

THE COMPARATIVE EDUCATION SOCIETY OF HONG KONG NEWSLETTER

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Welcome and Hello

Comparative education in Asia is growing, both in size and importance. Many of the issues that affect one country, such as development, teaching and learning, finance, and administration, are of vital concern, and affect the entire region.

Comparative educators in Asia can learn from each other, and they can contribute to a unique Asian perspective. In this spirit, the Hong Kong Comparative Education Society launches this Newsletter. We hope it will be a clearing house for

- Conference announcements
- Recent publications by Asian comparative educators
- News for and about comparative education in Asia
- Innovations in teaching comparative education
- Policy and methodology in comparative education research
- Programs of study relevant to comparative education in Asia
- Other matters of interest to comparative educators in Asia

Your contributions of news, notices, recent publications, opinions, and so on, are vital. Please share your information with us, and with all your colleagues in the region. You do not have to be a member of CESHK to publish your announcements in our Newsletter.

Our address is

Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong
Chinese University of Hong Kong
Shatin, Hong Kong

ViewPoint

Comparative Education in Asia

Professor Philip C. Altbach, Director of the Comparative Education Center of the State University of New York at Buffalo and former Onwell Fellow in Education, University of Hong Kong

The launching of the Hong Kong Comparative Education Society Newsletter is yet another indication that comparative education in Asia has come of age. The Hong Kong Society joins with China, Taiwan, Japan and Korea in having organizations focusing on comparative education. It is not surprising that there is such a density of interest in the field in East Asia. Education is a major priority in East Asia and there is much that can be learned from the experiences of various countries in the region.

More important, perhaps, Hong Kong as an international city with an international consciousness may provide the stimulus for comparative educators in Asia to come together for the first time in an Asian comparative education regional group. There are certainly the number of scholars and students in Asia to support a strong and active regional

organization. There is also the intellectual power to make an Asian-focused comparative education organization active and stimulating.

For far too long, comparative educators have looked to the American Comparative and International Education Society (CIES) and to the World Congress of Comparative Education as the main forum for dialog and discussion. The numbers of Asian scholars at CIES meetings has continued to grow in recent years and while it is always useful to share ideas internationally, it is entirely possible that a more specifically Asian focused organization can provide better communication and can involve numbers of colleagues in the region. Most important, Asian comparative educators have never been central to the CIES or to the World Congresses.

Hong Kong, because of its central location, connections with China, excellent contacts with comparative educators in the region and worldwide, relatively neutral position and, not least, its use of English, is a logical focus for the development of an Asian comparative education consciousness and organizational framework. It is perhaps a somewhat ambitious agenda but it is not an impossible one.

This Newsletter, for example, can provide an Asian voice in comparative education. Somewhat later, it may be possible to launch a region-wide journal for comparative educators. The attention of scholars from Asia can be shifted somewhat from the Western-oriented meetings to conferences in Asia focused on Asian themes. Key international scholars can be invited to participate if a wider perspective is needed.

Bluntly, it is time for Asian comparative educators to reject the neocolonial model that has dominated for so long. In my view, Asian scholarship in comparative education can have a greater impact and can be taken more seriously if it is discussed and communicated in an Asian context.

This Newsletter can be an important first step in an entirely new way of thinking about comparative education. Asia has the numbers, interest and research skills to stand on its own. More important, the insights of Asian comparative educators can provide leadership for thinking about Asia's educational development in the 21st century. Now is the time to act.

What are your views on Professor Altbach's controversial opinions? Send your comments to the Newsletter. Future issues of the CESHK Newsletter will carry further remarks by Prof. Altbach on higher education in Asia.

What's Happening?

Upcoming Events in Comparative Education in Asia

Education and Development in the Asian Pacific Rim. International Conference, 17-19 June 1993. Faculty of Education, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong, Fax (852) 603-6129.

29th Annual Meeting of the Japan Comparative Education Society. 19-20 June 1993. The Japan Comparative Education Society, c/o National Institute for Educational Research, Shimomeguro 6-5-22, Meguro-Ku, Tokyo 153, Japan.

