The Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong
香港比較教育學會

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第六刊（2002-03 年）

The Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong
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EDITORIAL

In the world of education, "globalization" has become a fashionable word that appears in almost all reform documents and many academic publications. On the day I write this Editorial, I type the word into the *Yahoo* search engine and get 1,630,000 web-pages[1]. When I type "globalization" and "education" together, 551,000 entries emerge, still a huge number. One can be certain that it does not need waiting for long before the numbers are doubled or tripled. A year? Six months? Who knows? Maybe only three months.

It is difficult nowadays for education researchers to confine themselves only to a particular region or culture without looking into other places. In an increasingly globalized but still divided world, no matter you like it or not, more and more educational activities are reaching out beyond boundaries. No matter appropriate or not, more and more policy makers tend to make frequent references to educational reforms happening elsewhere, and are more sensitive to the international ranking in students' academic performance. It is in such contexts that comparative education studies have attracted much more attention these days than before. In a recent publication, the National Research Council (2003) in the USA states that,

> "The US approach to education is not systematically informed by experiences with education in the rest of the world. Since the 1980s, many calls for domestic education have been justified by citing large gaps between the academic performance of the US students and their peers in other countries. Nonetheless, the US public has been offered little evidence to explain these results and knows little about the limitations of the studies that produced them. Nor have US policy makers and researchers used the limited information they do have about differences in education systems in various countries to systematically explore these results." (p. 1)

[1] Plus if you type "globalisation" (the English spelling), you get another 851, 000 web-pages.

The NRC thus calls for, as they put down as the name of their report: "Understanding others, educating ourselves: Getting more from international comparative studies in education." The NRC argues, in order to get more, systematic enquiries are crucial.

Certainly we can learn a lot about others and also our own selves by comparing and contrasting. In fact, Hong Kong, by its very special location of the meeting point of east and west and also different social systems, languages and values, is special place for comparative education studies. The *Comparative Education Bulletin (CEB)*, as a bilingual publication, will continue to serve as a platform for researchers from both Hong Kong and elsewhere to learn from each other. We welcome contributions in both English and Chinese, from Hong Kong and other places in the world.

Ip Kin-yuen
Editor

July 13, 2003

National Research Council (2003). *Understanding Others, Educating Ourselves: Getting More from International Comparative Studies in Education.* Washington, D.C.: National Academic Press.

National Literacy Campaigns in Historical and Comparative Perspective: Legacies, Lessons, and Implications for Latin America*

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A focus on campaigns facilitates analysis of literacy goals and outcomes in particular historical and social contexts, providing insights into the relationship between the spread of literacy and its various uses. The theme of a campaign is also timely in that the 1990s marked a decade of internationally coordinated medium- and long-range strategies and programs to eliminate illiteracy and provide universal primary education. Despite these various efforts, illiteracy still is pervasive in many regions of the world and it is not uncommon for a majority of the most disadvantaged populations in countries to be unable to have the most basic skills required to encode and decode print messages or comprehend written texts that pertain to their most pressing concerns.

After briefly reviewing data on the extent of illiteracy both globally and regionally, and for significant populations, this article discusses what lessons might be derived from a review of past literacy campaigns and what tensions are likely to persist during and after even the most successful of campaigns. References will be made to the implications of past campaigns for Latin America with particular attention given to the 1980 Nicaraguan literacy campaign and its aftermath.[1]

Extent of Illiteracy

Although significant gains have been registered in the number of adults who have become literate in the past three decades, the absolute number of illiterate individuals 15 years of age and older also has increased. While adult illiteracy decreased between 1970 and 2000 from 37 percent to 20 percent,

the absolute number increased from 847 to 862 million. A majority of the world's illiterate adults live in only two countries – the People's Republic of China and India. Regionally, South and West Asia have the highest illiteracy rate (45%), followed by Sub-Saharan Africa (40%).

There are significant differences between rich and poor countries, and between men and women, in literacy attainment. As UNESCO and many adult educators have pointed out, the world map of illiteracy is the map of poverty and, I would add, powerlessness. Women, who have suffered historically and universally from various forms of subordination, have the highest illiteracy rates, with poor women being even more disadvantaged with regard to access to and participation in literacy programs. UNESCO estimates that of the 862 million illiterate individuals over the age of 15 in 2000, 449 million were females.[2]

Latin America and the Caribbean have the lowest illiteracy rates of any of the developing regions. Overall, illiteracy declined from 26 percent in 1979 to 11 percent in 2000. During this period, there was a decrease in the absolute number of illiterate adults from 43 to 39 million. Compared with other developing regions, gender differences in literacy acquisition are not as marked in Latin America. In 2000, the overall illiteracy rate for males was 17 percent compared with 22 percent for females.[3] These figures, however, mask significant differences across and within countries. When the combined effects of social class, region, and gender are taken into account, the highest illiteracy rates are found among poor women living in rural areas. Gender differences in literacy attainment become even sharper when ethnicity is taken into account.

Worldwide, ethnic minorities and rural populations register disproportionately high levels of illiteracy. Heath, in a 1990 report to the Interagency Commission for the World Conference on Education for All, observed that over 800 million . . . illiterates were located in areas with numerous languages and complex patterns of language use.[4] Similarly, in Latin America, the countries with the largest indigenous populations (Bolivia, Peru, and Guatemala), as well as substantial former African slave populations (Brazil), historically, have tended to have the highest illiteracy rates; and figures for countries like Mexico which have a fairly low illiteracy rate (approximately 10% in 2000) do not reveal the high illiteracy found in regions with large concentrations of indigenous populations.[5]

These patterns of state educational provision and literacy acquisition by different subpopulations are not unique to the contemporary period. Nor are large-scale efforts to provide literacy a phenomenon of the 20th century.

Nature of Literacy Campaigns

Major and largely successful campaigns to raise levels of literacy have taken place over the past four hundred years, beginning with the Protestant Reformation. Historically and comparatively, literacy campaigns have formed part of larger transformations in societies. These transformations have attempted to integrate individuals into more comprehensive political and/or religious communities.

The efficacy of literacy and the printed word itself has been article of faith since the 16th century in Europe. Then as now, reformers and idealists, shakers and movers of societies have viewed literacy as a means to other ends, whether to a more moral society or a more stable political order. Then as now individuals have sought and used literacy to attain their own goals.

Particularly from the 1960s on, pronouncements about literacy have deemed it a process of critical consciousness-raising and human liberation. Just as frequently, such declarations refer to literacy as a means to perhaps diametrically opposing goals - to the ends of national development and to a social order that elites, both national and international, define.

An analysis of over a four hundred year period in a dozen

societies reveals the following legacies and lessons that may be useful in analyzing the potential and limitations of a mass literacy campaign to effect individual and collective empowerment and social change.[6]

Lessons and Legacies

- Literacy efforts need to last long enough to be effective,
- local initiative needs to be mobilized in conjunction with national will,
- there will be a significant minority who will oppose or not be reached by literacy efforts of centralized authorities,
- eventually emphasis is placed on state-organized schooling for youth, and
- literacy needs to be understood in its various contexts.

Campaigns Last Years, Decades...

Although a limited time frame is considered to be a defining characteristic of a mass campaigns, those cases frequently pointed to as exemplars of 20th century mobilizations commonly took one or more decades: for example, as studied by Bhola, the U.S.S.R. (1919-1939), Vietnam (1945-1977), Burma (1960s-80s), Brazil (1967-1980), and Tanzania (1971-81).[7] Only the Cuban literacy campaign spanned a period of one year or less. The Nicaraguan Literacy Crusade of 1980, not studied by Bhola, lasted only five months, but immediately following the 1980 *Cruzada*, the Nicaraguan government institute a campaign in indigenous languages for non-Spanish speaking populations of the Atlantic Coast Region, and it established in the same vein as Cuba, a program of continuing basic (*popular*) education. Since the late 1980s, however, there have been frequent calls and partial mobilizations for literacy in Nicaragua, due to the deleterious effects of a counter-revolution, economic collapse, and political regime change on educational provision for children as well as adults.

As literacy campaigns are usually initiated during periods of upheaval, revolutionary transformation, and civil strife, the difficulty of achieving and sustain lofty educational goals – which frequently characterize new political regimes – is not surprising. The Soviet Union, for example, stands out as first case of a country adopting a war-siege mentality to combat illiteracy. N.K. Krupskaya, Lenin's wife and a renowned educator, complained ten years after the passage of the 1919 literacy decree that not a single article had been implemented.[8]

National Political Will Is Important – But So Is Local Initiative

While it may take ten years or more for a campaign to take hold, nationally orchestrated literacy programs are usually preceded by grassroots initiatives. Moreover, the fanfare heralding tremendous achievements brought about by new political regimes generally obscures local educational efforts and accomplishment upon which national policymakers build.

