EDITORIAL

INTRODUCTION

This issue of *Higher Education Policy* began in late 1991 when Editor Guy Neave proposed that I be its Guest Editor. As this is being written 16 months later, thanks go to him and to Assistant Editor Ann C.M. Taylor for the unique opportunity to organize and edit a journal issue on a topic of great concern to myself and others. Thanks also go to the many scholars contacted during the five-month process of identifying topics and authors. Dr. William Cummings of Harvard's Graduate School of Education deserves recognition for his patient assistance on Indonesia and Japan. Leafing through the bulging file of correspondence (mostly faxed) that accumulated for this project, one is struck by the collegiality of the authors and diverse others. Their commitment to higher education issues of East Asia deserves further attention.

Setting the stage for the articles to come, I would introduce the notion that East Asian higher education should become an active, ongoing area of study and discourse. While extensive study has been given to higher education in terms of other major world areas, continuous, in-depth study of East Asia is undeveloped, though works exist (eg Altbach and Selvaratnam, 1989). One reason for this neglect is that a transnational association of universities has not been formed in East Asia that would be equivalent to existing regional groups, for example the Association of Arab Universities and a number of European societies. South-east Asia has had groups, but a survey is needed to ascertain whether there is any consensus for an East Asian association and that it could be self-sustaining through conferences, consultant services, R&D and publications directed to the issues and needs of the region.

Relatively young, most universities in East Asia are still grappling with transition concerns in the face of contradictory traditions and sociopolitical demands within their own societies. Surely, leading topics for discussion and study are not lacking, as Wang Gungwu's (1992) essay makes clear. He wrote that although they are typically underfunded, overburdened with undergraduate education, and babes relative to mature institutions in the West, Asian universities are losing community confidence and failing to respond to the crisis primarily because of their 'aloofness . . . from their environment' and 'false starts, false pretences, a self-deceptive nominalism' of excellence that are increasingly apparent to the authorities and public. Wang (pp. 26-27) also wrote that most Asian universities have failed:

not because they have paid too much attention to tradition, to philosophy, history, literature and the fine arts, as many critics claim, nor because they have given them too little attention. Where they have failed most notably has been their inability to provide this area of their work with the vitality to cope with the conditions of rapid change. The great traditions were great because they were widely, if not universally, recognized as relevant to the social and psychological health of communities. The challenge to our universities is to bring enough fire and imagination to the study of the arts, to match the power of science and technology . . .

Because sociopolitical ties are lagging behind those of trade, the concept of East Asia as a community has not gelled. The 1980s 'Pacific Basin' theme (eg Aikman, 1986) may have faded because it stemmed mainly from the perspective of United States opportunities in Asia, *à la* Christopher Columbus. My research through the region during the 1980s found both exciting and disturbing developments in each nation and university visited. The need for greater understanding beyond national boundaries was clear, as people were unaware of relevant practices at other universities in other Asian societies and often within their own. Opportunities to share information in collegial forums programmed for and beyond local parameters would benefit problem solving and renewed dedication. A count (*The World of Learning* 1987) of East Asian higher education institutions found about 600, a figure no doubt passed today by this rapidly developing region. The idea for an association came to me in 1987 while participating in a congenial and informative meeting in Hong Kong of registrars from South-east Asian Commonwealth universities and reinforced further through participation in an equally engrossing conference in Amman, Jordan sponsored by the Association of Arab Universities in 1988.

Besides promoting the theme that a community of mutual interests exists, this article will also try to illustrate the deeply ingrained nature of tradition in the East and the tremendous transitional difficulties higher education institutions have faced. To do that, I will compare China and Japan. The article then concludes by prefacing the other articles.

EAST ASIA: DIVERSE TRADITIONS AND DIFFICULT TRANSFORMATIONS

A vast geographical region of the world, East Asia comprises many nations and territories facing the Pacific and China Sea and those to the east of India in South-east Asia – 18 in all. Its total population is 1.827 billion, with China's 1.158 billion the largest and Brunei the smallest with 0.3 million (Malik, 1992). Real knowledge of East Asia forestalls the homogeneity and other stereotypes still common elsewhere that stem from the colonialization and racism of nineteenth and twentieth century imperialism (Yee, 1992a).

Guided by social scientists such as Reischauer and Fairbank (1962) and De Bary (1958), one can define East Asia in general as that region of the world indebted to the human and cultural roots of ancient China (as source, not state). Stretching back thousands of years, China's influence or lack thereof through the region can be found in obvious and subtle ways. In the latter, indigenous adaptation and nomenclature do not fully mask commonalities of the so-called 'Confucian' societies of Japan, Korea, Vietnam and among the Chinese of Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand and elsewhere. With differing bents, such as more than four decades of communist rule in the former, China, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore and Taiwan are, of course, explicitly rooted in Chinese traditions. Other East Asian nations, which are removed from the 'Confucian' sphere, include Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and the Philippines where Malay peoples predominate, Burma where about 70 per cent are Burmans, Cambodia with 90 per cent Khmer, and Laos and Thailand, mostly Thai. In contrast to Confucian traditions, the first three are primarily Muslim, the Philippines mostly Christian and the rest mainly Buddhist. Also, while a few are ancient entities as 'sovereign' nations, most nations emerged from post-WWII developments. In short, aeon root origins from various sources and combinations, East Asian traditions, richly diverse, are not and never have been uniform. As the following articles show, higher education in East Asia today represents diverse traditions before and during foreign colonial rule before WWII as well as changes made after the War.

