects, varieties and accents possess their own unique logical system, and each is just as valid as any other language. Hence, it is also a fallacy that a person who is able to speak the Standard variety is more sophisticated or in any way superior to others. As Matsuda (1991) states, “People in power are perceived as speaking normal, unaccented English. Any speech that is different from that constructed norm is called an accent.”(cited in Lippi-Green, 1997, p. 59) It is society that places more power and gives more prestige to one form over others. Therefore, there is no legitimate reason for judging a person’s worth by the language he or she speaks; just as we should not judge one based on the color of their skin, language should not be a criterion for judging one’s worth.

We see the potential implications of teaching sociolinguistics as follows - teaching sociolinguistics would provide an opportunity to reexamine our own beliefs and ideologies regarding language and raise language awareness. Moreover, teaching sociolinguistics can lead to one’s realization of the equality of language and hence contribute to the establishment of a society based on the principle of human equality. Nonetheless, we perceive a few major obstacles; first, it is worth noting that gaining knowledge of sociolinguistics does not automatically equate to the reexamination of one’s ideology and the realization of human equality. Because it is ultimately up to each individual to decide what conclusions to draw from any given piece of knowledge or whether he/she would even consider the option of examining it, the mere exposure to

sociolinguistics cannot guarantee that it would result in the realization of language equality or human equality. Furthermore, as we noted earlier, diverging from an established cycle of social reproduction is extremely difficult; people who uphold distinct values or beliefs are bound to confront opposition in the face of such a rigid social structure. As long as schools continue to play a role in maintaining the status quo, the premise of linguistic superiority will remain, and the door to linguistic equality and human equality will forever be closed. Thus, no matter how daunting the journey may seem, there is no solution but to take one step forward.

In taking this first step, the teaching of sociolinguistics may serve as a key to ending the cycle of social reproduction and unlock the door to a society that gives equal respect to all languages and their speakers.

All in all, we firmly believe that the teaching of sociolinguistics will promote a critical examination of the self, language, and society, which will create an opportunity to reflect on what it truly means to embrace linguistic diversity and uphold the ideals of human equality. It is a field that holds vast potential to shed light upon the existing inequity in society and make invaluable contributions for the realization of human equality.

Lastly, borrowing the words of the late Martin Luther King Jr. (1963), we would like to conclude our paper:

I say to you today, my friends...even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men are created equal."

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Education, Revolution and Contribution: My Perspective on the History of Latin America and the Universal Philosophy of Soka Education

Koichi Hagimoto

Introduction

The theme for this year's Soka Education Conference is "Education and Contributive Revolution." In this paper, I attempt to examine the essential role of education in social change from two perspectives. On the one hand, I consider it necessary to explore the inseparable relationship between education and revolution from a historical viewpoint. What kind of role does education play in the development of both socio-political and ideological revolution in world history? How do we envision the future of educational philosophy and what contributions can Soka Education make in this respect? And last but not least, how do we, as practitioners of such pedagogy, create a new history of humanity?

For my historical analysis, I choose Latin America as a model because I believe it to be historically rich with revolutions. My paper focuses on the ways in which many Latin American revolutionaries, including Andrés Bello (1781-1865), José Martí (1853-1895), and Paulo Freire (1921-1997), perceived education as a practical means to construct a better society. When reflecting upon the history of Latin America, we realize that pedagogy has often played a crucial role in peoples' struggles against oppressors, whether being European colonizers, conceited intellectuals or cruel dictators, since the discovery of the New World in the fifteenth century.

The second part of my essay, on the other hand, concerns the question of educational values and the meaning of SOKA in our contemporary society. In other words, the first section deals with the history of education in a particular region—Latin America—, whereas the second part points toward the future by exploring the possibility of an alternative revolution through a new pedagogy based on what I call "spiritual endeavor." There are two key terms to be considered here: Tsunesaburo Makiguchi's (1871-1944) "pedagogy of value creation" and Daisaku Ikeda's (1960) notion of "human revolution." What distinguishes the philosophy of Soka Education from other types of pedagogy resides in its emphasis of a single individual's inner transformation. It does not refer to a revolution in the socio-political sense, as we shall see in the first section of my essay, but rather to a spiritual revolution according to which an invisible change within one's mind is the essence of altering the history of humanity.

Latin America: A Continent of Revolutions

Latin American experienced many revolutions, or "wars of independence," against European colonialism during the nineteenth century: Argentina (1810-17), Chile (1810-18), Colombia (1810-19), Mexico (1810-21), Venezuela (1811-22), Peru (1821), Brazil (1822), Cuba (1880-98) etc. Even in the twentieth century, social movements against neo-colonialism and global imperialism continued to influence people's life. Andrés Bello was a nineteenth-century intellectual from Venezuela, who was also a humanist, poet, lawmaker, educator and philosopher. He was a teacher of Simón Bolívar

(1783-1830), known as the Liberator of South America, as well as the founder of one of the oldest and most prestigious universities in the Americas, The University of Chile. Concerned with the future of Chile, he dedicated himself to the development of educational and juridical systems in the country.

In the essay “On the Aims of Education and the Means of Promoting It” (1836), Bello characterized the fundamental purpose of education as the creation of model citizens capable of contributing to society. He wrote that “[e]ducation [...] is what teaches us our duties to society as members of it, as well as our duties to ourselves if we wish to attain the highest degree of well-being of which the human condition is capable” (109). In his vision, education encouraged all citizens to both develop abilities for their own sake and fulfill their distinct responsibilities as members of society. Bello further insisted that “[i]n every society, the aim of its members is the achievement of general happiness” (110). Based on his belief in the power of education, he created the foundation of educational institutions in Chile, fostering individuals who could strive to create a prosperous nation in which people enjoy freedom and social welfare.

Similar to Bello, the Cuban revolutionary José Martí regarded education as one of his essential tasks in the process of nation-building. The following words demonstrate his fundamental interest in education: “Education is like a tree: it sows a seed and opens many branches”³⁶ (my translation). Martí sacrificed his life in favor of Cuban independence at the end of the nineteenth century, voraciously producing essays and articles as a Cuban political leader. For Martí, education played a significant role in the propagation of patriotic ideas. One of the most renowned scholars of José Martí studies is a Cuban critic and poet, Cintio Vitier, with whom Daisaku Ikeda compiled a dialogue called *Diálogo sobre José Martí, el Apóstol de Cuba* (2001). According to Vitier, “Martí’s educational and pedagogical ideas should not be considered as isolated ‘thoughts,’ or ideas solely aimed at one area of society. Rather, it is a fundamental part—even the axis itself—of a project guided by the Cuban Republic”³⁷ (my translation). Martí thus considered an educational reform as the essential project of creating a new Cuban nation, which he famously depicted as “the nation for all.”