Perhaps the most striking example of the successful attainment of high literacy levels through decentralized efforts is that of 19th century America. Unlike the German, Swedish, and Scottish campaigns of the 17th and 18th centuries, there was no centrally determined policy that brought the power and resources of the nation-state to bear on the problem of literacy. Instead, the competition of religious denominations, the proliferation of religious and secular presses, the exhortation of leading secular and clerical authorities, and local civic initiative came together to promote literacy activities.[9]

In the 20th century, the most striking examples of mobilization involve centrally organized efforts that are waged in terms of a "war on ignorance." But these national-level efforts also have depended heavily on local initiative and popular organizations to recruit teachers and to implement instructional activities. Prominent examples in Latin America include Cuba and Nicaragua. In Cuba, in 1961, a volunteer teaching force of 271,000 individuals was mobilized to reach 979,000 illiterate individuals, who represented 12.6 percent of the adult population. Of this number, l00,000 were high school and university students who went to live and teach in the countryside, 35,000 were

teachers, 25,000 workers taught in their work sites, and 121,000 volunteer adults taught in their free time. By the end of 1961, the illiteracy rate had been reduced to 3.9 percent.

In Nicaragua, in 1980 out of a total population of 2.4 million, of whom 717,000 were at least ten years old and literate, over 250,000 youths and adults volunteered to teach. Of this number, over 90,000 ended-up teaching a total of 406,056 Nicaraguans to read. Mounted within the first year of a revolutionary government, the campaign is credited with reducing the illiteracy rate from 50.35 percent (N=722,616) of the population over the age of ten to approximately 23 percent in five months.[10]

The Nicaraguan National Literacy Crusade (*Cruzada Nacional de Alfabetización, CNA)* involved an all-out mobilization representing a war effort. The imagery and vocabulary of struggle and a national war loomed large in the CNA. Six national literacy fronts were formed with over 55,000 *brigadistas* (literacy workers), mostly high school students, going to live in the rural areas of the country to work with, learn from, and teach the largely illiterate peasantry.

The deployment, logistical support, and protection of the literacy "army" required the support of every national ministry and mass organization. While a National Coordination Commission consisting of twenty-five state ministries and civil society organizations was formed under the auspices of the Ministry of Education, it was at the municipal level, according to outside observers, that the crusade took form, where organizational involvement was most intense, and the mass of people participated.[11]

The success of large-scale mobilizations, particularly in revolutionary societies like Cuba (1959 on) and Nicaragua (1979-1990) is often the function of mass organizations, such as youth, workers, neighborhood, defense, and women's association. A national campaign, by mobilizing large numbers of people and strengthening mass organizations, creates opportunities for large-scale citizenship participation in decision making. But such mobilizations and organizations may also serve as instruments of exercising cultural and political hegemony by dominate groups or state apparatuses.

With the change of political regimes in Nicaragua in 1990 as the result of national elections, the incoming government of President Violeta Barrios de Chamorro and her coalition of fourteen parties (National Opposition Union, *Unión Nacional Opositor*, UNO) set out to dismantle many of the populist and socialist-oriented policies and programs of the Sandinista National Liberation Front (*Frente Sandinista Nacional de Liberación*, FSLN) and set the country on the path to reintegration into the global capitalist economy. The CNA and follow-up adult basic education programs were viewed by the new Ministry of Education officials as largely attempts at political indoctrination in an ideology antithetical to traditional Nicaraguan values. Moreover, Ministry of Education programs, much in line with the national neoliberal economic agenda, have promoted decentralization and a number of policies widely-viewed as leading to the privatization of the education system. Literacy was largely abandoned to civil society initiatives funded by external international agencies, governmental and nongovernmental. By 1995, I had estimated that the illiteracy rate had risen to almost a million youths and adults and approximately 50 percent of the population over the age of l5. At that time, the government was spending under US $25,000 of its own funds on literacy and adult basic education program. Beginning in 1998, a number of Spanish international technical assistance agencies were playing an important role in trying to jump-start literacy and follow-up adult basic education programs with a vocational component, but aimed at no more than l0 percent of a target population of over 500,000 youths and adults between 16 and 60 years of age.[12]

Nicaragua typifies a common issue facing literacy campaigns around the world. The need for complementarity of efforts between the state and civil society, at a time when major international donor agencies are focusing efforts primarily on the first four years of education and essentially abandoning efforts at literacy and adult education for populations over 35 years of age.

Local initiative is critical but so are centralized government efforts, because only the state has sufficient resources and the power to mobilize a population around the need to reach the most disadvantaged populations. The various grassroots organizations forming such an essential part of civil society also are critical for reaching populations that are not amenable to centrally-initiated efforts at education.

Resistance

History offers countless examples of people individually and collectively resisting imposition of what they viewed to be alien values. The German literacy drives elicited this response from peasants as early as the 16th century. Russia offers abundant instances before and after the 1917 Revolution of peasant populations setting up their own schools and employing reading materials that did not accord with the designs of state authorities. In Russia, peasant attacks on state-appointed teachers occurred in the late 1920s and early 1930s. In Mexico, literacy works and other members of the *Misiones Culturales* that were sent to the countryside by the government, beginning in 1923, were frequently objects of attack by conservative groups who opposed the secular and revolutionary messages being transmitted by the teachers. In Cuba and Nicaragua, similarly, literacy workers and literacy centers were prime targets for counter-revolutionary forces that viewed them as symbols of the new social order. In Nicaragua, over 300 "popular educators" were killed, wounded, or abducted in the 1980s.

Moreover, in Nicaragua, there was considerable resistance on the part of Atlantic coast indigenous populations to the national literacy campaign in Spanish as a form of cultural imposition. In deference to the strong pressures from this region and in recognition of the region's unique cultural characteristics, the FSLN launched a follow-up literacy campaign in Miskitu, Sumu, and English. It is interesting to note, that the late-1990s literacy efforts in Nicaragua, the Spanish-funded *Programa de Alfabetización y Educación Básica de Adultos de Nicaragua* (PAEBANIC), has not included the Atlantic Coast and undeveloped Department of Río San Juan in their initial programming for the period 1998-2003.

An historical analysis reveals that aside from physical attacks on literacy workers and demands for separate campaigns in native languages, resistance to national literacy efforts frequently takes the form of local communities and individuals refusing to read the types of messages emanating from the center. In the case of Nicaragua, in certain communities literacy workers and students used the bible, instead of the national literacy primer, as the principal text. A more common occurrence was that the principal themes in the literacy primer were subject to the varying interpretations of individual communities and readers.

Gillette, who participated in the evaluation of the UNESCO-sponsored eleven country Experimental World Literacy Program (1967-1973), sums up the difficulty of controlling outcomes of literacy campaigns: "Happily, literacy like education more generally cannot be reduced to behavioral conditioning. It endows people with skills that they can (although do not always) use to receive and emit messages of an almost infinite range, a range that in any events escapes the control of those who imparted literacy . . . . Literacy is potential empowerment."[13]

Significant Populations Are Not Reached

In addition to the resistance of people to control or to content that is alienating, there are other seemingly intractable problems. As noted earlier, class, ethnic, racial, geographical, and gender differences in literacy acquisition have been ubiquitous over the past four hundred years. Historically and comparatively, rural populations, the working class, ethnic and racial minorities, immigrants, and women have been the last to receive literacy instruction and to gain access to advanced levels of schooling. There are, of course, exceptions (including Cuba today). Still, despite the intensity and scale of efforts, and whether by intent or not, an unmistakable pattern emerges from historical campaigns from cases as diverse as pre-industrial Germany, the Soviet Union, Tanzania, and Nicaragua. Regardless of date, duration, or developmental level, it appears that an irreducible minimum of at least 10 to 20 percent of the

adult population remains illiterate. This finding places in question notions that except for a small minority of severely handicapped and institutionalized populations, it is possible to achieve literacy rates of over 95 percent in advanced industrialized countries.

Schooling Becomes the Vehicle for Attacking Illiteracy

The intractability of adults who do not wish to learn in ways prescribed by state authorities or be converted to a different set of beliefs is a common occurrence. An important legacy of the German Reformation campaigns is Luther's shift in attention to shaping the young, as opposed to his earlier focus on all members of the community.[14] The dilemma faced by Luther, whether to concentrate literacy efforts on the young (who may be less "corrupted" and more malleable) or on adults, is a strategic issue in most subsequent mass campaigns.

In 20th century campaigns, despite initial large-scale efforts aimed at entire populations, a narrowing eventually occurs with greater emphasis placed on the formal education of the young. Particularly with the rapid expansion of primary education enrollment in the Post-World War II period, illiteracy rates for the young have been noticeably lower. In Latin America, the rates for the age group 15 to 19 have been less than half that of the age group 50 and older.