TRADITION VERSUS TRANSFORMATION: CHINA AND JAPAN

China

Archaeological traces of the far past coming to light show that North China was inhabited hundreds of thousands of years ago – Peking Man

(400,000 BC) and the Lan-t'ien (near Sian) Man (600,000 BC). Late Neolithic (c. 6000 BC) pottery and bronze (c. 1500 BC) in the Yellow River region (cradle of East Asian peoples), Anyang 'dragon bones' inscriptions of the Shang dynasty (1766-1122 BC) that succeeded the Hsia rulers (2205-1755 BC), and more, give the Chinese 'good reason to feel a greater sense of direct continuity from the Shang than Westerners feel from the early Egyptians and Mesopotamians or even the ancient Greeks and Romans' (Fairbank and Reischauer, 1979, p. 22).

Paralleling Buddha and other religious leaders of India, Plato, Socrates and other Greek philosophers, as well as Isaiah, Jeremiah and other Hebraic prophets, Confucius (c. 551-479 BC) and other Eastern Chou dynasty (770-256 BC) philosophers established scholarly traditions and sociopolitical patterns that are still significant culturally. Balancing the hierarchical, social orientation of Confucian ethics, heavy on loyalty, obedience and learnedness, Daoism, originated in the third century BC, offered an opposing alternative to power, conflict and status through position and materialism. Stressing nature as universal and its complex aspects and unities, Daoism championed the individual and the ideals of harmonious simplicity and freedom. It is no wonder that China's rulers and officialdom (and other Asians) adopted Confucianism as their *raison d'être*; even the Chinese Communist régime can be better understood through cultural traditions. While Confucians focus on human affairs and elitist distinctions, Daoists view life and the cosmos as one interrelated complex, people being only one element. It follows then that Daoist and Buddhist philosophy have been blended.

Building on Tang (618-907) improvements of earlier practices, the Song (960-1126) perfected the process of appointing government officials through an intricate, competitive examination system, the original formulation of a civil service (and degrees) preceding Europe by about 2000 years. As Fairbank (1992, p. 53) wrote: 'It is aptly said that the Chinese scholar was a Confucian when in office and a Daoist out of office. Daoism, which flourished among the common people, was the school most opposite to the elitist prescriptions of Confucianism.'

Greatly accelerating education and the examination system, another first of the Song dynasty, was the printed book based on Tang inventions of paper and block printing. Printed books revolutionized the spread of knowledge beyond official circles. Long before, in 124 BC, the Han had established an imperial academy for lectures and studies in the classics; by about AD 250 the academy had 30,000 students. During the Ming dynasty (1368-1644), 'at the top of the intellectual pyramid . . . stood the Hanlin Academy, a carefully selected body of outstanding metropolitan graduates, who performed important literary tasks for the court' (Fairbank and Reischauer, 1979, p. 190). Other scholarly centres, private academies supported by important officials and rich merchants, expanded in later years to number about 300 through the nation. This philanthropic tradition continues, as seen when Hong Kong tycoons fund the construction of new schools and university buildings that the government names after them. Academies prepared students for the three-tiered exam system, prefecture government, central government and the 'palace examination'. After many centuries the examination system was abolished in 1906 in favour of the 'modern' curriculum, such as provided by private schools with Japanese teachers and the many mission schools.

Besieged by the Taiping and other revolts and thoroughly humiliated by foreigners in the Opium Wars, the Sino-Japanese War and the Boxer Rebellion in the nineteenth century, Qing dynasty (1644-1911) China could not reverse its decline through transformation. Subjected to tyranny and disarray since the 1911 Revolution, China has not fully solved its sociopolitical crisis to the present day. The 1989 Tiananmen massacre of university students and human rights record continue to cloud China's relations with other nations. Police-state strictures on universities have been relaxed only slightly (Yee, 1992a, 1992b).

