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在传统与现代之间：后殖民视野下的学前教育政策研究 [*Between tradition and modernity: A study of preschool educational policy from the postcolonial perspective*]. 严仲连 [Yan Zhonglian]. 上海，中国：华东师范大学出版社 [Shanghai, China: East China Normal University Press], 2014. 188 pp., (paperback), 28¥, ISBN: 978-7-567-51132-3.

Aiming to analyze preschool educational policy from the postcolonial perspective, this book deserves a careful reading by educators who wish to go deeply into preschool education policy in China. Yan, the author, begins by illustrating colonial history, postcolonial conditions and the practices of decolonization of preschool education policy in the US, New Zealand, Korea, India and Nigeria, and then concentrates on the postcolonial crisis and the decolonization path in China's preschool educational policy. Preschool education in China has witnessed colonization, postcolonization and anti-colonization. Its history appears complex and tortuous, affected by Chinese traditional culture and the dual structure dividing urban and rural areas.

Following economic globalization, education in third world countries, especially in China during its comprehensive transition, demands a delicate balance between an international outlook and indigenous development, and between traditional culture and educational modernization. China's education system is currently going through a postcolonial crisis in terms of educational theory, practice, and policy as exemplified by two ruptures: the rupture with Chinese indigenous culture caused by the transplanting of Western educational values, theoretical systems and patterns of discourse, and the rupture with Chinese indigenous reality caused by education being separated from specific Chinese problems, as well as the current situation, social needs and developing conditions. Yan exercises deep introspection in looking at the colonization of preschool education in China. He holds that Chinese people are xenocentric in relation to traditional culture, blindly imitating the Western curriculum model, and putting Western preschool education standards first. Yan warns that active participation in colonization from the Chinese side will result in a loss of cultural and national identity.

Yan criticizes the materialist orientation in preschool education in China, which is characterized by over extravagant facilities, overly high fees and a stress on quality in terms of structure rather than process. To establish affordable and

economical kindergartens in China, Yan has practical advice to offer about quality standards of preschool education, the development of curriculum resources, and an ideal kindergarten culture of democracy and cooperation.

This book is not only highly theoretical but also practical in that it is highly relevant to concrete problems in China's preschool education. Yan re-conceptualizes such specific fields as literacy teaching, reading the classics and children toys, preschool English, collective teaching and subject curriculum.

Yan has also made an in-depth and rewarding study of preschool education policy in rural areas in China. He points out that there are five key types of kindergartens in rural preschool education, i.e., central kindergartens, city-country integrated kindergartens, primary school-affiliated kindergartens, rural family-operated kindergartens and charity kindergartens. Every type has its respective particularity and limitations, which demand further development. But in general, these kindergartens face similar challenges: insufficient financial outlay, comparatively outdated mechanisms of management and operation, and a lack of good teachers.

The book suggests that the dichotomy between Western-centric and Chinese ethnocentric approaches should be transcended. An ideology of binary opposition in postcolonial problems of preschool education needs to be transformed through concrete measures and ideas that initiate new approaches. In sum, the relationship between preschool education in China and Western countries should be diversified, equal and open, dialogic and cooperative, and neither Western nor Chinese-centric.

This book has great significance for scholarship in the field. However, some points are still unclear. For example, some expressions are obscure and hard to understand. A clear explanation regarding the difference between postcolonialism and postmodernism is also lacking. The belief that McDonald's food outlets represent colonialism needs further discussion.

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