Another important aspect of Martí’s pedagogical philosophy is how he emphasized young people’s responsibility to reveal their infinite potential through education: “There is nobody who lacks something positive; he just needs to know how to discover it” (my translation).³⁸ In his well-known essay “Our America” (1891), Martí expressed his hope for Latin American youth to “understand that there is too much imitation [of foreign models], and that salvation lies in creating. *Create* is this generation’s password” (294). With his unwavering faith in the potential of young people to change the destiny of Latin America, Martí urged all the youth to learn their own culture and tradition rather than following foreign models. This, I believe, essentially constitutes Martí’s poetics of resistance against exterior forces. For him, the key to the educational reform was “creation”: the creation of a new country, the creation

³⁶ “La educación es como un árbol: se siembra una semilla y se abren muchas ramas.” (119)

³⁷ “Sus ideas educacionales y pedagógicas no deben considerarse como ‘pensamientos’ aislados, ni únicamente dirigidos a un área de la sociedad, sino como parte sustancial—e incluso el eje mismo—de un proyecto de República.” (173)

³⁸ “No hay quien no tenga algo bueno; falta saberlo descubrir.” (cited in Vitier and Ikeda, 168)

of Our America—not “their” America (U.S.A.)—, and most importantly, the creation of a new history.

Another Latin American figure I want to examine is the twentieth-century Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. Unlike Bello and Martí, Freire theorized a concrete pedagogy, which would later be known as liberation theology. One of his most significant books is *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1970), in which the author proposed a new approach to pedagogy by examining the particular power relationship between “the oppressor” and “the oppressed.” Based on his experience with helping the education of many Brazilian illiterates during the 1960s, Freire dedicated this book “to the oppressed, and to those who suffer with them and fight at their side” (7).

In the book, the Brazilian author argued that the fundamental problem of the country’s educational system lied in what he called the “banking” approach to education. This banking concept characterized students as empty containers of knowledge (bank accounts) that inevitably require a teacher’s authority, which signifies the “filling” of “the students with the contents of his [the teacher’s] narration” (57). For Freire, the excessive application of lecturing and memorization in the classroom was an example of this “banking” approach. According to this vision, students are dehumanized into mere objects whose mind-set is no better than that of animals waiting to be fed by their keepers. Opposing this type of education, Freire suggested that a new pedagogy must focus on equal dialogue between teacher and student, which would enable individuals to cultivate their authentic beings—that is, their authentic “humanness”—through dynamic interactions. The educator’s role, therefore, is to create a particular kind of dialogue based on mutual trust and respect between teachers and students. In Freire’s words, it is a dialogue that “requires an intense faith in man, faith in his power to make and remake, to create and re-create, faith in his vocation to be more fully human” (79).

Soka Education as a Universal Philosophy

Why is it important to discuss the three educators/revolutionaries that I have mentioned? I believe that it is because students of Soka Education ought to follow their path, become like them, and further—this I want to emphasize with my deep respect for the three intellectuals—we should reach beyond their achievement. Soka philosophy is universal, capable of transcending time and space and of providing a new idea of revolution. Daisaku Ikeda recalls a memory with his mentor, Josei Toda, when Toda told young people dedicated to the Soka philosophy that “[s]ince you uphold the greatest philosophy in the world, you are already world leaders!” (cited in Ikeda 2005, 109).³⁹ Bello, Martí and Freire were all concerned with people’s well-being and considered educational reform as a way to improve society. They represented what we call “global citizens” who changed the history of their respective countries. Bello is still remembered throughout Latin America as one of the pioneers of the modern educational system, while every citizen in Cuba regards Martí as the nation’s founding father. Freire’s pedagogy, for his part, remains fundamental for today’s scholars of education. I firmly believe that we should not simply read them as historical figures but we must listen to them and learn

³⁹ In this essay, I use *For the Leaders of the 21st Century: Founder’s Memorable Remarks* (2005) for all of Ikeda’s quotes, except otherwise noted.

from them, constantly reminding ourselves that our goal is to become world leaders capable of making changes in the society.

I also want to acknowledge the difference between the pedagogical ideologies advocated by Bello, Martí, and Freire and the philosophy of Soka Education that is practiced at SUA and which the Founder, Daisaku Ikeda, desires to promote around the globe. As we have examined, education for the three Latin American intellectuals represents an important tool for the betterment and prosperity of society. However, the Soka philosophy defines education as the end in itself, and its fundamental concern is the happiness of each student. That is, the focus is not on society at the macro level, as in the first case, but rather on each individual at the micro level. Here I want to recall Ikeda's educational proposal delivered in September of 2001. In his proposal entitled "Building a Society Serving the Essential Needs of Education—Some Views on Education in the Twenty-first Century," Ikeda stated the following: "Hence, as I consider education in the twenty-first century, I would like to assert that what is most urgently needed is a paradigm shift from looking at 'education for society's sake' to building 'a society serving the essential needs of education'" (Ikeda 2000). The question is, then, what does it mean to create "a society serving the essential needs of education"? I believe that the answer resides in a new approach to the concept of education/revolution, which is not based on the traditional notion of socio-political revolution as perceived in Bello, Martí and Freire, but on a single individual's inner transformation, which Ikeda calls "human revolution."

Ikeda defines the idea of "human revolution" as the following: "A great human revolution in just a single individual will help achieve a change in the destiny of a nation and further, will enable a change in the destiny of all human kind" (20).⁴⁰ It is well-known that Ikeda's philosophy originated in his mentors, Tunesaburo Makiguchi and Josei Toda. Opposing the nationalistic education promoted by the Japanese government during World War II, Makiguchi argued that the fundamental goal of education was the happiness of each and every student through the creation of value: "Life, ultimately, is a quest for value. Happiness is an ideal state of life in which value has been found and given expression. Thus, it is the duty of education, whose goal is to lead everyone to happiness, to empower people with a robust capacity to enjoy and create value" (cited in Ikeda 2005, 6). I think that the notion of "human revolution" exemplifies Makiguchi's concept of "Value Creating Pedagogy" for it best symbolizes one's ability to cultivate his/her full potential and to enjoy the most productive way of living. I believe that Soka Education encourages each student's active learning process, or what I call "spiritual endeavor," aimed at constructing an indestructible faith in his/her own potential.