What a contrast from the past! In the thirteenth century when Marco Polo and others visited China and reported back home the many wonders they had seen, their revelations were received with disbelief and derision. The Jesuits also established relations with the Chinese – awesome both in their feats and the 'What if' questions that arise from the Papal Bull of 1742 terminating the crusade to convert China (Yee, 1987, 1984, pp. 49-72). In China for nearly 150 years, the 'image of China conveyed through the influential writings from Peking figured in the Enlightenment as an example of an ancient society which had a natural morality quite independent of revealed religion.' The China depicted by the Jesuits was cited approvingly by Voltaire and the Deists, and also by the Physiocrats. 'Eighteenth century Europe enjoyed a vogue of things Chinese . . .' (Fairbank and Reischauer, 1979, pp. 247-249). However, the positive impression was not universal nor long-lasting (Spence, 1990, pp. 133-134). Traditionalism causing its downfall, China's isolationist mentality cared little for things foreign. As China languished in sunset traditions, Japan – the Land of the Rising Sun – was astir with transformation.

From academies to universities

China's system of education was based on preparation for the formal examinations, to which the 300 or so academies were mainly geared. Although government land endowments (providing support for only 200,000 nationally) and private philanthropy played a role in basic education, the people were mostly illiterate. Achieved merit and equal opportunity were explicit in Confucian principles on human perfectibility through education and self-cultivation, but status was achieved and certified through the intricate examination process. Stories of peasants pooling their resources to support a bright boy's studies to prepare for the examinations are exaggerated. The typical scholar-official maintained his family class status; his greatest advantages were family tutoring and associations.

As increasing numbers from the enlarging merchant and property class successfully passed examinations, the number of degree holders exceeded state needs. With about 20,000 top-level posts, the civil service could employ only about 500 degree holders annually. Most degree holders therefore turned elsewhere, chiefly to their own localities, to apply their status as 'gentlemen' (*shi*) or of the literati class, and became 'local magnates, family heads, and informal public servants as well as ex-officials' (Fairbank, 1992, p. 95). Lower-ranked degree holders numbered about 500,000 at any one time. Discussing the inept response of the Qing government to 'foreign stimuli', Fairbank and Reischauer (1979, p. 263) said China's administrative network was thinly spread and functioned more through passive, ritualistic accountability than proactive initiative and outreach: 'the typical county magistrate had charge of an area of 300 square miles and a population of a million people'. It is no wonder, then, that though learnedness was highly valued, the scholar symbolizing the ethos of Chinese civilization, relatively few obtained degree status and held office. As nineteenth century foreign stimuli encroached upon Chinese society, especially in the treaty ports, workaday abilities became increasingly valued; many studied English in the many mission schools.

In state affairs, spirited debates over reform mentioned above culminated in the Reform Movement of 1898 as presented by Kang Youwei to the young idealistic Emperor Guangxu. Although the Movement was largely aborted (see Spence, 1990, pp. 226-227, 229-230; Hsu, 1983, pp. 355-386), major educational measures were adopted. The Imperial University at Beijing was founded and the largest private academies at the various governmental levels were upgraded. The Imperial University, now Beijing University, has been in the forefront of Chinese intellectual thought and reform activities from its start. Its development and reputation were spurred by early administrators, such as its first president, Yan Fu, who persuaded the government to provide funding: 'In today's world, every civilized country has many universities ranging in number from tens to many hundreds. If we cannot preserve even one, especially one already in existence, it is unfortunate indeed' (Spence, 1990, p. 313-314). Beida's second president, Cai Yuanpei, moved the university into prominence. A Hanlin scholar and Sun Yat-sen revolutionist who studied for five years in France and Germany, Cai sought creative, well-educated minds and creative talents for the faculty, defended open intellectual inquiry, and strongly resisted government interference in university affairs. One of Cai's appointments was the brilliant Hu Shi, a Cornell University graduate and student of John Dewey at Columbia, who among many endeavours developed a vernacular writing style to promote literacy. However, in time their deeds and efforts were shattered by WWII, sociopolitical disarray, and tyranny.

Nanyang College [now Jiaotong (Communications) University] in Shanghai was founded by the government in 1896 for students preparing to go abroad. About 32 other government institutions of higher learning were started before WWII. Shanghai's St. John's College (renamed St. John's University in 1905), opened in 1879 by the American Episcopal Mission, was the first missionary college in China. In time, 15 Christian colleges and universities, 13 Protestant and 2 Catholic, were founded by missionaries and became important centres of learning for the children of the new middle class. Graduates, especially of St. John's, Nanking, and Yenching, were highly sought after and many reached high government positions – with the Communists and the Nationalists. Chinese philanthropists built Nankai University in Tianjin, Amoy University in Xiamen, Fudan University in Shanghai, and added a third Catholic institution (Aurora University) in the early 1900s. Most of the universities had schools for younger students. According to Feuerwerker (1983, p. 175), enrolments in the mission colleges were very low, about 300-400 students. In 1925 total higher education enrolment in China was 21,000 (the population of China was about 450 million) of which 88 per cent were accounted for by the 34 government schools; see Lutz (1971) for a history of the Christian universities and Hayhoe (1989) for China's universities since 1949. Financed by the Rockefeller Foundation from 1915 to WWII, Peking Union Medical College became a world-class teaching and research institution. Although the College introduced quality medical training and treatment its limited MD graduates, numbering a minuscule 166 through 1936, had no effect on China's real needs.

