Philosophy & cultural embodiment
Vol. 4, No. 1, 16-33
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Values in Practice: Contextualizing the p4cHI Style Approach in Japanese Education

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Introduction

The values embedded in educational systems shape them and are shaped by them as new approaches and pedagogical ideas are explored. Philosophy for Children (P4C) is an educational approach built on a radical shift in values that has garnered global attention in recent years. The adaptation of P4C through the philosophy for children approach in Hawai‘i (p4cHI) to the educational context of Japan is especially noteworthy because of the unique history and context of the Japanese education system. The Japanese educational context formed with influence from major value systems like Western Democracy and Confucianism. To explore the possible implications of P4C-based pedagogy in Japan, we will examine the unique historical connections between the Japanese and American education systems and their underlying values.

P4C is rooted in, and was developed in response to, American pedagogical traditions and value systems and is thus best understood in this context. The influences of John Dewey and pedagogical practices like the Socratic Method on Lipman's P4C situate it within the broader historical conversation about the importance of using education to promote good citizenship in a democratic system. The p4cHI approach was developed and drastically changed in the process of implementing Mathew Lipman's P4C approach in the educational context of Hawai‘i. We will outline these influences in order to provide some context for the values that these systems carry and to act as grounds for some comparison with education in Japan.

In the first half of this paper, we will explore some major characteristics of, and movements in, the Western pedagogical tradition that have had an impact on the development of P4C and p4cHI, such as Socratic method and inquiry-based and student-centered pedagogical approaches. These include influences on Western Democracy broadly from ancient Greece to more recent movements in American pedagogical theory. We do this, in part, because of the important roles that these approaches have played in the history of education in Western countries (Friesen & Scott, 2013). With this context in place, we will then examine how the Japanese educational system has developed into its current state and point out some of its characteristics. Our goal is to explore how the value systems and educational contexts influence, and could be influenced by, pedagogical movements like p4cHI.

I. Achieving Democracy: Argumentation and Community-Building in American Education

Two prominent values that are often in tension throughout the history of American education are argumentation and community-building. The first of these value systems emphasizes finding truth through logic and rigor, developing and defending one's own arguments, and especially by inviting others to debate these beliefs in the public sphere. The second value system is concerned

with empowering individuals by responding to their interests, emphasizing self-realization, and inspiring people to engage with the world around them in a communal, rather than a combative, way. These two value systems are different, and yet, to the extent that they are present in the history of American education, they share a similar purpose: they hope to guide students to become ideal citizens and ultimately improve democracy. That is, they share the underlying value systems of Democracy.

Developing a Functional Democracy in American Education

The idea of democracy originates in ancient Greece, specifically in the city-state of Athens, in the fourth and fifth centuries (Raaflaub et al, 2007). The Athenians did not think of democracy, or *dēmokratia*, which literally meant "people power," as just a political system (Cartledge, 2007, p. 162). For them, democracy was primarily a social phenomenon, or way of being, and it was often used as an adjective to describe such words as "*bios* (life, way of life, livelihood) or *psukhē* (soul, spirit, mind)" (Cartledge, 2007, p. 156). Further, democracy in Athens required from each of its members a willingness to speak one's mind and debate with others in order to function properly.

Athenian society would provide a model for democratic ways of thinking, as well as democratic methods of education. In the earliest universities in Europe during the Middle Ages, students were trained to seek knowledge through publicly held debates, which carried the risk of public humiliation. This practice grounded the acquisition of knowledge in conflict and emphasized the importance of self-defense and confidence in the face of adversity. Teachers, who would subject students to cruel corporal punishments, were often seen as "enemies" of the students, and as such students would be motivated to argue against them at every opportunity (Tannen, 1998). Further, while early universities in the Middle Ages were not necessarily concerned with functioning democracies, this emphasis on debate and truth through struggle (what the Greeks would call *agon*) can be found in some of the foundational texts of Western philosophy.

The traditional understanding of education in the Western world was established by Plato's ideas about "philosophers," which argued "for a formal education system that would essentially 'weed out' those unfit to study or become philosophers, while strengthening the abilities of those students who show philosophical promise" (Miller, 2013, p. 5). Plato thought of the philosopher as someone who can discover or intuit what others cannot: those "who are able to grasp what is always the same in all respects are philosophers, while those who are not able to do so and who wander among the many things that vary in every sort of way are not philosophers" (Cooper, 1997, p. 1107). For Plato, and for many educators who were influenced by him, the best method to discover who could "grasp what is always the same" was constant, logically rigorous argument. Furthermore, Plato argued that these "philosophers" were the men who should rule societies in order to maintain unity and order (Dewey, 1916). Although Plato's ideas were not intended to realize democracy, as his ideal society was ruled by a select number of people who were identified as "philosopher kings," Dewey (1916) argued that this approach still encouraged democratic society to a certain extent because a common citizen could be rulers as long as they were "philosophers," regardless of their social classes.