Curriculum Changes for Chinese Communities in South East Asia: Challenges of the 21st Century. 21-23 June 1993. Faculty of Education, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong, Fax (852) 603-6129.

Towards Education for All. International Conference, 20-23 September 1993. Faculty of Education, Universiti Brunei Darussalam, Negara Brunei Darussalam, and the South East Asian Research Review and Advisory Group (SEARRAG), 19 Jalan Azyze, Hillside, Tanjung Bungah 11200, Penang, Malaysia.

Moral and Civic Education. International Conference, 19-23 November 1993. Faculty of Education, Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong, Fax (852) 603-6129.

Iran. Dr. Golnar Mehran (professor in comparative education), 30th Street, Park Ave., No. 98, Tehran 15119, Iran.

Japan. Japan Comparative Education Society, National Institute for Educational Research, Shimomeguro 6-5-2, Meguro-Ku, Tokyo 153, Japan.

Korea. Korean Comparative Education Society, c/o Department of Education, Ewha Women's University, Seoul, South Korea.

Malaysia. Dr. Molly N.N. Lee, International Development Education, Pusat Pengajian Ilmu Pendidikan (School of Educational Studies), Universiti Sains Malaysia, 11800 Penang, Malaysia

People's Republic of China. Chinese Comparative Education Society, c/o National Institute of Educational Research, Bei San Huan Zhong Lu #46, Beijing 100088, People's Republic of China.

Singapore. Dr. S. Gopinathan, School of Education, National Institute of Education, 469 Bukit Timah Road, Singapore 1025.

Sri Lanka. Professor Swarna Jayaweera, 410-127 Baudhaloka Mawatha, Colombo 7, Sri Lanka

Taiwan, Republic of China. Chinese Comparative Education Society-Taipei, c/o 102, Ai Kuo East Road, Taipei, Taiwan,

References: Singh, R. P. "Comparative Education-A Neglected Discipline in India," *Prospects*, vol. XX, no. 1, 1990

Has this Report omitted your organization, or one that you know about, in comparative education? If so, please send us the name of the organization, and a full contact address, including fax number if available.

Recent Publications, Comparative Education in Asia

A recent call for publication titles related to comparative education in Asia brought an avalanche of responses from scholars throughout Hong Kong. The following list is by no means complete, and will be added to in future issues. We urge our readers, especially those outside Hong Kong, to add to this list by sending us your complete bibliographic references.

The following references are listed in alphabetical order by author.

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Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong Newsletter

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The CESHK Newsletter is a publication of the Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong, a non-profit organization with main offices located at The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Shatin, Hong Kong. Contributions to the Newsletter are welcomed, and should be sent to the Editor at the Society's address, or directly to Dr. Hob Brown, Dept. of Education, University of Hong Kong, Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong.

IX World Congress of Comparative Education. International conference, summer 1995. Inquiries contact Raymond Ryba, Secretary General of the World Council of Comparative Education, University of Manchester, Department of Education, Manchester M13 9PL, U. K.

News Around Asia

"Education, Democracy, and Development" The World Council of Comparative Education Societies VIIIth World Congress, Prague, Czechoslovakia, July 8-14, 1992

To honor the 400th anniversary of the birth of John Amos Comenius, the pioneering Czech educator, academics from around the world met in Prague to discuss "Education, Democracy, and Development." This Congress was particularly meaningful for the Hong Kong Comparative Education Society, a new member of the World Council of Comparative Education Societies. For the first time, Hong Kong had official representatives attending the World Council's executive committee meetings held during the Congress.

Nearly 700 delegates from 61 countries attended. The nine delegates from Hong Kong presented papers and seminars on education and politics, curriculum reform, educational administration, gender issues in education, and the education profession in comparative perspective. Hong Kong's numbers may have been few, but their contribution was significant.

Congress events were organized into three categories: plenary sessions, commissions, and paper presentations. Plenary sessions featured key-note addresses by well known scholars in comparative education. Commissions were organized by individual coordinators who invited experts to discuss issues such as education and development, decentralization and finance, politics and education, and gender education. Individual papers were grouped together under sessions with common themes. Given the large number of participants, there was a rich choice of options available to attend. In addition, the Czech hosts organized an introduction to Czech and Slovak educational systems, tours of Prague, and many dinners, and receptions.