Except for the West China Union University in Chengtu that was operated by a British-Canadian group, the Protestant universities were American-sponsored. The missions derived advantages, such as extra-territoriality rights, granted to foreigners after the Second Opium War defeat of 1860. However, during Chiang Kaishek's Nationalist government, more regulation and Chinese personnel were mandated. Therefore, after 1860 to WWII, Westerners (mostly Americans) gave much effort and expense to introducing Christianity into China. According to Thomson, Stanley and Perry (1981), the Americans left a lasting effect but not what they intended. The missionaries educated many in China properly and helped many to study abroad. Their graduates formed a new élitist class which contributed to 'important echelons of leadership on both sides of the Formosa Straits'. In retrospect, their China effort, though on the face of it a total failure – China was not *won* for Christ – had mysterious qualities of success. China was, in fact, transformed through their help. But the transformation was not of their design' (pp. 59-60). Severely hampered by the war with Japan, when they regrouped in the interior, the universities were converted by the Communists. Beijing University moved to the attractive Yenching campus. However, the lasting effect of the pre-1949 universities through their graduates dramatizes higher education worthy of the name.

According to China's Ministry of Education (1984), there were 207 higher education institutions in pre-Mao Zedong China in 1947 with 154,612 students enrolled, out of which 55 (26 per cent) were comprehensive universities. By 1983 the respective numbers were 805, 1,206,823, and 36, as seen in Tables 1 and 2.

年 份 Year	学 校 数 Number of Institutions	学 生 数 Number of Students			教 职 工 数 Teachers, Staff & Workers	
		毕业生数 Graduates	招生数 Students Admitted	在校学生数 Enrollment	计 Total	其中: 专任教师 of which: Full-time Teachers
1947	207	25,098	...	154,612	30,303	16,940
1949	205	21,353	30,573	116,504	45,983	16,059
1950	193	17,607	58,330	137,470	48,170	17,319
1951	206	18,712	51,689	153,402	65,064	22,960
1952	201	32,002	78,865	191,117	72,287	27,089
1953	181	48,091	81,514	212,181	81,111	33,630
1954	188	47,069	92,280	252,978	92,221	38,835
1955	194	54,466	97,797	287,653	100,072	42,066
1956	227	63,214	184,632	403,175	139,713	58,346
1957	229	56,180	105,581	441,181	155,281	70,018
1958	791	72,424	265,553	659,627	192,485	84,995
1959	841	69,839	274,143	811,947	236,121	99,657
1960	1,289	136,138	323,161	961,623	333,550	139,142
1961	845	151,283	169,047	947,166	415,859	158,736
1962	610	177,255	106,777	829,699	335,041	144,371
1963	407	198,754	132,820	750,118	316,103	137,925
1964	419	204,499	147,037	685,314	311,967	135,176
1965	434	185,521	164,212	674,436	332,579	138,116
1966	434	140,670	...	533,766	332,049	139,126
1967	434	124,836	...	408,930	332,267	138,901
1968	434	150,194	...	258,736	341,350	143,181
1969	434	150,119	...	108,617	335,447	137,272
1970	434	102,672	41,870	47,815	312,338	128,617
1971	328	5,945	42,420	83,400	328,610	138,060
1972	331	16,961	133,553	193,719	347,466	130,175
1973	315	30,057	110,960	313,645	369,053	138,931
1974	378	43,282	165,084	429,981	389,807	148,401
1975	387	118,155	190,779	500,993	407,521	155,723
1976	392	149,154	217,048	564,715	439,839	167,409
1977	404	194,426	272,971	625,319	471,842	186,489
1978	598	164,581	401,521	856,322	518,140	206,254
1979	633	85,035	275,099	1019,950	573,534	236,637
1980	675	146,635	281,230	1143,712	631,933	246,862
1981	704	139,640	278,777	1279,472	666,339	249,876
1982	715	457,244	315,135	1153,954	729,758	286,908
1983	805	335,344	390,800	1206,823	763,374	302,919