However, it is important to acknowledge that the notion of democracy has itself been the subject of many debates and opposing ideas. Specifically, there are some thinkers who have

opposed the idea of debate and instead emphasized the idea of community as crucial to a functional democracy. As Dewey (1916) argued, democracy is:

> [A] mode of associated living, of conjoint communicated experience. The extension in space of the number of individuals who participate in an interest so that each has to refer his own action to that of others, and to consider the action of others to give point and direction to his own, is equivalent to the breaking down of those barriers of class, race, and national territory which kept men from perceiving the full import of their activity (p. 91).

The realization of this form of democracy was necessarily linked to what Dewey called a "good education." This "good education" would promote the idea of having free inquiry, nurturing a tolerance to diverse opinions, and communicating in the spirit of cooperation rather than debate (Westbrook, 2015). Dewey thought that "[c]hildren should be engaged in ongoing experimentation, communication, and self-criticism, constituting themselves as a youthful commonwealth of cooperative inquiry" (Westbrook, 2015, p. 170). Tannen (1998) suggested that people need to consider replacing the "learning by adverse debate" culture with the "learning by constructive dialogue" culture. She argued that learning by proving others wrong in debates only narrows our views and knowledge. It is much more constructive and healthier to have cooperative inquiries (Tannen, 1998).

Despite the complex relationship between the values of education and democracy in the Western world, there is a common thread of emphasizing the importance of individualism, rationality, and argumentation. As Andrews (2007) argued, students in Western education systems are usually expected to use the knowledge gained about a given subject to create their own arguments about that subject. This is true even when pedagogical practices involve philosophical dialogue and opportunities for the exploration of cooperative values. The Socratic method is a prime example of this because it often involves collaborative inquiry and dialogue, yet is often used as a tool for improving critical thinking and argumentation. The tension between the communal and individualistic aspects of Socratic dialogues can be seen in the various ways philosophers characterize the Socratic method (Bloch-Schulman 2012).

The Origin of Socratic Method and Its Development in The Education Field

In the Western philosophical tradition, philosophical dialogue originates with the ancient Greek philosopher, Socrates (469 BC-399 BC) (Delić & Bećirović, 2016). Socrates had a habit of engaging in philosophical conversations with people, and he was deeply interested in "defining some basic concepts like justice, beauty, courage, temperance, virtue, and friendship, all in the form of disciplined dialogues led by Socrates himself" (Delić & Bećirović, 2016, p. 511). His habit of pursuing a deeper understanding of concepts with others through dialogue inspired the pedagogical approach that came to be named after him: the Socratic method. However, everything we know about Socrates comes from the writings of Plato, Xenophon, and Aristophanes, since Socrates did not write any works of his own. Given the various perspectives on Socratic ideas, it is difficult to pin down a singular interpretation of the term "Socratic method" (Riffel, 2014; Rud, 1997).

Nevertheless, "[w]hat seems to be clear is that the Socratic method is directed towards finding the "truth" or the "essence" of things through dialogue between the provocateur and

respondent" (Riffel, 2014, p. 127). For Socrates, as recorded in Plato's *Theaetetus*, philosophy begins with an individual's wondering, and the "Socratic" dialogue is understood as a process of "inquiring into moral questions by examining and refuting the opinions of his fellow discussants" (Cooper & Hutchinson, 1997, p. 157). Furthermore, Socrates himself described his role in inquiry as that of a "midwife," or someone who supports developing discussants' "presuppositions and consequences so as to see clearly what the ideas amount to, and then establishes them as sound or defective by independent arguments of his own" (Cooper & Hutchinson, 1997, p. 157) by asking questions and thinking with them. This characterization of Socrates as a supporting figure of co-inquiry seems to be in tension with common ways philosophers characterize the Socratic method. According to Stephen Bloch-Schulman:

> Whereas some philosophers identify (or focus on) the Socratic Method as only referring to a form of open dialogue, most define it and focus on the fuller, twofold meaning Biondi describes: open dialogue and the hypothesis / refutation / cross-examination of *elenchus*. So conceived, the Socratic Method focuses on one's desire not to contradict oneself and thus allows the teacher to compel the student to examine her or his internal incoherences. (2012, p. 20).

The emphasis on the importance of coherent argumentation and cross-examination of this interpretation of the Socratic method can be traced back to its use in famous US law schools in the early 19th century (Schneider, 2013). The Socratic method served as a new pedagogical technique to promote mental dexterity so students could respond to legal questions on the fly. Instead of collaborative co-inquiry, the Socratic method became a means of defending arguments from attack or identifying and correcting errors in reasoning.