SUA is a place where countless human revolutions should take place, including the smallest change of everyday life. Our founder wrote to us as follows upon opening the university in 2001: "What is indispensable to humanity in the 21st century? A spiritual revolution. And what is the key to carrying out that goal? A revolution in

⁴⁰ Ikeda's idea of human revolution can be also understood as similar to Ralph Waldo Emerson's notion of "self-reliance." Sarah Ann Wider, for instance, points out some parallels between the two concepts: "Both [Ikeda and Emerson] believe in the varied and creative potential of the individual and believe that such potential must be freely nurtured. From what I have read in Mr. Ikeda's word, there is a strong parallel between Emerson's self-reliance and the concept of "human revolution": everyone of us must undertake that very hard work of ongoing and absolutely honest self-examination, looking hard at who we presently are and who we might become." (in World Tribune, Nov. 9, 2007; 5)

education. Education is the foundation for spreading humanism throughout the world and building peace. SUA, Aliso Viejo, in California's Orange Country, opened its doors in 2001 to respond to this fundamental need" (81). The task as young founders of the university is, therefore, to produce a new kind of educational institution where professors treasure every student with utmost respect and where students constantly embark upon "spiritual endeavor" through the process of human revolution. I believe one of the most important phases of human revolution begins with one's tireless dedication to studies.

Once again the founder's remarks are significant in this respect: "My young friends, you have a responsibility to study with the utmost seriousness and dedication. You have a mission to resolutely triumph for the sake of the innumerable people of good conscience who have placed their trust and hope in you" (139). Our purpose of study at SUA is neither a mere absorption of knowledge nor the achievement of fame in the academic world: the goal is the happiness of all humanity. We train ourselves through ceaseless learning in order build skills and abilities with which we can help the life of incalculable individuals in the future. This process certainly requires much patience and discipline. However, as the founder always reminds us, only through these struggles can one become a true leader capable of creating positive changes in the society. The father of Soka Education, Makiguchi, was a diligent student in his youth. Because of his dedication to studies, his friends called him 'Bookworm.' Under economic hardship and family circumstances, he was obliged to work and study at the same time. Whenever he found free time in his job as an errand boy, he engrossed himself in reading. Why did he study so much? Ikeda tells us that "Mr. Makiguchi's greatness was that he kept that passionate commitment to ceaseless learning burning throughout his life for the sake of the happiness of humankind" (135). Without these struggles during his youth, Makiguchi could not have established the foundation of Soka Pedagogy. Without his efforts, Soka schools could not have existed. Without him, SUA would not have been built. I believe that it is incumbent to follow Makiguchi's model and study hard, committed to a mission of working for humanity's welfare.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I want to emphasize that SUA students should consider themselves *revolutionaries*, representing not the violent heroes of war but true leaders of the twentieth century who never forget the sense of appreciation to our supporters. We must reach the level of Bello, Martí, Freire, Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., Emerson, or Whitman, firmly believing that Soka Education and the philosophy of human revolution are universal and all-embracing. Now is the time for us to create the foundation of each of our lives through assiduous studies, passionate dialogues and most importantly through internal human revolutions. Human revolution should not be examined as a mere concept discussed in classroom because it manifests itself in our interaction with others, in our attitude toward the environment, and in our perspective about the world. It is perhaps in this practical aspect of human revolution where we can find the positive force to transform the human history of destruction and cynicism into a bright future of construction and indestructible optimism.

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The Combination of Manual and Intellectual Labor in Education for Social Transformation

Jennifer Numagami

In this paper, I will approach the topic of the combination of manual and intellectual labor in education within the framework of a historical materialist perspective. This paper will explore the notion of manual-intellectual labor from the perspective that human beings can become producers in the broadest sense, exerting an influence on history and making a change for the better. However, in order to act upon the world so as to change it, it is necessary to understand how the world acts upon us. Both the Japanese educational reformer Tsunesaburo Makiguchi (1871-1944) and the Russian anarchist Peter Kropotkin (1842-1921) note that to engage directly with the world is key to fostering this understanding. This paper will argue that manual-intellectual labor in education is essential not only for the personal enrichment of students but also for honing the critical understanding necessary for realizing social transformation. Underlying my paper is the contention that there is no such thing as a “neutral” education and that only an education informed by an awareness of the need for radical social change can foster the social consciousness necessary to create a more just and humane society. After all, Marx’s observation that “men inevitably enter into definite relations, which are independent of their will” does not mean that humanity is condemned to a predetermined fate (“Preface”). Rather, it is up to us to determine the fate of history by challenging the forces of oppression that perpetuate social inequality; the importance of education in this struggle cannot be underestimated.

A “Human Geography” in Education

In 1903, Makiguchi published *A Geography of Human Life*, a geography textbook for educators that examines the relationship between the earth and human beings. In this book, Makiguchi writes that “the natural beginning point for understanding the world we live in and our relationship to it is that community of persons, land, and culture which gave us birth; that community, in fact, which gave us our very lives and started us on the path toward becoming the persons we are” (14). It is only with a thorough understanding of what “started us on the path toward becoming the persons we are” that we can understand how we should act upon the world so as to change it. Makiguchi offers various examples that show the interconnectedness between various parts of the world: “[A] piece of wool cloth wrapped around my body was originally produced in South America or Australia and processed in England by the labor of British people and with coal and iron mined there. . . . On my desk is a kerosene lamp; it is silent, though the oil inside it might well be saying, ‘I sprang from the foot of the Caucasus Mountains along the coast of the Caspian Sea and arrived here after traveling thousands of miles’” (11-12). By offering anecdotes about the interconnectedness within the world and our dependence on the world, Makiguchi reflects a concern for the environment amidst the rise of modern industrialism. However, although he urges students to develop an understanding of the world, he does not specify what sort of understanding is necessary. This understanding is important because it will influence how we assess our current condition as well as what

measures we must take for the future. These are difficult questions that must be considered in any education that attempts to transform human society.

Makiguchi expressly acknowledges the “human” dimension to geography, thereby suggesting the importance of locating individuals in the midst of human interactions. He calls for “a new approach to the study of geography which both recognizes the dynamic nature of the earth and takes human beings and their richly varied cultures into account” (15). Makiguchi views the study of geography as being tied to the larger community: “[E]ach child’s immediate geographic community, consisting of the natural environment, family, and village or neighborhood, should constitute both the setting and the curricula for learning” (23).