Table 1: Basic statistics of regular higher educational institutions

年 份 Year	合 计 Total	综合大学 Comprehensive University	工 业 院 校 Engineering	农 业 院 校 Agriculture	林 业 院 校 Forestry	医 药 院 校 Medicine & Pharmacy	师 范 院 校 Teacher Training	语 文 院 校 Language & Literature	财 经 院 校 Finance & Economics	政 法 院 校 Political Science & Law	体 育 院 校 Physical Culture	艺 术 院 校 Art	其 他 院 校 Others
1947	207	55	18	18	—	23	22	4	10	—	5	15	37
1949	205	49	28	18	—	22	12	11	11	7	2	18	27
1950	193	50	27	17	—	25	12	6	12	3	2	18	20
1951	206	47	36	15	—	27	30	8	19	1	1	18	4
1952	201	22	43	25	3	31	33	8	12	3	2	15	4
1953	181	14	38	26	3	29	33	8	6	4	4	15	1
1954	188	14	40	26	3	28	39	8	5	4	4	14	1
1955	194	14	42	26	3	28	42	8	5	5	6	14	1
1956	227	15	48	28	3	37	55	8	5	5	6	16	1
1957	229	17	44	28	3	37	58	8	5	5	6	17	1
1958	791	27	251	96	13	134	171	5	12	5	21	28	28
1959	841	29	274	99	14	142	175	5	13	5	24	33	28
1960	1,289	37	472	180	24	204	227	8	25	9	30	45	28
1961	845	32	269	106	13	158	163	6	17	4	29	38	19
1962	610	31	206	69	9	118	110	6	17	3	11	28	2
1963	407	29	120	44	8	85	61	6	16	4	10	22	2
1964	419	29	122	44	8	85	59	14	18	6	10	22	2
1965	434	29	127	45	8	92	59	16	18	6	10	22	2
1971	328	27	115	31	3	78	44	7	2	—	5	12	4
1972	331	27	116	32	3	78	44	8	2	—	5	12	4
1973	345	28	118	34	3	78	45	10	4	—	6	13	6
1974	378	29	120	37	4	85	57	10	6	—	7	14	9
1975	387	29	123	38	5	88	58	10	6	—	7	14	9
1976	392	29	126	38	5	89	58	10	7	—	7	14	9
1977	404	29	132	38	5	89	59	10	7	1	7	18	9
1978	598	32	184	48	8	100	157	10	21	2	8	19	9
1979	633	33	191	52	9	107	161	10	22	6	11	22	9
1980	675	32	203	56	10	109	172	10	30	7	11	26	9
1981	704	32	207	55	10	112	186	10	36	7	12	27	10
1982	715	32	206	56	10	112	194	10	36	9	13	27	10
1983	805	36	215	56	11	111	210	10	44	10	13	27	62

Table 2: Number of institutions by field of study

Japan

Astounded by China's Opium War defeats, and threatened by American and British naval forces itself, Japan 'responded quickly and successfully to the challenge of superior Western economic and military technology' (Reischauer, 1977, p. 85). As the Tokugawa period (1600-1868) gave way, centuries-old emulation of Chinese education and culture was also discarded. In a short time, the Meiji government centralized national rule and mobilized efforts to modernize. While samurai warriors once studied Chinese classics and fought with swords in feudal clashes well into the 1800s, and cities went defenceless against bombardments by Western naval ships in the 1860s, by 1894 Japan's modern navy easily sank China's motley fleet. In the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-05 to settle conflicting claims on China's Manchuria, Japanese forces defeated both a Russian army and a fleet, a decisive victory that echoed worldwide. Its rising military prowess reflected Japan's modernization and swift adaptation to modern technology. The transformation from feudal traditions was encapsulated by portraits of

Emperor Meiji 'with beard, military uniform and medals . . . innovations borrowed from nineteenth century European royalty' (Reischauer, 1977, p. 82; see Jansen, 1992, pp. 93-119).

Unlike China and other lands subdued by imperialism, Japan transformed 'its society in a mere generation or two from one in which status was primarily determined by heredity to one in which it depended largely on the education and achievements of the individual.' This extraordinary turnabout was possible because of 'internal characteristics, such as the great homogeneity of the Japanese people and their strong self-identity. The clear awareness of the possibilities of learning from abroad was also a distinct advantage.' Other advantages were (a) sophisticated economic and political institutions in place, (b) literacy rates (45 per cent males, 15 per cent females) not far behind those of the West, and (c) that the rationale for 'the whole great change could be justified in Japanese minds, not through newly learned foreign concepts, such as democracy or later communism, but by Japan's own ancient system of imperial rule' (Reischauer, 1977, pp. 83-85).

Those points amplify the differences between Qing China and Meiji Japan. For while the Chinese court and scholars debated and delayed a course of action, their attitude towards change was overburdened with tradition and arrogance. Having the most to lose in modernization, the Japanese samurai class opposed change and was speedily defeated ironically by the new imperial army of conscripts. With their final defeat at Satsuma in 1877, the demise of the samurai was accomplished in only nine years. In China, the lead approach (*ti-yong*) proposed by Zhang Zhidong was to use Western science and technology as practical tools, such as the Krupp cannon, to modernize, while at the same time maintaining Chinese learning and philosophy ('essence') as first principles. Unlike Japan's systematic conversion, the half-hearted approach of China would prove to be no more than a contradiction in terms.