The Executive Committee of the World Council took a number of important steps, including the admittance of additional member societies such as the African Comparative Education Society, and the re-election of Prof. Wolfgang Mitter as President of the World Council.

But their most important action, at least for comparative educators in Asia, was the decision to hold the next Congress in Beijing, capital of The People's Republic of China. Prof. Gu Mingyuan, Professor of Education at Beijing Normal University, was elected Co-President, with special responsibility for organizing the next Congress, scheduled for 1995.

Comparative Education in Asia: A Report of Current Activity

Dr. Grace Mak, Lecturer in Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

Last year the Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong conducted a small survey of comparative education in Asia. The survey sought to discover whether there is a comparative education association in a particular country, and if so, when was it founded, and what is its size? What kind of activities does it have? What are the channels of communication with its members, such as journals or newsletters? Is comparative education taught as courses, and if so, in what type of programs?

Because of the lack of systematic intra-Asia networking in comparative education, Dr. Grace Mak of The Chinese University of Hong Kong, who conducted the survey, had to depend upon the scope of her personal contacts. The report is therefore a starting effort, one she intends to pursue in greater depth in the future.

Like the term "Europe," there is much fuzziness about the term "Asia." Asia is a diverse continent, with unclear boundaries.

Asia's representation in the international community of comparative education is relatively weak. Asian scholars do not show a high profile in comparative education publications, at least not in those written in English. Out of a total of 679 participants at the 8th World Congress of Comparative Education held in July 1992, 61 delegates were from countries in Asia, not including 29 others from Australia and New Zealand. There was no Asian scholar on any of the plenary sessions.

The countries and regions that are members of the World Council are China, Taipei and Hong Kong (as separate members), India, Japan, Korea, and Australia and New Zealand (as one member). The Chinese Comparative Education Society was founded in Shanghai in 1979 under the umbrella group of the Chinese Education Society. It has a national association with nine local chapters. In 1990 it had 683 members. It organizes national conferences and small-scale seminars, and publishes bulletin at irregular intervals. Comparative education exists as taught courses and research programs. Scholars in the field have been trained in China and abroad. The field is growing fast in China

The Chinese Comparative Education Society-Taipei was founded in 1974. It publishes a Comparative Education Bulletin three times a year as well as monographs. It gives two awards each year for scholarly contributions to comparative education and for service to the Society. Its members are college faculty, graduate students, secondary or primary school teachers, and educational administrators. Apart from organizing conferences, it also sends at least one representative to each major international comparative education conference.

Hong Kong has had a Comparative Education Society since 1989. Although comparative education is taught only at the University of Hong Kong and the Chinese University of Hong Kong, Society membership includes staff and students from several institutions of higher learning in Hong Kong. Aside from publishing this Newsletter, the Society hosts visiting academics and sponsors seminars by them. The field is young in Hong Kong but its scholars have been active.

According to R P Singh (1990), the teaching of comparative education as a field of study has a history of some forty years in India, but comparative education is rarely considered an area of specialization in university departments, and research in the field has not received much attention

Japan has a national Japan Comparative Education Society and some of its members are active internationally. In 1991 it had 573 members of whom 94 were students. Comparative education is offered at faculties of education and is an area of research. The Society publishes a newsletter once a year and gives an award to a member under 40 years of age for outstanding contributions to comparative education in Japan.

Comparative education has a wider presence than formal associations. In many countries there are scholars trained in comparative education who conduct research in the field or in related fields. In Singapore, Sri Lanka, Malaysia, and Iran, for instance, there are a small number of active comparative education scholars, but for different reasons, these places do not have a comparative education society.

To promote regional communication we list the following names and addresses of contact points by country. The list is not official and does not claim to be exhaustive. It is hoped that the list will kindle interest in the subject and further communication between comparative educators in Asia.

Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong. c/o Faculty of Education, The Chinese University of Hong Kong, Sha Tin, Hong Kong.

India. Comparative Education Society of India, c/o Department of Education, University of Bombay, Vidyanagari, Santacruz (East), Bombay 400 098, India.