Yet, the above mentioned incorporation of the student into community life primarily serves the purpose of nurturing the “moral character” of the individual student. Fostering a sense of connection with the natural environment contributes to “character development.” In the chapter “Interacting with the Earth,” Makiguchi discusses the various “kinds of spiritual interaction” with the environment, including utilitarian, scientific, or sympathetic interactions (32). However, what is the purpose of such feelings of sympathy for others or the environment, if that sympathy is not directed towards a specific course of action to fundamentally transform one’s culture or society? Makiguchi insists that “children can achieve the full potential of their humanness only through direct, active, personal communication with natural phenomena” (23). Yet fundamentally, the “attitudes of appreciation and wonder toward the natural and social systems which sustain one’s life” are cultivated for the purpose of fostering “individual happiness and social health” (xxvii). The individual happiness of the student is juxtaposed with social betterment. However, the individual student does not have to be viewed as being distinct from society as a whole; instead, just as Makiguchi stresses how geography can only be considered in relation to human activity, the individual can only be considered as a social being.

Although the “human geography” that Makiguchi espouses implicitly views human beings as social beings, his articulations of the “human geographic” education tend to dwell on the enrichment of the individual as a prerequisite to social betterment, suggesting an oppositional rather than reciprocal relationship between the individual and society. In other words, Makiguchi tends to regard the nurturing of the individual as essential to the greater well-being of society, but in doing so sets up a false dichotomy of individual versus social well-being. Makiguchi’s own emphasis on how human beings are shaped by their connection to the natural world and the community belie this false dialectic that he establishes between the individual and society. The relationship between the individual and society is important because how these concepts are understood is part of how we understand the world and likewise, how we envision change.

Makiguchi’s concept of the “homeland” as the basis for a geographic education is interesting to examine as an indicator of the times in which Makiguchi lived. The concept of the “homeland” reveals both nationalist and cosmopolitan leanings that reflect the international atmosphere of imperialist competition among nation-states at the turn of the 20th century. In fact, *A Geography of Human Life* was published just one year before the Russo-Japanese War (1904-1905). On the one hand, Makiguchi emphasizes how one’s local “homeland” can serve as the starting point for developing a cosmopolitan, deeper understanding of the world at large (20). In describing how “the sphere of one’s

homeland” can vary “depending on one’s vantage point,” Makiguchi explains how a child can know only the world directly around it, but “from a cosmic perspective, we can think of the earth as our homeland” (19). However, on the other hand, the concept of the “homeland” also rings with nationalist connotations. Makiguchi, while recognizing the importance of understanding the greater world, also viewed the “homeland,” as manifested in the Japanese nation-state, as a source of pride and value (13). Makiguchi writes the following: “It would be foolish to narrow our vision to our own small portion of the world, to worry uselessly about bygone troubles or busy ourselves in disputes and arguments over trivial matters. At the same time, we should avoid blindly following those who would have us neglect our immediate environment and community in the name of a misguided cosmopolitanism” (13). Makiguchi admits that his ideas could be considered “too narrow and provincial,” but contends that his point is that “every aspect of the universe can be observed in the small area of our homeland” (20). Although Makiguchi wishes to stress the importance of considering the local condition, by shying away from supporting any “dreamy cosmopolitanism,” he discounts the possibility that a cosmopolitan system of values could be effective in supporting the local condition and community.

This does not nullify Makiguchi’s valid criticisms of the educational system that he observes. Justifiably, Makiguchi laments that educators insist on book-learning despite the richness of experience that can be gained from observation of the natural world as well. For Makiguchi, this direct interaction with the natural environment plays a role in the nurturing of genius: “Jean Louis Agassiz, for example, one of the great zoologists of modern times, made one of his important discoveries while fishing in a lake in his native Switzerland as a child. . . . Similarly, Peter the Great is believed to have developed the qualities which made him a hero as he played in the lakes and mountains in his homeland” (20). On the surface, Makiguchi’s emphasis on “direct-experience” learning as central to the nurturing of genius in individuals could appear to be very similar to the observations of Kropotkin. Kropotkin notes the following: “Galileo made his telescopes with his own hands. Newton learned in his boyhood the art of managing tools; . . . when he began his researches in optics he was able himself to grind the lenses for his instruments, and himself to make the well-known telescope” (*Fields*). Kropotkin introduces the Moscow Technical School to illustrate how the combination of book-learning and technical or applied learning could be put into practice. He marvels at how students “[could fabricate] with *their own hands*, and without the help of professional workmen, fine steam-engines” (*Fields*). Students not only had an understanding of how machines worked but also of how they are made. Both Makiguchi and Kropotkin would agree that interaction with the environment, or “applied learning,” could be effective in the nurturing of genius.

The “Complete Education”

However, whereas Makiguchi tends to highlight the role that interaction with the natural environment can play in individual enrichment, Kropotkin tends to view such an integrated learning as the means through which to develop a critique of social inequalities. In *The Conquest of Bread* (1908), Kropotkin explores Adam Smith’s idea on the division of labor:

Look at the village smith, said Adam Smith, the father of modern Political Economy. . . . If [the] . . . smith has never done anything but nails, he will easily supply as many as two thousand three hundred in the course of a day. And Smith hastened to the conclusion—“Divide labour, specialize, go on specializing; let us have smiths who only know how to make . . . nails, and by this means we shall produce more. We shall grow rich.”

Kropotkin argues that “[t]he so-called ‘division of labour’ has grown under a system which condemned the masses to toil all the day long, and all the life long, at the same wearisome kind of labour [sic]” (*Fields*). As a result of the division of labor, the total wealth produced has increased, but only at the expense of the working classes, who are excluded from enjoying the fruits of their own labor. The elite consumers who control the means of production reap the benefits of the labor supplied by the working classes. This fundamental inequality between the producers and consumers in society is evidenced by the division between manual and intellectual labor. An education that emphasizes the combination between manual and intellectual labor would serve to heighten awareness of this distinction and the need to eliminate the division as a form of social oppression. Although Adam Smith would argue that the division of labor simply leads to more efficiency and productivity, the reality in fact is that the division of labor has assigned confining social roles to whole classes of people who are at the mercy of their oppressors.