Both governments exercised strict authoritarian control of their nations, but China's imperial system retained power while Japan's ascended anew in full spirit of transformation. It was not so much that China lacked industrious, capable and ruthlessly dedicated ministers, such as Li Hongzhang and Zuo Zongtang; their conservatism and loyalty to a defunct system prevented a Japanese-styled transformation. Also, China's dimensions, its landmass and population, compared to insular Japan presented overwhelming odds; differences in logistics alone seem more of kind than degree. Incomparable to Japan's close, martial relationship with its people, China's administrators were ill-equipped to rally support from the populace. Also, the counter-allegiance of the people prevented Japanese-like identity with their rulers (Yee, 1992b).

Both nations sent officials and students to Europe and America. While Japan adopted whole ministerial policies and procedures from Europe, Chinese equivalents remained little changed. Modern weapons were purchased but were used typically as show pieces and made inoperative through graft and misuse. Perhaps the crowning example of China's ineptitude was the squandering of naval funds to build the new Summer Palace which included a marble paddlewheel ship for the Empress Dowager's retirement in 1889. Such machinations and disunity overcame efforts by intelligent, patriotic reformers, such as opponents Zhang Zhidong and Kang Youwei who sought solutions out of old. Educated in Hawaii and Hong Kong, Sun Yat-sen along with other revolutionists sought the overthrow of the traditional order as their first priority. While China dismissed the advice of wise men with knowledge of the West, Japan made excellent use of its many officials and students who had studied abroad.

Paraphrasing Reischauer (1977, pp. 167-178), years before its control over the nation was complete, the Meiji government created a Ministry of Education in 1871 and adopted in 1872 the French centralized system of education with the aim of universal literacy. Chinese-styled academies and other old schools were soon abandoned. In 1877 three shogunal schools in Tokyo, a Confucian academy, a medical school and a foreign learning school, were combined to form Tokyo Imperial University in 1886. More imperial universities followed suit: Kyoto (1897), Tohoku (1907), Kyushu (1910), Hokkaido (1918), and so on. Private academies (Keio and Waseda) were granted university status in 1918. Although the Americans made many changes after WWII, the fundamentals of Japanese education have remained – uniform conformity to learning depth and meritocratic achievement that probably produce the world's best educated people. *The World of Learning* 1987 listed 148 universities in Japan, of which 57 were government institutions, 14 municipal, and 77 private. The many junior colleges, mostly for women, were not listed. According to Kanaya (1988), university enrolment in 1992 was expected to be over 2 million [Japan's population of 124.2m. (Malik, 1992)] and the late 1980s ratio of higher education students/age cohort would be about 40 per cent.

However, Japanese intellectuals are highly critical of the educational system. Problems accrue from the same authoritarian paternalistic patterns that transformed Japan's modernization. In place of the drive to transform anew, an entrenched bureaucracy maintains the status quo today. Many Japanese bemoan problems such as: lockstep conservatism and rigidity stifling creative initiative and reforms, examination-driven motivation and rote learning, apathetic university studies and teaching, dispirited faculties in gridlock antagonism among themselves and with administrators over funding, authority, and autonomy rights (eg Nakayama, 1989; Nagai, 1975). In Chinese traditions the social status of the scholar was paramount and a warrior was beneath contempt. While the learned warrior was honoured in traditional Japan, the samurai spirit of loyalty to authority facilitated change when the need for transformation was centrally mandated. Both societies maintain the authoritarian paternalism endemic to Asian cultures (Yee, 1992b).

To close this section on tradition versus transformation, let us see how one man handled the dilemma and had the environment in which he could succeed. In my travels, two nations' currencies are noteworthy – Hungary with composer Bela Bartok's portrait on its bills, and Japan with Fukuzawa Yukichi (1835-1901) on the 10,000 yen note. He was an envoy to the United States and Europe and a leading educational reformer even before the Restoration through example, writings [*Seiyo Jijo* (Things Western), 1866, first best-seller], and the newspaper that he started. Though educated in the Chinese classics he reoriented himself and led the move to modernize Japan's educational system with Western learning, and was a big voice in discarding Chinese studies (in which it seems he went too far and overgeneralized his condemnation).

Visiting Keio University in 1987 and in 1992, I remembered its founder. Though highly patriotic, Fukuzawa was keenly moral and not militaristic. I wondered what he would have thought and done about his nation's actions in 1930s China and WWII. Reading his autobiography (1960), I thought of his small boarding school (considered large with 100 students in 1868) compared to the Keio establishment today – university, professional schools, research institutes, and high (3), middle (2) and elementary schools (1). Long before Keio was granted official university status, a medical school was operating and academic departments were started with the hiring of three American professors in 1890. It is obvious that his good work has continued in the hands of many others. Given the environment in which their efforts can take root and grow, educators with foresight and drive can accomplish much to promote society and humankind.