It is not surprising that literacy provision and socialization of individuals over time have merged and been institutionalized in state systems of formal education. From the earliest campaigns, the goals of literacy provision have been the propagation of a particular faith or world view through the reading of prescribed texts and under the supervision of teachers of a certain moral persuasion and of an upright character. Historically, the religious orientation of school systems has given way to a more secular faith in the nation-state and/or the propagation of an ideology such as capitalism. While bureaucratic systems of education with their attendant centralization of decision-making, standardization or routines and uniformity of curriculum, may being certain benefits, such systems also lead to alienation and academic failure – possible illiteracy – of substantial numbers of individuals who do not fit into such structures.

Data from Latin America are suggestive of the difficulties educational reforms face in tying gradual elimination of illiteracy primarily to provision of basic education to the young. In Latin America, school repetition rates are as high as 25-30 percent in the early grades when children are learning to read. According to Tedesco, a high percent of students' first experience with schooling is that of failure.[15] In a number of countries, a majority of poor, rural, and ethnic minority children do not complete the first five or six grades of primary education. In a context of growing poverty and reduced funding for education, plus cost recovery measures that require parent financial support for once free public schooling, many children either do not enter school or drop-out early due to the need for them to work. In Nicaragua, it is estimated that in a country of approximately 5 million, and a majority of the population living in poverty, over one million school-age children either have not entered or completed primary education.

Thus, the prospect for the future of poor and developing countries is both that of increasing numbers of youth and young adults acquiring literacy through schooling but also substantial numbers and percentages who either do not achieve a basic level of formal education or who will leave school illiterate or with minimal literacy skills. These patterns suggest the need for policy makers to continue to mount large-scale literacy efforts to reach those populations never reached by school or poorly served by formal education.

For the past three decades notions of literacy education have formed part of the international agenda of educational reform and vision of what education systems should be like. Notions of lifelong opportunities for individuals to improve their knowledge and skills and develop a broad range of talents are changing definitions of literacy.

Literacy Must be Contextually Defined and Continually Appraised

Literacy takes on meaning in particularly historical and social formations. The status of literate persons and the multiple competencies that are required to interpret texts and communicate with others must be viewed in relation to the demands of specific settings. It is generally considered that more sophisticated reading and writing skills are required in more complex technological environments, and comprehension of various print and nonprint materials necessitates background of both national and international contexts.

These trends also characterize less developed countries like Cuba and Nicaragua (1979-1989). In Cuba, the national literacy campaign was followed by a program of adult education that serially involved "The Battle for 6th Grade," and then "The Battle for 9th Grade." The vocabulary of adult basic education also changed to provide the increasingly technical knowledge needed in conjunction with the mechanization of agriculture and changes in factories. But the content of education also changed to reflect the increasingly international context and internal transformations in Cuban society. Similarly, in Nicaragua, major efforts were initiated in the final years of the Sandinista government to develop post-literacy basic education texts that provided individuals with the knowledge and skills need to run cooperatives and participate more effectively in decision-making in their workplace and communities. As of November 2002, the Nicaraguan Minister of Education discussed the need for new approaches to literacy and adult education in a context of extreme poverty and unemployment – programs aimed at providing the equivalent of the first four years of basic education and vocational skills for largely self-employment in a society where the majority of work occurs in a "shadow economy."

In industrialized countries as well as developing countries, it is likely that there will continually be calls for renewed efforts to reach and impart literacy-related skills of a higher order. On the other hand, a radical political economy critique of industrialized societies is likely to point out that a process of deskilling has been going on in the workforce of countries like the United States. If the fastest growing sectors of the economy are not in high technology areas involving robotics and informatics, but in the service sector and, in particular, areas like fast food restaurants and security services, then there are unlikely to be sufficient economic incentives and rewards for individuals to develop higher order communication and computation skills. A radical critique of Latin American countries, similarly, would point out that the dependent and distorted nature of their economies is unlikely to lead to either sustained growth and generation of high level jobs or to sufficient resources for continued educational expansion and improvement in the quality of schooling. At a conference I attended in Managua, Nicaragua, in the November of 2002, the Minister of Education, noting the limited opportunities in the modern sector of the economy for the graduates of literacy and adult basic education programs, ironically noted that even being able to use a different machete for harvesting sugar cane could be viewed as a form of literacy contributing to greater economic output.[16]

Concluding Reflections

Ultimately, contextual factors – the opportunities for using literacy skills, the transformations that occur in social structures, the ideology of national leaders – determine whether or not individuals acquire, retain, and use literacy skills. Whether literacy and postliteracy campaigns use materials and methods that are truly designed to equip individuals and communities to play more active roles in shaping the direction of their societies or, instead, use materials and methods aimed at inducting people into predetermined roles is a telling indication of the ideology and intent of these campaigns. As Cairns has observed, literacy is fundamentally a political issue involving these questions: "What sort of society do we want? Are we seriously interested in improving the skills and training of the poorly educated? Will we make this a priority, and commit funds and expertise in an age of dwindling resources?" He goes on to note that these questions lead to others which "starkly clarify the values we put on people and their ability to realize their full potential."[17]

ENDNOTES

*This article builds on previous publications, in particular, my chapter 'Las campañas nacionales de alfabetización desde las perspectivas histórica y comparativa: legados, lecciones e implicaciones para América Latina,' in Leer y Escribir en Espana (Madrid: Fundación Germán Sánchez RuiPérez, 1992); "National Literacy Campaigns in Historical and Comparative Perspective: Legacies, Lessons, and Implications for Latin America," in Carlos Alberto Torres (eds.), *Education and Social Change in Latin America* (Melbourne, Australia: James Nicholas, 1997).

1. See, for example, Chapter 6 on "Literacy and Adult Basic Education," in my *Education as Contested Terrain: Nicaragua 1979-1993* (Boulder, Col.: Westview Press, 1994).

2. Data on literacy are based on estimations of UNESCO, Institute for Statistics, Paris, July 2002, table on Regional Adult Illiteracy Rate and Population by Gender; and UNESCO Institute of Statistics, "Latin America and the Caribbean Regional Report, 2001." Data available on the UNESCO Web site: [http://www.unesco.org].

3. Ibid.

4. Shirley Heath, "Language and Literacy," paper presented at Workshop on Literacy at Interagency Commission for the World Conference on Education for All, New York, June 1989; cited in Nelly Stromquist, "Women and Illiteracy: The Interplay of Gender Subordination and Poverty," *Comparative Education Review* 34 (February, 1990), p. 99.

5. Data on ethnic and racial minorities found in the report of the Programa de Promoción de la Reforma Educativa en América Latina y el Caribe (PREAL). "Quedándonos Atrás: Un Informe del Progreso Educativo en América Latina, 2001," p. 10. Available on the Web site: [http://www.preal.org].

6. Lessons taken from Robert F. Arnove and Harvey J. Graff, "Introduction," in Arnove and Graff (eds.), *National Literacy Campaigns: Historical and Comparative Perspectives* (New York: Plenum, 1987), pp. 1-28.

7. H.S. Bhola, *Campaigning for Literacy: A Critical Analysis of Some Selected Literacy Campaigns of the 20th century, with Memorandum to Decision Makers* (Paris: UNESCO/International Council for Adult Education, 1982); also see H.S. Bhola with Josef Müller and Piet Dijkstra, *The Promise of Literacy: Report of the International Seminar on Campaigning for Literacy, Udaipur, India January 4-11*, 1982 (Baden-Baden, Germany: Nomos

Verlagsgesellschaft, 1983).

8. See Ben Eklof, "Russian Literacy Campaigns," in Arnove and Graff, *National Literacy Campaigns,* p. 131.

9. Edward Stevens, "The Anatomy of Mass Literacy in Nineteenth-Century United States," in Arnove and Graff, *Literacy Campaigns*, pp. 99-122.

10. Although campaign officials claimed that illiteracy rate had been reduced to 12.96, this lower figures is based on the government's decision to subtract from the target population of illiterate adults approximately 130,000 individuals who were considered "unteachable" or learning impaired because of blindness, debilitating illnesses, or institutionalization. For further discussion, including concern about the figure of 23% reached by me, see chapter 6 in Arnove, *Contested Terrain.*

11. Charles L. Stansifer, "The Nicaraguan National Literacy Crusade," American University Field Staff Reports, South America, No. 41, 1981, p. 5.

12. Programa Alfabetización y Educación Básica de Adultos de Nicaragua (PAEBANIC), *Presentacion PAEBANIC,* available from the Centro de Investigaciones Socio-educativas(CISE), Universidad Nacional Autónoma de Nicaragua (UNA), Managua, Nicaragua, August 8, 2000. The literacy project involves the cooperation of the Ministerio de Educación, Cultura y Deportes de Nicaragua (MECD), as well as the Organización de Estados Iberoamericanos (OEI) para la Educación, la Ciencia y la Cultura, the Agencia Española de Cooperación Internacional (AECI), and the Ministerio de Educación y Cultura de España (MEC).