Recognizing the social inequality perpetuated by the division of labor, Kropotkin calls for the integration of manual and intellectual education, or the “*education integrale*, or complete education.” The combination of manual and intellectual labor would enrich the lives of people engaged in all types of occupations. As Kropotkin eloquently expresses, “[H]ow much the poet would gain in his feeling of the beauties of nature, how much better would he know the human heart, if he met the rising sun amidst the tillers of the soil, himself a tiller; if he fought against the storm with the sailors on board ship; if he knew the poetry of labour and rest, sorrow and joy, struggle and conquest!” (*Fields*). However, the exhilaration of the poet Kropotkin describes stems not only from the richness of human experience that the poet would gain, but also perhaps from the sense of justice that could arise from understanding the labors of the workers. An education that brings students into the fields to produce the food that we eat or that shows students how technology works could prompt students to think more critically about not only how we depend on the world but how the limits of the world as we know it will ultimately impact our own existence. A manual-intellectual labor education would not only foster an intellectual understanding, but also bring the essence of human life as rooted in the activity of labor and the need to eliminate the division of labor as a form of perpetuating social inequalities into focus.

“*Labor Education*”

Kropotkin’s ideas on the need for an integration of manual and intellectual labor in education for social transformation also influenced and resonated among Chinese intellectuals living in Paris around the turn of the 20th century. As Dirlik puts it, “Chinese anarchists, keenly aware that the distinction between mental and manual labor had for

centuries served to distinguish the rulers from the ruled, perceived in labor the means not only of creating a ‘whole person’ but of bridging the gap between rulers and ruled and thus abolishing classes in society.” (16) From around 1917, Chinese students were recruited to join the “diligent-work frugal-study” program in France (30). The program served both practical and idealistic concerns, but promoted the idea that combining manual and intellectual labor could be beneficial to students by raising their awareness of the working world. Whether it was intended or not, many of these students left France with the belief in the need to organize labor to realize social change (30). The mottos of the National Labor University of Shanghai (1927-1932) also show how anarchist ideals found expression in “laborer’s education”:

The college is convinced that mental labor and manual labor must be emphasized equally without any imbalance. It is hoped that its students will become genuinely full mental and manual laborers. Students must undertake manual labor tasks while engaged in academic learning in order to develop labor skills and habits as well as a respect for the spirit of labor. (37)

Engaging in both manual and intellectual labor would help in developing “whole” individuals, but more significantly, students would have an intellectual basis as well as the “respect for the spirit of labor” to inform their activities, which would be devoted to realizing social revolution. At the National Labor University, students were recruited from the peasant and working classes. Peasants and workers were brought into classrooms or workshops, and students were sent out into the fields and factories for the purpose of labor organizing. Students were encouraged to become “genuine revolutionaries” and to “study the meaning and method of revolution.” (37) As the examples above show, manual-intellectual labor education could form the framework for fostering a revolutionary outlook in students, who are aware of the distinction between the working and ruling classes and the need to organize on behalf of the working class. In this way, students would be educated in a way that encourages them to become active participants in the process of changing the world for the better.

A Critique of the Modern University

How does this discussion of manual-intellectual labor bear upon the current status and/or education of the typical American university? After all, the university, as the beacon of higher learning, should figure into the question on the role and purpose of education as a means for realizing social change. In the essay “Ivory Tower in Escrow,” the literary critic Masao Miyoshi paints a bleak picture of the rapid corporatization of American universities of higher education. Calling the university a “de-territorialized corporation,” Miyoshi describes the alliance between industries and universities that has become particularly salient with the end of the Cold War and the emergence of a global market economy. The “fierce intensification of competition, careerism, opportunism, and finally, the fragmentation and atomization of society” are reflected at the site of the university, which has become integrated into what could be viewed as an anti-social trend of alienation and commoditization (Miyoshi). Elaborating on the analogy of the

university as a corporation, Miyoshi points out how the university president can be likened to a business CEO; students receive a pre-packaged education that sets them onto a professional career path to enter a real-world corporation. In this atmosphere, intellectual curiosity is stifled at the expense of research and development that is directly tied to an affiliated corporation. In other words, intellectual production at the university serves corporate interests and supports the hegemony of capitalist ideology. As a result, the interests of those opposed to the ruling class are maligned and disregarded by those occupying the “ivory tower” of the university. The university education, like all education, can in no way be neutral. Miyoshi decries what he sees as the decline and failure of the humanities disciplines to oppose the university’s positioning on the front lines of this consumerist, global corporate culture. Bluntly stating that “[e]nvironmentally, the earth has reached the point of no return for the human race,” Miyoshi proposes that the humanities be replaced with the discipline of ecology, as a way to cope with the environmental havoc wreaked by uncontrolled capitalistic development.

The Function of the “Intellectual” in Realizing Social Change

The ideas of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci (1891-1937) serve as a counterpoint to Miyoshi’s bleak portrayal of the current trends at the university. In other words, whereas Miyoshi describes the failure of intellectuals to offer resistance, Gramsci remains convinced in the importance of intellectuals, including those at universities, in promoting an education for social change. Gramsci believes that there are two types of intellectuals: traditional and organic. Organic intellectuals that have “developed organically alongside the ruling class,” serve the interests of the ruling class (*ibid*). However, it is also possible that organic intellectuals from the working classes could play a role in challenging the status quo or ideological hegemony of the ruling class. Gramsci writes that “the mode of being of the new intellectual can no longer consist in eloquence ... but in active participation in practical life, as constructor, organiser, [sic] ‘permanent persuader’ and not just as simple orator...” (*ibid*). Makiguchi also placed importance on the role of the educator as being engaged with community life.

Gramsci writes that “‘all men are intellectuals,’ [and presumably women] ‘but not all men have in society the function of intellectuals’” (Burke). In other words, “everyone has an intellect and uses it but not all are intellectuals *by social function*.” (Burke) Essentially, Gramsci is pointing out that all people, regardless of their formal profession, are intellectual producers. Gramsci writes that every individual in society “carries on some form of intellectual activity ..., participates in a particular conception of the world, has a conscious line of moral conduct, and therefore contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it, that is, to bring into being new modes of thought.” (“Antonio”) Everyone participates in the process of intellectual production, whether consciously or not, critically or uncritically. However, this participation “in a particular conception of the world” that “contributes to sustain a conception of the world or to modify it,” means that intellectual production ultimately serves the interests of a particular class or ideology. All people, as (sometimes unwitting) intellectuals, participate in supporting a certain mode of thought, such that there is no neutral standpoint from which to engage in the process of intellectual production. The vast uncritical or

unconscious intellectual production that occurs on a daily basis ensures that the ruling class ideologies are able to maintain hegemony throughout society.