EAST ASIAN HIGHER EDUCATION TODAY

Higher education in East Asia differs greatly from higher education in the West (Yee, 1990, 1989, 1988). Westerners mistake Asian universities as comparable to theirs; several examples can help to explain. In 1990, the executive directors of the United States accrediting associations invited me to go from Singapore to meet with them in Phoenix at their annual meeting to help draft their international guidelines for overseas branches of American universities, mainly in Japan. Sharing my knowledge with that important group including federal government officials, I quickly learned that no one knew anything about higher education in Japan and Asia. They were shocked to learn that once students were admitted entrance to Asian universities, they were more or less guaranteed graduation. In Japan, most students seldom attend lectures.

On the other hand, Asian academicians are more aware of the differences between their institutions and those in the West. One of my research findings was that university administrators and faculty in East Asia believe that the world's best and most respected universities

(quality in faculty, scholarship and production, academic climate) are in the West. Two Asian universities, Tokyo and Peking, appeared among the top 15 ranked but obtained only 3 per cent and 1.2 per cent, respectively, of the almost 2,000 ratings obtained. After the top five, Harvard, Cambridge, Oxford, Stanford, and MIT (in order of choice), many other institutions showed up with few ratings each. In terms of their societies, however, the same respondents ranked universities according to domestic versus international criteria, which were overwhelmingly dictated by the job success of their first-degree graduates. East Asian prestige, therefore, depends on the students' access to career employment following graduation. Tokyo University has been first-ranked for a long time, because its graduates have enjoyed primary access to excellent careers in government and corporations. Obviously, the study of East Asian higher education and the area association proposed by this article would be important to educators worldwide, not just in East Asia. We all have much to learn.

A rapid pirouette

A crucial analysis, issues-oriented approach to comparative education was taken to organize this journal issue (Yee, 1991). In brief, the following guidelines were used: (a) focus on East Asia, (b) select native scholars as authors when feasible, (c) commission articles that deal with leading issues and trends versus static, structural-type works, which are often sanitized, nationalistic exercises. Thus, identifying critical issues and trends in higher education first dictates whether articles cover one nation or more.

East Asian societies carry the marks of American, British, Dutch, French, German, Japanese, Portuguese and Spanish colonialism, the most pervasive being that of the two island nations. Though bypassed in the West and Japan, Asians have not forgotten; it is a history that awaits comprehensive review and analysis. Whatever else that can be said about British rule in Asia, however, the century of education in Hong Kong can be viewed with some pride. Not that it is of emulative quality, but it is worthy because the British did try in Hong Kong (Yee, 1992b, pp. 255-317). In contrast, during the WWII occupation, the schools were closed and library holdings at the University of Hong Kong were used for fuel. As for the future, human rights abuses and the degraded condition of universities in China suggests that education in post-1997 Hong Kong will not prosper.

Other perspectives on the British can be found in the provocative articles on Burma and Thailand (by Sunait Chutintaranond and Pracob Cooperat) and Malaysia and Singapore (by Lim Teck Ghee). Both articles relate differing histories resulting from contrasting responses to imperialism in the nineteenth century and to self-rule changes after WWII. Tyranny by Burmese generals has been Burma's tragedy for decades. One cannot help feeling that Burma's degradation is related to its war-infested past that includes some of the deadliest struggles and atrocities in the nineteenth century and WWII. One characteristic of human behaviour seems especially clear in East Asia, namely that having suffered tyranny for so long, people develop counteracting behaviour within certain limits of compliance behaviour and that those limits will be thrust aside in non-compliance and revolt if authoritarianism exceeds its own conditioned bounds. Such behaviour resembles that in prisons (Yee, 1992b).

In contrast to Burma, Thailand is a thriving nation today. It has had rulers who avoided foreign subjugation of their people through accommodation and keen promotion of modern education. Dr. Lim tells how ethnic differences led to the creation of the Republic of Singapore in 1965 after only two years of union with what is Malaysia today. He shows how higher education developments reflect and give insight in transformation approaches of the two nations. In my opinion, Singapore's educational system is the best in East Asia and could be better if the government would relax its paternalistic urges a little.

The Dominican University of Santo Tomas in Manila claims the proud distinction of being the first university in East Asia (1611). Although the Jesuits claim that the Madre de Deus School or St. Paul's University College in Macau was 'the first European style university in the Far East, 25 years before the creation of the University of Santo Tomas in Manila' (Pires, 1987, p. 16), the dispute is academic, since Santo Tomas lives on (closed during WWII). The article by Robert Cooney and Eliza Paqueo-Arrezo gives a thoughtful overview of higher education in the Philippines through the issue of accreditation. Independent of the United States since 1946, the Philippines has undergone great changes, though Spanish and American influences can still be found. The proliferation of institutions and weak, contradictory government policies have made it hard to implement accreditation standards worthy of the term quality.