13. Arthur Gillette, The Experimental World Literacy Program: A Unique International Effort Revised,*" in Arnove and Graff, Literacy* Campaigns, p. 215.

14. Gerald Strauss, *Luther's House of Learning: Indoctrination of the Young in the German Reformation* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1978).

15. Juan Carlos Tedesco, "La Década Perdida: Analfabetismo, Democracia y Desarrollo en América Latina," *El País* (Madrid), "Temas de Nuestra Epoca," January 18, 1990, p. 6.

16. Talk given by el Ministro de Educación, Cultura y Deportes (MECD), Silvio De Franco at the "Foro sobre Descentralización y Participacion Social en las Escuelas: El Futuro de Reforma Educativa en Nicaragua," organized by the New School University of New York and the MECD, Hotel Intercontinental Conference Center, November 5, 2002.

17. John C. Cairns, in "Introduction" to Audrey Thomas, "Adult Illiteracy in

Canada--A Challenge," Occasional Paper No. 42 (Ottawa, Ontario: Canadian Commission for UNESCO, 1983), p. 8.

Changing University Governance as a Global Trend

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In many countries, universities have been under tremendous pressure from government and the general public to restructure or reinvent themselves much as business enterprises and corporations over the past decade. Economic values have become the foundation of university administration and management. Such notions of economic rationalism and corporate managerialism have caused a serious threat to traditional academic culture and interest, which was originally grounded on the ethos of collegiality. This article examines the changing mode of university governance from the perspective of the entrepreneurial university. It argues that the development of university education has been profoundly influenced by public sector reforms, and business ideas and practices. The notions of managerial efficiency, market relevance, public and financial accountability, and quality services are indeed prevailing in the university sectors around the world.

University governance is significantly affected by the fact that a certain number of higher education institutions intend and attempt to follow the example of business by adopting corporate decision-making and planning techniques and using economic measures of productivity. The impact of the adoption of business management techniques and managerial culture can be reflected in the changing organizational culture in universities and other higher education institutions. University finance and administration becomes more business-like with the ascendancy of the role of university chief executives and senior administrators. The bureaucratization and professionalization of university administration comes along with the marginalization of faculty and other constituencies within the university in the processes of strategic planning as well as decision-making. At the same time, students are treated as customers in the sense that institutions

are motivated to create courses and programs to cope with student needs under the trend of mass customization.

The pressures for reforms facing most universities may be due to a genuine need for fiscal and academic restructuring in terms of the redistribution of financial and human resources within institutions. Moreover, the public's mistrust of the work of universities and academics makes institutions more business-like, more entrepreneurial and more pragmatic. Rewards are now pegged to the process of entrepreneurialization of universities and the cost-effectiveness of departments and faculties in terms of teaching and research activities (Waugh, 1998). There is an overall agreement of universities that the rise of the "entrepreneurial university" is based on the fact that the administration is fused with new managerial values on top of traditional values. A strengthened administration or management is a prerequisite for the cultivation of entrepreneurial culture in a university (Clark, 1998). Moreover, universities need to be more adaptive to difficult environments which are conducive to institutional reforms in most countries. In her research on the trend towards more adaptive universities in Europe, Sporn (1999) suggested that institutional reforms facing the university sector may be due to global competition among institutions for resources, and also unpredictable fluctuations in enrolments and revenues. In response, university administration and management need to become more adaptive in nature with the setting up of more externally oriented, coherent, effective and entrepreneurial structures and processes.

The rapid transformation and change of global environments trigger new mechanisms of coordination and control in higher education systems around the world. The changing role of the state and the latest governmental policies on higher education come to the fore of research and analysis among scholars working in higher education policy studies. Many European systems formerly characterized by a state control model with relatively tight regulation and centralized funding have moved to a state supervisory model with increased institutional self-regulation, and the state steers the university sector from a distance. The policy of decentralization and deregulation has become more popular in those countries and their universities have been granted more autonomy and freedom to design their own structures for academic programmes, personnel management and financial allocation. At the same time, the overall quality of university education is being supervised by external authorities through the means of audit and evaluation (Sporn, 1999).

Mortimer (2000) summarized five major developments in university education in relation to changing governance in the era of reform. These developments include the rising importance of market forces, the globalization of science and technology, the increased importance of technology, the increased emphasis on educational outputs, and the integration of the university into larger society. Universities have to conform to the principle of accountability under strong market forces. The increased importance of market forces is in tandem with the pursuit of more effective policy principles and practices of governance under market-oriented culture. Markets, especially those for science and information technology, are global in nature. Slaughter and Leslie (1997), in their research of the impacts of globalization on the development of the higher education systems in Australia, Canada, the UK and the USA, claim that in order to survive in such a global marketplace, governmental policies on university education have to devote more resources to take advantage of financial opportunities in the form of academic capitalism. At the same time, with a major shift from elite to mass higher education systems, universities are under increasing pressure to improve both the quality and the market value of their courses and programs as a kind of commodity and service provided to customers or students in a client-oriented and market-centred environment. The notions of vocationalism and pragmatism have been applied to the latest developments in university education in most countries around the world.

In retrospect, the most important consequence of recent changes in university governance and management is the movement from collegiality towards managerialism that is eroding both the notions of professionalism and the rights of academics to manage themselves. The role of academic leadership has been emphasized, and more authority and power is located in the hands of vice-chancellors and managers who are remote from

academic work. A top down approach of management and resource allocation is being supplemented by the adoption of devolved budgetary systems, posing the danger of deans and department heads becoming detached from academic work and from a representative role that secures trust and support for institutional changes and reforms (Dearlove, 1998). Although the old collegiality may be a problem, the new managerialism is not the answer for universities to face external pressures and challenges. For universities, which are basically professional consent organizations, change needs to be effected more on the basis of trust than control, and relationships between administrators and academics need to be strengthened . Therefore, universities are facing a stark choice between the alleged democracy of a whimsical collegiality and the problematic efficiency of a hard-nosed managerialism (Dearlove, 1995).

Changes in university governance denote fundamental changes in state-university relationships in a wider context of public policy and governance. The use of markets or quasi-markets for the provision and delivery of public services, including higher education, can be understood as a way to use the concept of governance as the minimal state. Moreover, the use of the term "governance" also refers to corporate governance, the new public management and "good governance" (Rhodes, 1996). A crisis of the state is concurrent with a linked and integrated crisis of governance and of state capability. The result is that the form of the state is changing because it has become more active in creating market structures in place of direct involvement in the economy and the welfare state program following the era of big government (Wilson, 2000a, 2000b). Instead of witnessing a real shrinking of the state, the role of the state has been restructured and transformed into a "market-builder" amidst the persistent tension between "market" and "state" concomitant with the ascendancy of private power in governance and public policy. Meanwhile, the current role of the state is implied paradoxically by "shrinkage" and "rollback" in the sense that while the state is helping to build and shape markets after the fading away of the welfare state, the state's power, in fact, is remaining stable even increasing. Universities, which are using public funds, have also become key players in the building of markets under the current policy direction of the state, together with a transformation and strengthening of the responsibilities of university administrators in the name of the managerialism or new public management (Sbragia, 2000). Similar to reforms of public organizations, that for the university sector is more skewed towards market forces than before, so as to bring a higher quality of services at a lower cost and to meet the specific preferences and needs of student populations under the dominance of such notions of mass customization, universalism, public accountability, efficiency and "value for money" (Peterson, 2000).

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Transforming Public Schools into Semi-Private Schools: A Comparative Study on the Privatization Initiatives in Hong Kong and Shanghai

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In the field of public administration, a "new paradigm" is said to have been discovered and is named as "new public management", "market-based public administration", "entrepreneurial government" and so on (Cheung, 2001). New market approaches, such as privatization, decentralization, deregulation (and re-regulation), etc., have been dominating the recent trends in public administration and policies. And basic assumptions about the boundaries between public and private sectors, as well as the scope of regulation and the opportunities for deregulation, are in the process of being reconsidered and revised (Metcalfe & Richards, 1990). In the light of such a global trend, it is just natural for the governments to attempt to reform education using the market approach and to reconsider some of the basic assumptions about public education, in response to an environment where international competition has been often emphasized.

