

**CERC and Kyoto University Joint Roundtable  
(4-5 March 2024)**

**An Asian University?  
Intra-Asia Dialogue, Comparative Praxis**

Chairs: Lili Yang and Jeremy Rappleye

**March 4, Monday (Hybrid)**

► Morning session: 10:00 -12:45

1. Welcome (30 minutes)
  - a. CERC Director (Nutsa Kobakhidze)
  - b. Session Co-Chairs (Lili Yang, Jeremy Rappleye)
  - c. Self-Introductions
  - d. Outline of the 2-day program
  
2. Round-Table Discussion: Yang (2013) Alatas (2003) (2 hours)
  - a. Break-out Groups
  - b. Share group discussions
  - c. Faculty give “wrap up” reflections

Yang, R. Indigenizing the Western concept of university: the Chinese experience. *Asia Pacific Educ. Rev.* **14**, 85–92 (2013). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12564-013-9254-0>

Alatas, S. F. (2003). Academic Dependency and the Global Division of Labour in the Social Sciences. *Current Sociology*, *51*(6), 599-613. <https://doi.org/10.1177/00113921030516003>

► Lunch and Campus Walk: 13:00-14:30

► Afternoon Session: 14:30-17:00 (3 presentations, 20 minutes x 10 Q&A)

## Presentations by HKU side

### **Ferrying Chinese and Western wisdoms: an onto-hermeneutic exploration of ethnic Chinese humanities and social sciences scholars' engagement with knowledge**

Fan Lijun 范丽珺

Discussant: Wu Shangjun

#### **Abstract**

In the context of Western onto-epistemic hegemony and global knowledge asymmetries, comparatively less research has been done on individual scholars' engagement with knowledge than on structural inequality and epistemological exclusion. Chinese humanities and social sciences scholars, like other non-Western scholars, are facing the struggle of how to deal with Chinese and Western wisdoms (knowledges, cultures, and traditions). Employing an onto-hermeneutic approach, this study views scholars' intellectual engagement as a way by which human beings understand the world. Historical contexts shape scholars' intellectual engagement in the present. The dynamic process of scholars' fusion of horizons, in which the past and present interact, is the foundation for understanding and knowledge generation. This study focuses on if and how Chinese scholars undertake the mission of ferrying Chinese and Western wisdoms in the process of knowledge production, consumption, and dissemination.

### **Incorporating multiple perspectives in scholarship: Learning from Wang Yangming's experience**

Wu Xiangni 吴相霓

Discussant: Keiichi Ushirogawa

#### **Abstract**

As the world becomes more complex and increasingly interrelated, conducting research and handling grand educational challenges of our time require integrations and synergies. The generation of innovative solutions cannot be identified within any traditional resource, disciplinary knowledge, or academic community alone. In the report, Xiangni will share preliminary findings on how the Neo-Confucian scholar Wang Yang-ming realized the fusion of horizons in Gadamer's sense, and how he further developed and transformed Confucianism by incorporating teachings of Buddhism and Taoism. Underlying this integration, Wang Yang-ming shows his critical consciousness of what was handed down from the past, both its hidden values and constraints. Informed by his active questioning, Wang Yang-ming formed a fundamental view about the unity

of existence. This lays a solid foundation for his re-discovery of “unity of knowledge and action” in the light of multiple perspectives.

(Short Break)

### **Tacit Chinese Traditions in Intellectual life: Significance and Predicaments**

Zhu Yanzhen 朱彦臻

Discussant: Thomas Brotherhood

#### **Abstract**

In this report, Dr Zhu will share her research on Chinese traditions as ‘tacit knowledge’ in the intellectual lives of current China’s scholars. Involving 28 scholars in the humanities and social sciences (HSS), her empirical data show that Chinese traditions constitute their academic self-requirement, moral self-improvement, and aesthetic enjoyment. While playing an important role in intellectual life, tacit Chinese traditions hardly find a home in existing education and knowledge systems due to inevitable objectification, shrunken informal education/learning, and the neoliberalisation of higher education. This report will end with the discussion around how to discover education and intellectual traditions beyond ‘systems’.