Since WWII, communism and opposition by Western nations and Asian allies have racked much of East Asia. This is surely clear in the engrossing article on North and South Korea by Ransoo Kim and Young Sop Ahn. While reunification is increasingly discussed, the two Koreas remain adversaries. Contrasting higher education systems and sociopolitical policies north and south of the 38th Parallel, this article demonstrates a vital point of mine – that is, universities are excellent indices of the sharp differences in East Asian sociopolitical environments. They also show that Korea has been in continuous unrest since the first Sino-Japanese War of 1894-95 and Korea's colonial subjection (1910-1945). Exemplifying the fortitude of Asians and their readiness to grasp opportunities to progress, South Korea is developing into a strong democracy with a competitive economy as this article relates well.

The highly informative article by Ruth Hayhoe and Wenhui Zhong illustrates the complex and unique nature of ruler-people relations in China as touched upon earlier, despite the many crises brought about by their communist rulers, such as the Great Leap Forward, 1958-59, after which it is estimated 27 million died of starvation, and the insanity of the Cultural Revolution, 1966-1976, the Chinese people have maintained their wits and traditional values. In addition to what was said above in relation to Burma, Asian behaviour includes the psychology of aloof detachment in the people-versus-ruler relationship, albeit interlocked, that results from their respective identity roles. I have attempted to explain such behaviour in a theory termed the Chinese Stepping-Stone Syndrome (Yee, 1992b). Showing again that cultural traditions can be timeless, achievement through intellect and knowledge are still honoured in China, Drs. Hayhoe and Zhong report that research by Chinese scholars in the basic sciences is attracting world attention and that their production of publications and participation in international forums have increased markedly since the late 1970s. Prospects for more progress are positive as might be expected from one of the world's largest pools of scientific talent: that is, if the sociopolitical climate continues to encourage and permit.

Written from first-hand observations and interviews in Vietnam over many months, Jean Berlie's useful article reveals that higher education under communist rule in Vietnam has regressed since it was under French colonization and that the promises of communism were exaggerated. Though improvements are emerging, they have been few and slow to come. Vietnam's tragic history dramatizes the universal human desire for freedom from alien intrusion and the fierce determination of the Vietnamese people to fulfil that desire. Although punitive communist rule has been in power since the war with the United States ended, the people-versus-ruler phenomenon seems true for Vietnam too. Yes, commerce, education etc might have been better during French colonization, but foreign rule is despised. Alien rulers of China became acceptable by adopting Chinese traditions and manners. Vietnamese resentment towards French colonial rule is documented in the voluminous narrative and footnotes of Buttinger (1967). It may be that higher education flounders in Vietnam, even though it is so vital to development, in part because the antecedent and residual traditions are foreign. Before the French arrived in the nineteenth century, the Vietnamese were schooled in Chinese.

Wataru Mori's article succinctly relates the difficulties of transforming established institutional patterns in Japanese universities. Though many view Japan as the industrial and economic giant that it is and envy its educational system, higher education in Japan is overlaid with bureaucratic tradition. Dr. Mori tells how as president he was able to initiate improvements at the University of Tokyo that his successor has

advanced further. This article helps us to understand that along with foresight, great diligence and patience to develop consensus are hallmarks of successful university administration, especially in East Asia. Since education ministries are predominant in most East Asian systems of education, university administrations in Asia do not have nearly as much fiscal control as elsewhere. Shinichi Yamamoto's article on the problems of academic research in Japan correlates well with Dr. Mori's work, for it clearly shows how rigidly structured Japan's universities are in real terms and explains how the present system and its domination by the Ministry of Education inhibit academic R&D. Thanks to Drs. Mori and Yamamoto, now I can understand much that puzzled me in 1972 while serving as a Senior Fulbright professor at Tokyo University. Their articles suggest that change may be evolving in Japan, though glacially relative to higher education in other societies.

The government's 'especially obtrusive' domination of Japan's public universities has been a long-standing concern (eg Reinsch, 1911, pp. 345-347). I found that of the academicians in East Asia participating in my research (omitting Hong Kong and Macau for obvious reasons), especially in contrast to Malaysia, professors in Japan denied and even expressed hostility towards the idea that their work was related to the state and guided by national (patriotic) goals. Verifying this unexpected survey finding through university interviews in Japan, I found that the common explanation was the government's culpability for WWII and authoritarian, paternalistic patterns.

The article by Mitsuo Nakamura and Setsuo Nishino provides valuable insight into the role of Islamic education in Indonesia's universities. They show how Indonesian traditions are being transformed through scholars who have been educated in the West and are dedicated to a revitalized Islamic society and higher education programmes that address Islamic values and modern scientific-technological learning.

Last but not least, the article by Thomas Boyd and Chuan Lee on Taiwan reveals the extensive need for vocational education throughout East Asia. They carefully show how Taiwan and one institution of higher education are addressing the challenge to expand institutional bounds beyond traditional patterns. Graduates of their model college, Ming Chuan, are sought after throughout East Asia and the world. Taiwan's economic maturity and departure from the old issues of militarism, conflict with the Communists etc, show how traditions can be maintained through ready adjustments to new conditions and opportunities.

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