In both Hong Kong and Shanghai (as well as in other parts of the Chinese mainland), we see the emergence of new types of public school (or semi-private school) in recent years. Though both places belong to the same country, according to the "one country, two systems" principle, Hong Kong remains a highly-autonomous free capitalist city, while Shanghai prospers as the forerunner of the vast socialist country. Set aside other aspects of difference between the two places, certain aspects in their developments are strikingly similar. In 2002, the first group of popular public schools, being encouraged by the Hong Kong government, converted themselves into semi-private Direct Subsidies Scheme (DSS) schools that receive government subsidies and collect high school fee at the same time. In Shanghai over the last decade, a number of public schools have also been transformed into Converted Schools (*zhuanzhi xuexiao*) that enjoy more autonomy with the ultimate target of a full self-financing status. A special type of privatization has obviously taken place and the boundary between public and private has been crossed in both cities.

This paper argues that the education privatization initiatives in the two cities, although of different social systems, are similar in their policy orientation in using market approach to respond to problems such as inadequacy of funding by drawing in additional resources for the public education system, and the belief in obtaining higher educational qualities through the competitive market mechanism. This inevitably leads to certain problems such as inequity in both cities.

THE CASE OF HONG KONG

The Direct Subsidy Scheme has been a controversial issue in Hong Kong since it was first proposed in 1988 (examples can be found in a book edited by Chung & Wong, 1988). The debate became even hotter when the funding formula was revised in 2001 and the first batch of public schools joined the scheme in 2002.

What is DSS school?

DSS schools are said to be private schools. According to the Education Commission (1998) that first proposed the DSS, "In most other developed countries, the private schools are the prestigious ones for those who can afford, or can obtain through academic merit, a better education than that provided by the Government" (p. 50). The Commission was thus in favour of "a strong, independent private sector" (p. 53) in the long run, based on its proposal of DSS. However, whether DSS schools should be counted as private or public is a matter of debate.

In Hong Kong, the school system has been quite complicated. Before the introduction of DSS, schools in Hong Kong can be divided into 3 main types. The government schools and private schools comprise only a small percentage in the school system over years, at about 10% respectively. The major

part of the system is made up by the "aided schools" which are almost totally funded by government but administered by charities, churches and other non-profit-making bodies according to some ground rules laid down by the government. Both the government and aided schools are considered as the public sector.

The DSS schools are counted as *private schools* in government statistics, although they are similar to aided schools in the sense that they are non-profit-making in nature, and that they received government subsidy at a level comparable to aided schools. However, they are allowed to collect certain school fees even in the compulsory education years. The funding formula is different in orientation. And fewer administrative and financial restrictions are imposed by the government. Table 1 shows the major similarities and differences between the aided and DSS schools before 2001.

	Aided Schools	**DSS schools**
Description	Fully aided by government and managed by non-profit-making sponsoring bodies under the Codes of Aid.	Receive Government financial assistance under the Direct Subsidy Scheme.
Finance		
Recurrent subsidies	Recurrent grants as governed in the Codes of Aid based on number of classes.	Government subsidy is payable on a per student basis at the average unit cost of an aided school place.
School facilities	Provided with standard school facilities and are given flexibility for acquiring school facilities with the resources provided.	Free to deploy resources or acquire school facilities of their choices at their own expenses.
Teaching and Learning		
Curriculum	Should develop a school-based curriculum on basis of the local curriculum prescribed by Education Department	Mainly follow local curriculum but free to design their own curriculum.

Medium of Instruction	Should follow the "Medium of Instruction Guidance for Secondary School" for selecting a suitable medium of instruction.	Should choose a suitable medium of instruction according to the ability of the students.
Operation and Management		
Admission of Students	Students are allocated through central place allocation systems. Discretion is exceptional.	Have full discretion to admit students.
School Fee	Do not collect school fees during the compulsory education period (Primary 1 to Secondary 3). School fees for senior secondary students are standardized.	Can charge their students any approved school fees. Government subsidy will be adjusted accordingly.

Table 1: Major Similarities and Differences between Aided and DSS Schools Before 2001
(adapted from Education Department, 2001)

Schools were invited to join the scheme in 1991. Since then, various types of schools have joined the scheme, including some former private schools and international schools, but none of them are eye-catching. No aided school has ever applied to convert its status to DSS in 10 years time. The objective of fostering "a strong, independent private sector" seems to have failed. But recently, three prominent aided schools finally suddenly declared they would change themselves into DSS schools in 2002 and they would collect much higher school fees than that of other DSS schools.

Recent Developments

Two factors have apparently attracted the aided schools to the unexpected move: the change in funding formula of DSS which put popular DSS schools in a financially very desirable situation; and the pursuit for freedom or deregulation against tightening up of control amidst the education reform.

In 2001, a major revision in the funding formula of DSS was proposed by the government and accepted by the legislature (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2001). It allows the DSS schools to collect a much higher level of school fees without affecting the government subsidy received. Before 2001, the DSS school fee was under a comparatively tight control. Schools were free to charge a student up to a fee equivalent to 1/3 of the government recurrent subsidy (i.e. the average unit cost of an aided school place). If school fees exceeded the *ceiling*, the recurrent subsidy would be progressively reduced by 50 cents for every additional dollar charged. The spirit was that "a DSS school which charges higher school fees will receive less subsidy". Obviously, DSS schools were not encouraged to collect high school fee. As a result, most DSS schools were reluctant to charge school fees beyond that *ceiling*.

The 2001 revision allows a much higher *ceiling*. A DSS school will continue to receive full recurrent subsidy from the government until its fee level reaches two and a third of the recurrent subsidy received. In 2001/02, the average subsidy per student of aided primary school is HK$ 29,460 (Education Department, 2002). That means a DSS school can collect a school fee as high as HK$ 48,087 while still enjoying a full subsidy from the government. However, while collecting such high school fee, the DSS schools are also required to devote a certain amount of their income for scholarship or financial assistance schemes to make "DSS schools more accessible to students from less well-off families" (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2001). Nevertheless, the 2001 revision allows prestigious DSS schools that can attract an adequate number of well-off parents to enjoy a revenue as high as 3.33 times as that of ordinary aided schools.

If the promising financial prospect is the pull factor for the conversion, the education reform that started from 2000 would be the push factor behind the move. The reform proposals are summarized in Education Commission (2000). One frequently quoted measure was the student place allocation system that changes from one that was in favour of the prestigious aided schools to a more equalized allocation system. Previously, students are divided into 5 bands of equal number of students according to their academic achievement. The school choice of the best band will be entertained first, followed by the second, third, and so on. The system guaranteed that the best students would be placed in the prestigious schools. Now, as proposed by the Education Commission, the 5 bands are reduced to 3 bands. Each band covers a much larger number of students. The objective of the reform is to equalize the education opportunity of the students. But it is also frequently criticized, as the prestigious aided schools' advantageous position in getting the brightest students has been much hampered (see, for example, Lu, 2002). To preserve their advantageous position in the selection of students, the Direct Subsidy Scheme provides a promising leeway for these prestigious schools (Tsang, 2002).

Why Change?

Why did the Hong Kong government choose to modify the scheme to attract prestigious aided schools to join?

One reason is the belief in the market approach of reform, particularly at a time of "globalized competition".

It was stated in the "education reform blueprint" proposed by the Education Commission (2000) that "the world is undergoing fundamental economic, technological, social and cultural change" and that the quality of education must be enhanced in order to sustain the city's competitive edge. The market mechanism that allows students to choose the schools will foster better schools that effectively respond to the needs of the students and parents. In a speech delivered by the Mr Tung Chee-hwa (2001), the Chief Executive of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, he cites the examples of the Chinese mainland, US and UK where competitive public systems have been in place (such as the rank-ordering of schools), and that one should "make sure that parents and students who are keen about intellectual competition have a choice." He then concludes that,

> while committing to improve the quality of our entire public school system, we have also put in place the important initiative to enhance the competitiveness of Direct Subsidy Scheme schools, and to help more private schools to meet the diverse quality needs of different parents and students.

This very much echoes the general trend of the New Public Management or the neo-liberalism that believes market mechanism is more effective than a public system. The existence of DSS does not only widen the available options for parents. Its funding formula, based on number of students recruited, does make sure that the participating schools are popular, or else they will fail to acquire the resources they need.

Financial consideration is another important factor. Enhancing the quality of education requires much more resource inputs that would immediately reveal the shortage of available resources that the governments are willing to allocate to school education. As already hinted by the Education Commission in its blueprint (2000),

> In view of the high proportion of public expenditure currently devoted to education and the implementation of the committed new initiatives which will also require a considerable additional resources, we need a proper strategy to make effective use of public resources and other resources in the community. To realize the education reform, all sectors of society, in particular the learners themselves, must be prepared to make greater contributions. (p. 142)

And,

> We should encourage more private participation in running schools. We should also promote the development of private universities, community colleges, private schools and the Direct Subsidy Scheme schools so as to provide more channels for different sectors of the community to contribute towards education. (p. 146)

The DSS does not alleviate the burden of public expenditure for those converted schools. However, it does draws in a large amount of private contribution in terms of tuition fee that will provide better opportunities for those particular schools in the scheme to achieve better quality (Education and Manpower Bureau, 2001). In reality, it seems to be working. One of the converted schools, for example, promises the parents that with extra resources, the school is ready:

- to reduce class size
- to reduce teacher workload
- to have more individual attention for each student
- to revise curriculum in response to the new information age
- to increase professional development opportunities for teachers (St Paul Co-Educational College, 2001)

However, only those who can pay or those who are selected on certain criteria to receive the financial assistance can enjoy such benefits. It leads to the problem of social inequality that will be discussed in a later part of this paper.