It is with these considerations that Miyoshi's critiques against the university can be re-examined. The university, as Miyoshi illustrates, rather than being the bastion of free academic thought, has become subservient to the interests of the capitalist, corporatist ruling class. The university becomes indeed an "ivory tower," devoid of the power to offer any struggles of resistance and shamelessly supportive of intellectual production that serves the interests of a privileged few. The university becomes a sort of industrial factory, mass producing students who are fed sanitized and pre-packaged information and then sold as the products to be consumed by a corporation in the capitalist system. The sheer careerism at the university only perpetuates the division between manual and intellectual labor in society, as university students occupy the offices at the corporations that oversee the work done by cheap labor. University students become uncritical intellectual producers, supporting the ruling ideologies that perpetuate the capitalist mode of production, which exacerbates the division between manual and intellectual labor. Under the capitalist mode of production, workers in factories are alienated from experiencing the natural earth, which is essential to becoming "whole" individuals, as Makiguchi points out. Likewise, university students sheltered in an "ivory tower" fail to develop an appreciation for labor, which Kropotkin argues is crucial to a "complete education." Such a university education contributes to the permeation and perpetuation of the ideological hegemony of the ruling class, which posits that the capitalist world order is the natural world order, not to be questioned or debated.

However, these considerations necessarily raise the following questions: What sort of education does Soka University of America offer? Does the education of SUA serve the interests of the powerful few or the suffering many? In his *Prison Notebooks*, Gramsci asks, "[I]s it better to 'think,' without having a critical awareness, ... or, on the other hand, is it better to work out consciously and critically one's own conception of the world?" (*ibid*). Are students at SUA challenged to develop a critical conception of the world, one that will be practical in the struggle for realizing the revolutionary transformation of society? Perhaps Gramsci's question is the question that each of us must ask ourselves as the starting point in the quest for a fundamental social revolution.

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Education and the Revolutionary Process in Venezuela

Fabiana Sanchez

Introduction

Throughout history, education has been used as a powerful political and ideological tool for the perpetuation of one model or another. Ignorance, as well as oppressive models of education, have also worked to dominate people all over the world. However, there have also been, throughout history, educational pedagogies, and models that have led toward the emancipation of individuals from the cultural, academic, and social bonds that have traditionally restricted them. It has been people like Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, in Japan, Paulo Freire, in Brazil, and John Dewey, in the United States, who have striven to develop pedagogies and educational systems for the liberation of all people, and who have advocated the rise of what has been defined by many revolutionaries as the “new man.” As Daisaku Ikeda states, “education is a weapon to liberate humankind and rid our world of the human suffering caused by ignorance and other societal ills.” (Ikeda, p.179, 2001)

In Venezuela, giving rise to the “new man” is leading the national government to create a new structure in which education is at the center of all national strategies, based on Simon Bolivar's idea to “Pursue the achievement of the greatest sum of happiness possible to everyone.” In this sense, there are various tendencies in the current national project of the Venezuelan government that are revolutionizing education, and that are moving in line with many of Makiguchi's ideas in his pedagogy of Soka Education.

Soka Education

Tsunesaburo Makiguchi's value creation pedagogy has at its core that “happiness is the aim of education” (Bethel, 1994, p.56). Makiguchi's concept of happiness, however, is not the one that most people in the west have, where material or spiritual personal attainments are measuring instruments for our level of happiness. According to him, happiness “refers to a state of man's life when he is engaged in the process of attaining and creating value.” (Bethel, 1994, p.56) But not only is Makiguchi referring to the individual when he talks about happiness; he clarifies that “happiness has two elements: personal and social.” (Bethel, 1994, p.56) Thus, the happiness of the individual is inextricably connected to the happiness of the society as a whole.

Makiguchi's pedagogy has two distinguishable features; one is the “educational purpose and the integration, not only of the curriculum, but of all learning experiences in terms of purpose. This purpose “...[is] centered in the concept of value-creation.” “...Secondly, Makiguchi envisioned an educational system that would be socially responsible. These two predominant characteristics of Makiguchi's pedagogy are wrapped up in two terms that appear frequently in his writings, *bunka kyoiku* (cultural education) and *kyodoka* (community study).” (Bethel, 1994, p.60) These two concepts are particularly relevant to the development of this paper, since in most of the new Venezuelan educational programs we find strategies to help the students in studying and

observing their communities, and develop more access to cultural education, both in the form of the arts and in the ethical aspects that form the national culture.

In *A Geography of Human Life*, Makiguchi states that “it is education which is the true basis of all the other activities of the society. Education is the key factor influencing the destiny of a society. It is education which supplies talents and abilities to all other fields, and it is education that can nurture good character, ethical behavior, and social consciousness within the members of a society.” (Makiguchi, 2002, p.190)

In this sense, although it would not be accurate to affirm that in Venezuela the current education system and policies find their basis on Soka Education (even if some of the people responsible for establishing the new educational system have been in contact with Soka ideals), many of the current policies, strategies and programs parallel and manifest many of the basic concepts established by Makiguchi in Soka Education.

The Revolutionary Process of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela

The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is currently undergoing a process of peaceful social revolution, led by President Hugo Chavez, who was democratically elected in 1998 by over 56% of the voting population. His being elected was already a revolution in itself, since Venezuela had one of Latin America's longest party system democracies, with two main parties, AD and COPEI⁴¹, which had left the country devastated after forty years of representative democracy. Chavez was not only part of a new political party, but he also came from the poor rural class, and had had access to higher education thanks to his participation in the military (whereas, of course, all previous presidents of the country were law or political science graduates from Venezuela's most prestigious universities). Furthermore, Chavez was put in the political arena and the public eye after he led a *coup d'etat* in 1992, in reaction to neoliberal economic measures that were privatizing all national institutions, including the national oil industry.

Despite being one of the main oil producing countries and having the largest oil reserves in the world, which represents a tremendous GDP income for the country, Venezuelan people were experiencing, in 1998, the effects of over 40 years of social debt. This meant high levels of poverty (more than 80% of its population lived in poverty), little or no access to health and sanitation services, and of course, little or no access to education.

Education was being used for the deepening of capitalist values, and the education system had become a business. This trend was not only being followed in the country, but in all of Latin America. National public education was disappearing, and there was a trend towards the privatization of schools. Public school teachers spent more time on strike than in the classroom.

Few poor families could afford their children going to school, both because they had to work and because there were not many public schools open in their neighborhoods. Hence, fewer and fewer people from the poorest classes had access to education. Thus, the level of illiteracy was growing over time, especially in the rural areas of the country.