- Overall discussion – 30 minutes
- Wrap-up – 5 minutes

### **March 5, Tuesday**

► Morning session: 10:00 – 13:00

1. Welcome
2. Overview of KU participants’ research interests by Machi Sato (15 min)
3. Presentations (15 min and 15 min Q&A)

### **Rethinking the framework of shadow education from a postcolonial perspective**

Tatsuya Fujimura

#### **Abstract**

Private supplementary tutoring, such as Juku in Japan and sishu in China, has become a global phenomenon over the past three decades. Educational researchers have increasingly focused on this worldwide spread. The shadow education framework developed by Mark Bray exerts a dominant influence on this area of research. This framework views private supplementary tutoring as a “shadow” of mainstream education, and defines it through some aspects to enable cross-country comparisons. In this presentation, I will identify the analytical and normative issues within the shadow education framework. Firstly, this framework narrowly defines private supplementary tutoring, thereby failing to capture its diversity. Secondly, it presupposes the subordination of private supplementary tutoring to formal schooling, not fully recognizing its autonomy or its interaction with public education. Thirdly, these issues arise not merely from analytical limitations

but also from a Western-centric epistemology embedded in world culture theory. Considering these limitations, I will explore an alternative approach to private supplementary tutoring research from a postcolonial stance, grounded in the historical experiences of East Asian regions.

### **Challenging the Centrality of Feedback in Formative Assessment: Exploring Alternative Approaches to Confront Modern Perspectives**

Tomohiro Ishida

#### **Abstract**

Since the 2000s, the theory and practice of formative assessment, in which teachers and learners collaboratively improve and enhance their learning through assessment events, has gained international prominence. Within the discourse of formative assessment, the centrality of “feedback” is considered self-evident. This presentation highlights the influence of cybernetic principles, conceptualized as the “science of control,” within the theory of formative assessment. It explores the potential for alternative approaches to formative assessment that confront such modern concepts. This approach is guided by an consideration of the essence of ‘learning within practices’ and an inquiry into how assessment practices can be envisioned to enrich the learners’ “end-in-view.”

► Small-Group Breakout: Presentations by the KU side (1hour 15 min)

**Group 1:** James Parker, Setsu Okazawa, Mariko Ono, Djian Scopino Martins

**Chair:** Tatsuya Fujimura

### **Who’s at the Wheel? A Case Study of University Entrance Examination Reform in Japan**

Mariko Ono

#### **Abstract**

Since the 1990s, Japanese universities have undergone a series of reforms led by the government to keep up with Anglo-American universities. Studies have shown how the government strengthens its control over universities by offering incentive-led subsidies. However, unlike fast-changing Anglo-American universities, Japanese universities seem to change mostly at the peripheral level due to lack of specificity of the policies. Some universities even take advantage of this to develop their own interpretation and carry them out. This study describes an example of such practices by focusing on how Kinako university (anonymized) dealt with the introduction of multidimensional and holistic assessments (MHA) in the university entrance examination. The government introduced MHA to reduce the emphasis on knowledge-oriented examinations. In its policy, the government did not specify the methods nor the structure to conduct MHA, which obviously created confusion among universities. Under these circumstances, Kinako University came up with methods of MHA based on their own interpretation and successfully reformed its entrance examination system. Why were they able to take the wheel and what was the process?

## **Human Rights Education in Japan: Delinking Practice from Major Spheres of Discourse**

James Parker

### **Abstract**

For many leaders, politicians and thinkers, the pathway to peace is understood to be best promoted through a human rights framework. Nations across the globe have embraced human rights discourse, simultaneously enshrining ‘education as a human right’ while also using schools to teach about human rights in the classroom. In the early 2000s, Japan became one of the first nations in the world to propose and implement human rights education (HRE) in public schools. Despite this, Japanese cultural perspectives present significant challenges to the cultural assumptions embedded in human rights theory. Scholars acknowledge the problematic nature and difficulty of understanding the concept of human rights in Japan without considering the varying historical and social developments, cultures, and traditions. This includes the primacy of the individual to the underlying foundation of human rights frameworks, as opposed to the significance of an interdependent self found in relational societies. However, few studies have examined the domestication of international human rights frameworks locally in Japan. This study attempts to do this through an investigation of how the global education trend of HRE is interpreted, enacted, and contested by key stakeholders in Japan.