THE CASE OF SHANGHAI

Private education has a long history in China. However, it once disappeared from the scene due to ideological reasons after the establishment of the People's Republic of China. Following the start of the period of openness and reform in the early 1980s, private schools (or *minban* schools) revived and grew rapidly. In 1997, there were a total of 3,508 *minban* primary and middle schools, tripling the figure in 1992 (Shao, 2001).

What is Converted School?

Converted school is one type of privatized school in China. The first batch of five *minban* schools in Shanghai, founded in 1992 just after Deng Xiaoping's famous visit to the south, were later described as "converted schools". All these five schools made use of the campuses of some former public schools that were granted to them by district education bureaus. Each school was headed by a retired but renowned principal, who held responsibility to raise funds for the school, recruit and select teaching staff (mostly also retired teachers), and to manage the school (Zhu & Ip, 2002). But the name of "converted school" did

not emerge until 1996 (Zhang, 2001). The concept of "converted school" is a result of prolonged evolvement.

Whether converted school belongs to private or public sector is again difficult to answer. In fact, the term "converted school" is a very loose concept used by different people to refer to very different types of schools. According to official documents in Shanghai, a converted school is counted as "public school" of a special type (Zhang, 2000). But during the course of private education legislation, a senior national legislator (Wang, 2002) admitted that the concept is ambiguous, still in the process of evolvement, and that some schools should be counted as private. Nevertheless, most would agree that the converted school is part of the privatization process.

Zhang (2001) notes five origins of the converted schools:

(a) new schools built in new residential areas
(b) schools converted from public schools of low educational quality
(c) establishment of new schools in vacated public school campuses
(d) schools converted from public schools of high educational quality
(e) joint venture by the government, existing school and investor

They all share the following characteristics:

(a) Most converted schools were originally marginal in the public education system, in terms of geographical location or academic achievement.
(b) Usually they receive support from the government in terms of providing campuses, nomination of school heads, providing initial budget, relaxing the control in enrolment of students, etc.
(c) The schools will follow the operation mode of private schools, such as collecting tuition fee, reducing cost, and dealing with the supply and demand of the market.
(d) After 3 years of their establishment, the schools will have to be totally self financed. In some cases, the schools even have to pay rent to the government.

Strategies in Change

In 1996, The Shanghai municipal government initiated the Pilot Scheme on Public School Conversion, PSPSC. It included two major types of converted schools (Shanghai Municipal Education Commission, 1996):

(a) those converted from former public schools that were poorly run with old dilapidated campuses/facilities;
(b) new schools built in newly-developed residential areas.

The pilot scheme, which was completed in 1999, marks the active intervention by the Shanghai government in the issue of converted schools (Zhang, 2001). The underlining principle is that the state-owned status of the schools remains unchanged. However, changes can be found in almost all other aspects. The source of school finance changed from solely state subsidy to that of multiple channels, including collection of tuition fee, donation and fund-raising. Strict and direct supervision by bureaucrats is substituted by the so-called "macro-control and supervision", which means a looser control by the state. Accordingly, the management and operation system also changed from state-direct management to that of more flexibility and autonomy, in terms of internal management, use of funding, organizational structure and appointment of personnel. For these PSPSC schools, recurrent funding and teaching staff establishment are also provided. After all, all facilities granted by the government remain state-owned, but the rights of operation are given to the school managers (Zhu & Ip, 2002).

From the government's perspective, there are two desirable aspects for such a system. On one hand, the operators and many teachers of these schools are experienced retired educators. Their eagerness, ardency and experience in teaching in and managing a school can be utilized through such arrangements to supplement the shortage of experienced teachers. On the other hand, government planning is also active in the course of reform (Zhang, 2000). The promotion of a private school system is included by the Shanghai Municipal Education Commission and also the district/county education bureaus in their respective education development and reform plans. Government agencies are also involved in giving support and supervision to the planning of new schools, student recruitment, teaching, school

management, campus site and facilities, selection of principals and the reallocation of teaching staff, etc. The comparatively strong government regulation is considered by local researchers to be one of the factors that lead to the high social reputation of these private schools in Shanghai (Zhu & Ip, 2002).

Why Converting Schools?

Why does the Shanghai government choose such a privatization strategy?

Lack of funding has been one of the most frequent mentioned reasons. Although Shanghai is the most economically developed region in China, its public expenditure per capita on education in the mid 1990s was some 5%, around the average level in developed countries (*Wen Wei Bao* (Shanghai), Nov 2, 1995). Government subsidy to basic education can cover only some 60% of the normal expenditure of schools (i.e. the salary expenditure of teaching staff), and this amount already represents some 30-40% of the local governments' public expenditure in Shanghai (Shanghai Municipal Education Commission, 1997). As a result:

- Some schools' physical conditions are below standard.
- The provision of ordinary senior secondary schools has not yet reached the demand for school places.

Privatization of education stands as an attractive policy option. Converting some public schools into fee-collecting schools that also absorb other forms of private contribution, such as by joint venture, effectively increases the available revenue for public education.

Another reason is the attempt to employ the market approach to alter the public education system which is sometime seen as inefficient, inactive, of poor quality and uniform in style. In the Shanghai Municipal Education Conference in May 1993, the mayor proposed a pilot scheme to turn some poorly-run public schools into *minban* schools. The same meeting proposed again in 1994 that the government is to strongly encourage the pilot scheme of turning public schools into *minban* schools (Jin, 1996). The idea is simple. If the schools are poorly operated in the public education system, why not give the market a try? According to the suggestion, these new *minban* schools remained publicly owned, but could follow the practices of some existing private schools in raising funds, recruiting personnel, and managing schools. These are explicit policies at the municipal level. To what extent it is precisely implemented especially at the district level is yet to be investigated.

ISSUE OF SOCIAL INEQUALITY

Although DSS and Converted Schools may help to ease financial constraints to a certain extent, the new systems do bring about new problems, such as the possibility of intensification of social inequality.

In Hong Kong, due to the higher transparency of and easier access to information, it is particularly clear that this is a real risk. Figure 1 is derived from the official data published by the Education Department (2002), showing the tuition fee collected from each Secondary 1 student in the academic year 2002/03. One can easily see the difference in financial capacity across different schools after the conversion of the 3 prestigious aided schools into the DSS sector. While most of the DSS schools are collecting annual tuition fees from HK$ 0~4,500, the 3 prestigious schools are going to collect a fee as high as HK$ 35,000~48,000, an amount far from the affordable limit of an ordinary Hong Kong family. The eligibility of enjoying such educational benefits is thus based on either (a) the ability to pay a high tuition fee, and/or (b) selection by the school authority based on either performance or relationship with the school (such as those parents being the alumni, etc). By contrast, before joining the DSS, these prestigious schools were in fact open to all citizens in the territory according a fair mechanism of place allocation. While Mr Tung Chee-hwa called this a "New Elitism", the revised DSS formula is obviously leading to a segregated elitism which will effectively prevent people without purchasing power to stay out of the selected few. These DSS schools, receiving full subsidy from the government on one hand, and collecting high tuition fee on the other, and also enjoying the full discretion of selecting students, pose a great threat to both aided schools and independent private schools.

In Shanghai, the situation is not so clear. It is known that the converted schools are allowed to collect tuition and other fees. What is not known is the range of fees being collected, as the system is not as transparent as in that of Hong Kong. There are also unverified reports of abuse from the interviews of school personnel done by the author in Shanghai. The fear of abuse of money collected at least has led to the tightening up of control of the administration over the converted schools in some districts (Chen, 2000), which is ironically the opposite direction of deregulation.

CONCLUSION

The DSS in Hong Kong and converted school in Shanghai are different in some aspects. For example, the DSS is a policy package developed by the Hong Kong government with clear boundaries and a regulatory mechanism, while the converted school in Shanghai is a loose concept that is used to describe an already existing phenomena. Another difference would be the strategies employed by the two governments. In Hong Kong, no only three prestigious aided schools joined the DSS, while the Shanghai government explicitly encourages the conversion of "weak public schools" rather than "popular public schools" in order to "re-invent" those schools by market force and extra funding. The last difference worth mentioning would be the trend of deregulating in Hong Kong in contrast with that of re-regulating in Shanghai, due to their unique contexts.