41 COPEI: Christian Democratic party, their name stands for “Committee of Independent Electoral Political Organization” in Spanish. AD stands for “Democratic Action” in Spanish.

In terms of Higher Education, the public national universities, subsidized by the government, had become extremely elitist and thus excluded most of the graduates of public high schools. Entrance examinations required further preparation than what would be provided by high school alone. In consequence, people who could not afford private courses to prepare for entrance examinations could, in most cases, access neither national nor private universities. Also, universities are only located in major cities, and most careers require full time enrollment; therefore, students who work to support their families, and students from rural areas, were largely excluded from higher education, because the latter would have to move from their native communities to the cities where universities are located.

It was in the midst of this national social crisis that Hugo Chavez ran for election in 1998. As a candidate, he presented a political project that promised to improve the lives of all citizens, but focused especially on the ones who had been historically excluded from all social benefits (particularly the poor and the indigenous people). After winning elections, and refining his original project, this evolved to be a national plan defined as “Socialism of the 21st century,” which differs from the socialist ideologies of the 20th century. It aims to transform society into one where human beings are at the center of national policies and development strategies, and where humanistic values will be the ethical basis of the Venezuelan society, bringing about inclusion, fair distribution of wealth, fair use of the land and development of the whole country.

This socialist plan also aims at transcending the “representative democracy” and establishing a “participatory democracy,” through empowering the people and their communities, creating a new culture where development is “endogenous,” meaning from the communities up. This has been defined as “popular power,” and the goal is to attain a just and equal society. Karl Mannheim argues that “...In a society in which the main changes are to be brought about through collective deliberation, and in which re-evaluations should be based upon intellectual insight and consent, a completely new system of education would be necessary.”⁴² Furthermore, Paulo Freire discusses that a new system of democracy can only be adopted by the people through the experience of that new democracy (2002, p.36), which parallels, to an extent, Makiguchi's idea that education cannot be designed by those who are not experiencing the classroom, and who only work with ideal and theoretical situations. In this sense, the establishment of participatory democracy is present in the new national educational strategies.

The ideological structure of this Socialism of the 21st century is based on the ideals of Venezuela's Liberator, Simon Bolivar. Bolivar had at the core of his beliefs, equality among all citizens, education as the base for liberation from the oppressive colonial power, and the unity of the American people. Hence, he led the emancipation movements against Spanish colonial rule in Venezuela, Colombia, Bolivia, Ecuador, Panama, and Peru, effectively achieving their freedom.

The process of creating the new social structure entails a deep change in the values of society at large. Therefore, education has a fundamental role in the victory of this revolution. Every development strategy promoted by the current government includes an educational component and, as mentioned before, education is a central aspect of the government's strategies. Furthermore, after President Chavez' re-election for second term in December 2006, the I Socialist Plan 2007-2013 was launched, which

42 Karl Mannheim, *Diagnosis of Our time* (London, 1943) p23, as quoted in Freire,

outlined the government's national economic and social development strategies. In that plan, five guidelines have been defined, one of which is called “Supreme Social Happiness,” in which the educational objectives and strategies for the period are defined. It is interesting to note the close relation between this particular guideline of development and Makiguchi's view on the meaning of happiness in education, especially his link between individual and social happiness as integral objectives of education.

In terms of the education system, policies, and programs, there are two main focuses. One is giving more access to education to the population that was traditionally excluded from the education system through the new social programs called “Bolivarian Missions,” and the second is the reform of the existing national education system. This new system of “Bolivarian Missions” will be further discussed later in this paper. As for the second focus, there have been many debates, in different scenarios, between educators, parents, students, and administrative bodies of educational institutions, to revise, restructure and redefine all the aspects that take part in the education system. The themes that have been, and still are being, discussed include “the vision of country that we have; the conception of the country we want; the education we need for that kind of country; the national development model that we assume; the social values that we consider have to be consolidated; the way in which State and citizens relate; the mechanisms for the formulation, design, execution, follow-up and control of the education policies; the legitimacy and pertinence of education and the pedagogical event; the curriculum, the evaluation, the planning, the didactics, the teachers training,...among others.” (Bonilla-Molina, 2005, p.97) Some of the topics are very clear, like the model of country that we want, which is included in the Socialism of the 21st century, with participatory democracy, humanism and social development for the whole population, while others are not yet clear, such as the curriculum and didactics of the public schools. Hence, these debates are still taking place on all levels of education, from elementary school to higher education.

The Bolivarian Missions

The Bolivarian Missions arose, in the year 2003, as a way to overcome the bureaucratic apparatus of the State, which was difficult to change in a short period of time, and didn't allow for the solutions to the deep problems that had accumulated over 40 years, creating a great social debt with the countries' citizens. The Missions are social programs that make a conjunction between the constituted power (the National Government) and the constituting power (the people). “...all the efforts have been directed to satisfy the basic needs in health, education, training for productive employment, and food supply. Areas that form the backbone of any country in the world.” (Bolivarian Missions, 2007) “Also, their implementation promotes overcoming representative democracy and the capitalist State, aiming at consolidating a participative democracy and the creation of a genuine socialist State, which nurtures from the experiences of the national collectivity.” (Bolivarian Missions, 2007) The Missions have also grown from their initial areas, to include programs that address critical poverty, social inclusion of indigenous groups, and strengthening of popular economy, among others.

All “Missions” work within the communities, in order to achieve endogenous development, and also in order to know and address exactly the needs of each particular community.

There are five main educational Missions: Mission “Robinson I,” Mission “Robinson II,” Mission “Ribas,” Mission “Sucre” and Mission “Alma Mater.” The Missions Robinson I, II, Ribas, and Sucre all apply a system developed in Cuba, which includes the use of video lessons that are accompanied by the presence of a tutor that leads the class discussions and who complements the information of the video lessons. In some cases, the tutors are teachers who come from the formal education system, and in other cases they are trained by the new system to give classes in this format. The concept of the educational Missions is revolutionary, in that it is conceiving education outside of the traditional institutional concept, the educational method used is meant to be accessible to any community, and they have had results that would have been unthinkable to achieve with the traditional education system, given the time frame they have been in place. Hence, this system has empowered people who never thought they could have access to education.

Mission Robinson I “Yo Si Puedo” (I Can do it), named after Samuel Robinson who was the pseudonym of Simon Rodriguez (Simon Bolivar's teacher), was created to address the high levels of illiteracy in the country, teaching young people as well as adults how to read and write. Its objective was to finish the exclusion of people who couldn't read and write. The amazing achievement of this mission was that over one million five hundred people learned how to read and write, and on October 28, 2005 Venezuela was declared by UNESCO a “territory free of illiteracy”. This Mission also reached the indigenous people, teaching them to read and write both in Spanish and in their native languages.