**Group 2:** Keiichi Ushirogawa, Mako Kawano, Xing Shuyu, Wu Shangjun,  
**Chair:** Tomohiro Ishida

## **Education of Tea ceremony: the way of Questioning and Answering**

Keiichi Ushirogawa

### **Abstract**

In this report, I share my research on education in the tea ceremony, a representative of Japanese culture, relating to Zen. The tea ceremony has a long history as one of Japan’s art forms, but as an educational method, it is not highly regarded as a pre-modern one. However, in today’s public education that places too much emphasis on reason, the tea ceremony deserves attention because it fosters sensitivity and a sense of continuity with nature. In this report, I will point out the relationship between Zen Buddhism and the tea ceremony, and describe the utility of “question and answer” developed in the tea ceremony. The report will discuss how the tea ceremony, which asks learners to find questions through objects, is an effective critique of modern education, which refuses to let go of students’ self-centeredness.

## **The Japaneseness of Japanese English: Thinking through Esyun Hamaguchi's Contextualism**

Wu Shangjun 吳尚峻

### **Abstract**

This study delves into Japanese English (JE), an English variety influenced by Japanese language and culture, mainly used in Japan. It explores JE's interaction with Japanese culture, particularly through Esyun Hamaguchi's Contextualism, emphasizing the significance of interpersonal relationships in shaping identity. The research highlights JE's cultural dimensions, showcasing the challenges Japanese individuals face in conveying native concepts in English, and argues for JE's acknowledgment in global communication. It discusses the necessity of maintaining Japan's linguistic identity while fostering English skills. Using Hamaguchi's Contextualism, the paper illustrates "Japaneseness" in JE, urging for a reevaluation of cultural patterns in language studies. It critiques Western academic dominance, underscoring JE's unique features like relational self-concept, back-channeling, and passive voice preference, to enhance understanding of language's cultural underpinnings and the importance of linguistic diversity.

## **Reconsidering the nature of learning as situated in Japanese *Kenkyūshitsu***

Mako Kawano

### **Abstract**

My ongoing ethnographic study aims to understand the nature of learning as situated in Japanese *Kenkyūshitsu*. This term is often translated as 'laboratory community', which is primarily associated with the field of science. However, it also describes a research group within the Japanese university system in the fields of humanities and social sciences. This concept originates from the Japanese chair system or *Kōza*. One of the key educational aspects of *Kenkyūshitsu* is the development of deep relationality fostered through the close and yet dense relationships among its members. My particular interest lies in comprehending the underlying epistemological foundation of learning within *Kenkyūshitsu*. In pursuit of this goal, I draw upon the discussion by comparative philosopher Kasulis (2002) on the intimacy and integrity of cultural orientations. Consequently, this research may contribute to envisioning an alternative educational practice that appears to be effective within the Japanese cultural context.

## **Rethinking higher education from the perspective of gift and exchange**

## Xing Shuyu

### **Abstract**

Today, education and the whole society are in a situation of many crises, confronting these interwoven crises has become a crucial task for educational studies. Among the approaches attempting to do so, gift theory has attracted long standing attention from scholars. My research provides an examination on the theory of gift and exchange, focusing on its implication on educational philosophy and practice. I suggest that “commodity exchange” and “reciprocity” are the two dominant modes of exchange at work in education and these modes of exchange have their parts in the permeation of capitalism and the rise of nationalism. To face this, I call attention to and trace the existence of the dimension of “pure gift” in education, and the power it possesses to resist the dominant modes of exchange. To demonstrate the power of pure gift, I will offer a re-examination of higher education from the perspective of gift and exchange.

► Lunch: 13:00-14:00

► Afternoon Session (14:00 – 16:00pm)

- Overview of Group Discussions (30 minutes)
- Wrap up discussion (1 hour)

Closing remarks

Dinner