More important, both initiatives represent a trend of privatizing public schools with a market approach in two different social systems. The increasingly keen global economic competition has been felt by major cities regardless of their locations or social systems. In response to the challenges, governments tend to look for extra funding for higher education quality after realizing the inadequacy of public revenue in supporting a huge system of high demand. And market mechanism that emphasizes competition is often believed to be a strong force behind the pursuit for better schools. These factors join together to foster a new type of privatization strategy: getting extra funding for public schools and involving them in the enrolment market in order to obtain educational excellence. By retaining the schools in the public sector or semi-private sector, the schools will still be under the direction of the state, which is desirable for governmental control. But by so doing, there is also obvious risk in intensifying social inequalities as certain people will be denied access to the quality education which originally belongs in the public domain, simply because they do not have the purchasing power.

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Engaging Students in the Higher Education Policy Process

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Hong Kong America Centre

Can Hong Kong first-degree students engage in serious analysis of higher education policy? Absolutely yes!

In the fall semester 2002, I taught a course entitled "Public Policy Workshop II" at Chinese University of Hong Kong. The special focus of the course was the policy process surrounding current reform proposals for higher education in the SAR. The course had several interesting features, in terms of both substance and process, of potential interest to members of the Comparative Education Society of Hong Kong.

Several years ago, Chinese University instituted the Leadership Development Programme, which as its name suggests provides special courses and out-of-classroom experiences for 30 select students each year. The 24 required credits (which fulfill the university's general education requirements) are organized into four modules: Ethical Education and Aesthetic Training, Leadership Skills Training, Civic Education, and non-formal activities. (For more information on the Leadership Development Programme, please see http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/leadership/)

Two courses on public policy, of which my class was the second, fall within the Civic Education theme. The first policy workshop was a more theoretical, academically based introduction to public policy, with substantial readings about the policy process. In addition to their academic readings, students were also required to engage in debates on current policy questions in Hong Kong, questions unrelated to the main thrust of the course. Should soccer betting be allowed? is one example. Thus when students entered the Public Policy Workshop II, they already had a strong foundation.

The course itself: My course was conceived as a practicum, applying concepts from the previous class to a single contemporary problem. Because of my own background as an administrator and policy analyst, we chose to focus the class on higher education reforms in Hong Kong, with special emphasis on the Sutherland Report. (The syllabus for the course is available at http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/hkac/thematic/innovation/programs/policy /syllabus.htm)

The heart of the course was the organization of the students into a hypothetical consulting firm, New Century Associates, Ltd., although by the end of the semester their role became less hypothetical and more directly relevant to current Hong Kong debates. After some weeks of preliminary reading and discussion, the students identified five topics on which they wanted to work: associate degrees, privatization, federation of CUHK and the Hong Kong University of Science and Technology, a liberal arts college for Hong Kong, and, of course, funding. In small groups of their own choosing, they delved into the intricacies of these topics, with special attention to problems of implementation. The final product from each group was a consultation paper on the chosen topic. (For the students' final reports, please see http://www.cuhk.edu.hk/hkac /thematic/innovation /programs/policy/index.htm)

Comparative content: When I developed the syllabus, I was very conscious of being an American scholar working and teaching in a different cultural context from my own. I worked hard to find good readings written by non-western authors or discussing non-western policy settings. Luckily there are several fine scholars here in Hong Kong (some of them prominent in the Comparative Education Society!) whose works added significantly to the course. In addition, I brought a substantial amount of material with me from the United States that dealt with contemporary policy debates in more than twenty different countries. Several of the student working groups used these materials to put their chosen topic into international perspective. For example, one group explained why they rejected a particular policy option, based on their readings about unsuccessful experiences in other countries.

Like most first-degree students, my undergraduates had little understanding of educational systems in other parts of the world. They had no way of telling if the Hong Kong university structure is typical or not. At the beginning of the semester they told me how expensive it was to attend university in Hong Kong; by the end of the semester they were recommending tuition increases. They developed a much better understanding of the high degree of subsidy provided to them and their classmates, especially when viewed in light of the changes in recent years in funding strategies in such places as Australia and the United Kingdom. They also learned more about different types of tertiary education not present in the current Hong Kong structure, options they found intriguing in comparison with their own experience. Although the comparative aspect was not the centerpiece of the course, it played a significant role in the students' thinking about their final recommendations for reform.

Pedagogy: With a small class of 23 students, I had the luxury of holding a true seminar. It was more successful in this regard than many classes at CUHK, I suspect. First, the students in the Leadership Development Programme were chosen on the basis of their speaking ability in both Chinese and English. (Many of them told me that the most significant aspect of the LDP was growth in self-confidence in class—although some were still quite reticent to speak unless called upon.) Also, LDP selects students from the entire campus, so my class roster included English, accountancy, biotechnology, music, and journalism majors, to mention a few. Finally, the group took the required 24 credits together in sequence so they had already formed strong bonds of friendship that carried a positive class dynamic. All in all, I was very lucky.

From the outset I pushed the students to discuss, both in small informal groups as well as in more structured debates and presentations. Most of them accepted the challenge well, although it also became apparent in such settings who had prepared well and who had not. I also assigned one-page reflective papers, both to make them work on their written English and also to have some students each week who had thought more deeply about the readings before coming to class. We also

had three current issues debates with no advance warning on the topic or the students to be chosen to participate; this model from the previous semester worked well in getting students to follow the news about Hong Kong current events.

For most of the students, however, the highlight of the semester was a series of outside guests. Thanks to the good graces of the head of the department of government and public administration, we had two key government officials in two separate class periods; their candor about higher education issues impressed and influenced the students. Also, I arranged for a panel of outside experts to receive and respond to the students' oral presentations of their final projects. I was very proud of them as they stood up, wearing their best job-interview suits, showing quite professional PowerPoint presentations, and responding to very challenging questions from the panel. On the final evaluations, many students said that the experience, while difficult in some regards, was the best aspect of the class.

As I have commented to the students themselves and to many others, these young people did a better job in their second language than many American students could have done in their mother tongue.

What then was most unusual about this class? Probably the sense that first-degree students, with no particular expertise in public policy or in higher education issues, could make thoughtful and meaningful recommendations for reform of higher education in Hong Kong. (In fact, experts who have read their reports are quite impressed with the quality of their work.)

But the process and pedagogy of the class were unusual as well. I demanded that students take responsibility for aspects of the course that typically would fall within the professor's purview. For example, we spent the better part of a class period deciding what the five topics would be and who would work on them. Some students became impatient with the iterative process of making these collective decisions but in the long run these became <u>their</u> topics. Similarly, some wrote on their final evaluations that they would have preferred more lectures instead of discussions. From my perspective it would have been much easier to present lectures, but I chose to give more control to them. (I did take to heart, however, the recommendations of the class monitors to provide a clearer sense of direction for the discussions; thus at the beginning of each class period I wrote a topical outline on the board that seemed to provide more structure and predictability to the day's work.)

The students responded well to a series of process variables:

- In-depth focus on one topic
- Student responsibility for both substance and process for major aspects of the course
- Seminar-style discussion
- Frequent presentations, ad hoc and formal
- Group work, including the difficult challenges of arriving at consensus or of dealing constructively with non-contributing members of the group
- Email contact through a class bulletin board
- Individual reflection in writing
- Professional experience in addition to academic work

When we chose higher education reform as the topic for the course, a decision made in late spring 2002, we had no idea how timely the course would be. While no students said this to me directly, I think they reveled in their newfound expertise when campus debates arose over the proposal to merge CUHK and HKUST. Suddenly they <u>really</u> understood the issues and could discuss them analytically with their classmates. Sometimes serendipity makes a good course so much better because of its unexpected relevance.

I doubt that any of these students will pursue higher education policy in the future, but I hope that all of them will be more thoughtful when faced with other policy questions in their work settings and in their civic responsibilities. They did it once—they can do it again.

Address at the Ceremony of Conferment of Honorary Doctorate Degree by the Hong Kong Institute of Education, November 16, 2002

Ruth Hayhoe

Professor Morris, colleagues at the Hong Kong Institute of Education, honoured guests, ladies and gentlemen,

This is a unique and special occasion for the Hong Kong Institute of Education, as the first group of students to complete the four-year Bachelor of Education (Primary) programme graduate today. This is also the first graduation ceremony for the Bachelor of Education (Early Childhood Education), the first degree programme in this field ever run in Hong Kong. I am thus deeply honoured to be present today, and to receive an honorary doctorate of education from the Institute.