Mission Robinson II “Yo Si Puedo Seguir Estudiando” (I can continue my education), is a Mission created for people who conclude Mission “Robinson,” continue their elementary education (Years 1 to 6 in the regular education system), and consolidate the knowledge acquired during Robinson I. It also addresses the problem of many people who could read and write but could not understand the contents being read or written (functional illiteracy).

The classes take place in communal environments, like schools or small clinics, and there are about fifteen participants per class.

The achievements of this Mission are 1.321.582 of men and women who have finished their elementary education, from 2004 to February 2007.

Mission Ribas, is meant for people who conclude Mission “Robinson II” and continue into high school education, as well as for people who couldn't finish high school. According to the last national census in 2001, approximately five million Venezuelans had not finished high school, due to economic problems, exclusion, and lack of motivation.

In order to address this, the national government increased its public spending in education from 2.8% of GDP to 7% of GDP. This has allowed, among other things, for the creation of a system of scholarships that are given to the students who need it the most, in order to conclude their education.

The study plan of Mission Ribas, besides including regular subjects, such as math, history and geography, are integrated as a whole with the component of citizen formation,

which allows students to be conscious of the social, political, cultural, economic and environmental processes in which they have both individual and collective participation at the local, regional and national areas, with a Latin American and world vision. These are concluded through interactions with the community and labor environments within the community (Mission Ribas website). As for the evaluation process, since many of the participants in this Mission are adults, the evaluation has three stages: one is auto evaluation, second, the group evaluates each one of the participants, and their development as a group, and later the tutor will assess with both evaluations and other information they have observed in the group, using both qualitative and quantitative methods.

Up to December 2006, Mission Ribas had graduated 168.253 people, and has enrolled 608.326 students who couldn't access higher education before.

Mission Sucre was created with the aim of giving access to higher education to all citizens.

This Mission has redirected traditional careers, like law and medicine, towards solving the problems and needs of the communities. Hence, for example, the new medicine program is called “Integral Community Medicine”, and has been developed with the help of the Cuban system, which is recognized internationally for its merits in attention to natural disasters all over the world. There are also new careers being developed to address particular community’s needs, such as a cocoa producing community, or a fishing community. Since the classes are taught within the communities’ areas, in spaces called “university villages,” which might function at a local school, or at an institution of higher education in the area, it allows for transformation of the curriculum by the interactions of the students and the professor, and the adaptation of the contents to the needs to the group and their particular community. Some programs also allow for distance education, where the students will only attend classes once a week, and then have assignments to complete in their communities, or with fellow students.

There are currently 516,670 students in 24 different programs, in 1411 localities.

Besides the modality of Mission Sucre, which follows a similar methodology as the other Missions, new higher education institutions have also been created, following the same idea of pertinent higher education that is oriented towards community participation, including universities and technical institutes⁴³. Hence, the growth of student enrollment in higher education has gone from 668,830 in 1998 to 1,637,166 in 2006.

Mission Alma Mater is intended to develop almost thirty new higher education institutions (both universities and technical institutes), from 2007 to 2012, in order to give even more access to higher education. It is also aimed at replacing the current status of “Academia” that is completely separated from the current social realities, with new intellectuals, scientists, and artists with a social ideology.

It is interesting to note that among the new universities to be created, there is the plan for the creation of the “University of the South”. This university is being conceived as an institution for the emancipation of all the countries in the “south”, namely Africa,

43 The difference between a technical institute and a University in Venezuela is the years of education needed to complete the programs, the first one is three years (called a Technical Degree) and the latter one is five years, with the exemption of very few four years carrers, (called a “Licenciatura” which equals to a Bachelor's Degree).

Latin America and South Asia from the cultural domination they are victims of. From its conception, the people have structured the university themselves, through workshops with social organizations from these regions.

There are various other Missions that compliment the educational ones, like the Sports Mission, which gives the communities access to different sport practices, Mission Culture, which gives books for free and promote different cultural activities in the communities, and Mission Music, which has broadened participation in community youth music orchestras. The latter has allowed the growth of a program that was set in place a long time ago, but that is now revolutionizing classical music all over the world, since for the first time a national youth orchestra has sold out all international performances in Europe, the U.S and many Latin American countries. This is in line with Makiguchi's pedagogy, where culture and education cannot be separated.

Changes in the National Education System

Together with these social programs, the national public education system has also been strengthened. The above-mentioned dialogue that has taken place has been accompanied by many national plans.

Old schools' infrastructures are being improved, and new schools have been, and are being built. A new system of "Bolivarian schools" has also been set in place, basically replacing the old public school system. The Bolivarian schools, are conceived as "an educational center that is formed with the historical and cultural heritage of the community, thus offering the child and adolescents an integral attention based on: Satisfying the basic needs, such as food, preventive medicine, and cultural and sports interactions. Providing the student with abilities and skills for the full development of their potential to form a critical, researching and creative "citizen", and to link the communities with the educational process that is taking place in the institution." (Ministry of Education website)

In terms of higher education, as mentioned before, new institutions have been created, with an inclusive ideology, and the creation of new, pertinent careers. Some of the institutions created are: Bolivarian University of Venezuela, which has eight campuses throughout the country, and serves as space for Mission Sucre's "university villages"; and the UNEFA National Experimental University of the Armed Forces, which, although created originally for the military, is now accessible for all civilian population.

The Bolivarian revolution and the revolution of its education is an ongoing process that is now in a stage of evaluation, in order to assess how effective it has been in the achievement of the goal of a new humanist and social order. It can be said that it has succeeded in the inclusion of the majority of the population to all levels of education, which is deepening the goals of the revolution and will definitely bring new challenges in the ongoing dialogue of a new social order, and the concept of the "new man."

The changes experienced by the Venezuelan population have transcended our national borders and are now helping many people in Latin America, through the internationalization of the Missions and various new cooperation agreements that will definitely help us form new forums of discussion on our educational and social model.

In conclusion, as can be seen from some of the aspects of the new educational model in Venezuela, there are many of Makiguchi's and Soka Education's principles that

are consonant. Even if there are still many challenges facing Venezuela, the educational plans are leading to a new humanistic, democratic, and global society.

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The Soka Education Student Research Project is a part of the Soka Student Union at Soka University of America, Aliso Viejo, California.

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