I would like to begin my remarks today by asking "What is so special about the Bachelor of Education?" As an internationally recognised university degree, it is a programme that gives equal importance to high standards in specific knowledge areas, such as mathematics, Chinese or social studies and in professional knowledge areas such as educational psychology and curriculum. For most of Hong Kong's history, primary school teachers were trained in certificate programmes which were recognised only locally. With the coming of the knowledge society and increasing awareness of the importance of basic education to the health of society, there has finally been a recognition of the vital contribution of teachers at the basic level. They should be fully qualified professionals holding a university degree.

The term "bachelor's degree" has been associated with the university since its founding in medieval Europe. Traditional Chinese society also had recognised degree qualifications for scholars, with the highest level being called the *jinshi.* Those who attained university qualifications were recognised not only in their home region, but internationally through the conferral of a Papal charter on universities in Europe, and through the high prestige of China's scholarship in the East Asian region. Thus the fact that primary school and kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong are now expected to have university degrees gives them an entirely new status. Their academic standards are at the same level as university graduates around the world, while their professional knowledge and skill enables them to identify and develop the potential of each child in the schools of Hong Kong.

Primary school teachers in the United States and Canada, in Japan, in Korea, in Taiwan and in most parts of Europe, have had to reach this level of qualification for many years. We are thus delighted to see HKIEd raising the status and quality of primary and kindergarten teachers in Hong Kong in this important way. It is also a harbinger of the future for Mainland China, where new Bachelor of Education programmes for primary school teachers have been launched in recent years in Beijing, Shanghai and Nanjing.

In June of this year, I had a wonderful opportunity to meet about 12 of this year's BEd graduates. I asked them what was the most memorable aspect of their experience in the four-year degree program. Several of them told me that the most exciting aspect of their studies was developing an ability to reflect on what they were learning. It was not just a matter of memorising, or learning techniques for teaching, but rather of thinking in a critical and holistic way about how their knowledge of mathematics or of history, could be applied to children's learning.

Others told me that their experience of language immersion - in England, in Canada, in Australia, also in Northeast China - had been the most exciting aspect of their study programmes. It had opened their eyes to different societies, different ways in which classrooms were organised and children learned, different cultural experiences. This would enable them to be innovative and try out new and different things in their classrooms in Hong Kong.

Yet others told me of their experience of receiving visitors from other countries who came to Hong Kong. One mentioned

the international Mathematics Olympiad and the excitement of welcoming young teachers from the Philippines to the HKIEd campus, and showing them around.

One student said the most rewarding experience had been organising an art exhibit in which students presented works of art which they had created during their years at HKIEd.

It was a joy to meet with these students as they were about to join the teaching profession, and learn about their most memorable experiences. Now it is an even greater pleasure to be here with all of you to celebrate your significant achievement, in being the first cohorts to complete the four-year Bachelor of Education (Primary) and the Bachelor of Education in Early Childhood Education.

In conclusion, I would like to share a piece of advice and a story which I hope will encourage you. The advice was given to me by a senior woman leader in Hong Kong, who has had several distinguished careers, as a teacher, as a lawyer, as a banker, and as a university leader. She told me that she feels it is not possible to plan one's life, but it is important to be open to every opportunity and experience that comes along. "Embrace life with passion" - whatever you do, do it with your whole heart and commit your utmost effort to it. Probably you have guessed by now that this advice comes from Dr Alice Lam, Chairman of the University Grants Committee.

Now for the story, which comes from Mainland China, and is a true story of a woman I had the privilege of meeting in 1993 and again in 2001. Margaret is a Cantonese who grew up in an English-speaking environment in Shanghai. In 1957, when she was16 years old and just finishing secondary school, she was called on to join a group of young people being sent to the remote Northwestern region of Xinjiang. It was supposed to be a revolutionary effort to develop the border regions of China, but it was also a kind of punishment on those young people who were considered to have bad family backgrounds.

After 30 days in a rough and exhausting truck ride of several thousand miles, she reached the far Northwest city of

Urumchi, where she was able to find a job in a factory. There she also met and married her husband. Later the factory was shut down, and she and her husband moved to Alatai, a remote northern town many hours by train from Urumchi. There her husband found work in the oilfields, and she brought up their two children. Once the children were grown she was eager to contribute to society. She offered her services to the local secondary school, explaining that she could give English lessons in native English, as she had grown up speaking the language. Grudgingly they allowed her to do some part-time teaching. She became fond of the students, and worked hard to learn all she could about pedagogy and lesson preparation. However, no one at the school had any idea of the quality of her English or her ability to teach it. They did not value her work and she often felt discouraged.

In 1978 Deng Xiaoping came to power, and announced China's education should open up to the world. Margaret decided there must be a better way to contribute. She wrote a letter to the Dean of the Foreign Languages Department at Xinjiang University in Urumchi, telling him she was fluent in English and would love to help China's opening up by teaching English. When he received this letter from the remote town of Alatai, the Dean was amazed. He could hardly believe there was someone with such a high standard of English living in that region. He sent her a telegraph, asking her to come to see him immediately. She bought a train ticket for the long journey to Urumchi, and as soon as she had met the dean, he appointed her as a lecturer in English. Over the following years she worked very hard, teaching and studying, and became promoted to associate professor and then professor. She focused on teaching English to university scholars who needed to pass the TOEFL examinations and be prepared for study and research abroad in English speaking countries. Now she is recognised as the person who did most to help universities in the region to open up to the world, through her classes in English! What a wonderful example of someone who overcame many difficulties, and embraced life with a passion! When I last saw her in May of 2001, she was looking forward with excitement to the visit of a high level Hong Kong delegation. She had been invited by the region's leaders to assist in receiving them because she had done so much to help the region open up! She is also

one of the few people in the area speaking fluent English, Cantonese and Mandarin.

I hope you have enjoyed this true life story, and that you will give your whole heart and mind to the development of the children or young people you teach, and "embrace life with passion!"

書評

《香港與澳門的教育與社會：從比較角度看延續與變化》

李小鵬
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《香港與澳門的教育與社會：從比較角度看延續與變化》，貝磊、古鼎儀主編，香港大學比較教育研究中心 2002 年出版，全書 250 頁，國際書號：ISBN 962-8093-94-9。譯自英文版 *Education and Society in Hong Kong and Macau: Comparative Perspectives on Continuity and Change* (1999)。

一個優質、有信度和效度的比較教育研究，不單只依賴出色的研究員，還須善於尋找相關資料與文獻，作出合理的分析、比較與綜合。《香港與澳門的教育與社會：從比較角度看延續與變化》一書的作者們都展現了幾個共同的特質，以達至高質量的比較教育研究。

首先是研究員對當地的社會生活有深入的認識，並產生了一定的情感，懷著無私貢獻的心，說明實況並尋求改善之意願。這一特質可從大部份的作者背景中了解到。他們長期在香港和澳門兩地工作與生活，對兩地文化、教育及社會事務熟悉，而且長期參與兩地教育研究及推廣。因此本書各篇都能公平地分析兩地教育的是與非。雖然本書的作者們大都植根於香港，但仍能公正地展示了澳門教育的校本現實，如陳岡對澳門的歷史課程、謝均才對澳門的公民與政治教育、鄧國俊對澳門的中學數學課程分析，都能通過微觀的校園生活，反映了澳門社會的政治大氣候——澳門學校校方為了學生的未來，依據其自身的資源、政治取向與關係網絡，自由地採納或剪裁合用的課程，不受澳門政府的責難。

其二是作兩地域的比較時能不偏不倚。如黃艾珍的學前教育比較，能全面分析兩地的異同，並指出香港在教育事務上一般較澳門先進及完善，可是在幼兒教育這方面則落後於澳門，在學前教育的教育法例、財政支援及教師培訓都應加強。

其三是文獻資料的豐富。參考文獻的部份佔全書頁數百分之十以上，正好顯示作者們的認真程度。

本書的缺點是從英文原著翻譯而成，譯文不能令人完全滿意。此外，由於出版籌備時間過長，本書的資料只能反映港澳兩地在二十世紀末期的現象，未能看到回歸中國後的種種急速變化。例如筆者論說澳門教師教育時，點出小學教師學位課程的存廢問題，但在此譯本出版前已經得到解決。至於關於中小學教育的一篇，則未能反映近年兩地出生率降速下降所引起的種種問題。「小班制」先後被兩地教育當局引用來解決學生人數不足的困境，但理念與形式卻有很大差異。因此，本書對兩地在回歸後的社會及教育變化，只能提供歷史的支架。

總言之，本書能中肯客觀地展示香港和澳門兩個中國特別行政區的教育現象與差異。過去的種種，正是將來的明鏡。溝通與交流是教育改革的動力，但願本書的修訂版及早面世，對二十一世紀兩地的社會及教育變化，作嚴正的分析。