This is nontrivial for a few reasons. The first is that it demonstrates how the values we encode in our pedagogical practices (argumentation and cross-examination) directly influence how we use them. Despite the informal and dialogical nature of Socratic questioning, it is still used as a means of encouraging argumentation and individual critical thinking. The second is that this interpretation of the Socratic method focuses heavily on mastering personal content via the iterative refining of one's argument or views rather than on the development of collaborative skills or social reasoning habits. These are problematic because they impose and reinforce rigid roles for students as unskilled reasoners and teachers as those imparting wisdom. This is precisely what Bloch-Schulman (2012) calls attention to when he cites Arendt in a call to rethink the Socratic method as pedagogy.

> Although self-examination is often mentioned as a goal of the Socratic Method, what is needed is not merely to be put in a position to answer questions, but to be taught and get practice in how to formulate philosophically rich questions and, in particular, practice asking the difficult questions of oneself (Arendt, 2003). I recognize that doing this is quite difficult, but it is something that we can scaffold and teach. By learning how to ask questions of other students and of themselves, students would not be learning merely to follow someone else's lead, but to lead others and to lead themselves in critical analysis—to act like philosophers. (p. 22)

Despite the dialogical nature of the Socratic method, it ends up being reduced to a means of mastering content and reinforcing the values of competition and individual achievement. It doesn't have to be this way. Scholars like Jacquart, Scott, Hermberg, and Bloch-Schulman (2019) have demonstrated that philosophical dialogue benefits from a drastic shift from argumentation to diversity, inclusivity, and an emphasis on questioning and inquiry. In fact, as Jacquart et al. (2019) argue, the very notion of student-centered pedagogy is inseparable from the values of diversity and inclusivity.

> Student-centered pedagogy often takes a generic ideal as the norm; when we recognize that we have real students in the class, in all of their wonderful (and challenging) diversity, we recognize that a fully student-centered pedagogy must be inclusive; it must be about students and not "the student." (p. 108)

The call to shift from teaching "the student in general" to teaching each student as someone with a distinct history and perspective, is best understood as a call to shift our values underlying both American education and Democracy. If a good citizen is one that waits passively to consume information from experts, as Freie (1970;1993) spells out, then teaching to an idealized "student in general" is essential. Among other things, this approach ensures that students are prepared to maintain the *status quo* and to leave big questions to their authority figures. On the other hand, if a good citizen is one capable of critical self-reflection, curious questioning, and the care-full consideration of others, then student-focused pedagogy is ideal (Jacquart et al. 2019, pp. 107-110). Curiously enough, despite placing less overt value on the mastery of critiquing others, centering the student and the practice of collaborative inquiry improves, rather than diminishes, the student's willingness to critically engage with material (García-Moriyón, Rebollo, & Colom, 2005; Yan, Walters, Wang, & Wang, 2018). Luckily, student- and inquiry-based approaches have long and rich histories as forms of Constructivism, which we will turn to next.

Inquiry-Based and Student-Centered Approaches: Constructivism

Both inquiry-based and student-centered pedagogical approaches stem from the school of thought known as Constructivism (Chen, 2021). Constructivists believe that "knowledge is not merely given by a teacher. Rather, knowledge is constructed by a student through an active process of development" (Kambara, 2020, p. 2). Constructivists' work and writings seek to change the "traditional" teaching method, which is mainly teacher-centered and lecture-based. In Constructivism, students are expected to construct their own knowledge based on their experiences and previously assimilated knowledge, instead of having them wait passively for teachers to supply knowledge (Ozmon, 2012).

Constructivism as a school of thought was first applied to education relatively recently by the Swiss psychologist Piaget (1896-1980) and the Russian psychologist Vygotsky (1896-1934) (Matthews, 2003). Piaget is recognized as one of the first modern scholars to influence educators' perspectives on children's cognitive capability. "Piaget concentrated on the distinctive characteristics of child thought, on what the child *has* rather than on what the child lacks" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 9), and concluded that "the difference between child and adult thinking was *qualitative* rather than quantitative" (Vygotsky, 1962, p. 9). As a result of Piaget's work,

Constructivism was quickly perceived as an important school of thought in the philosophy of education, and especially in science education, in the late 1970s and early 1980s (Tabor, 2019).

Piaget's theory posited that there were four stages in a child's cognitive development and argued that children are perfectly capable of handling philosophical thinking because they develop their capability to deal with abstract ideas much earlier than previously thought. Moreover, other psychologists, such as Vygotsky and Bruner, developed their ideas based on Piaget's theory that humans' learning process is heavily dependent on social interactions, even if they did not necessarily follow the specifics of Piaget's development theory (Miller, 2013).

Although Piaget's theories were important developments in the history of Constructivism and helped further widespread acceptance of Constructivist ideas, he was not, strictly speaking, the first Constructivist. Matthews (2003) argued that the underlying principles of Constructivism "have had a long history in American education influenced by the developmentalist notions of 18th century French philosopher Jacques Rousseau, and later, the theories of John Dewey, G. Stanley Hall, and Arnold Gesell" (p. 53). Dewey in particular had a significant influence on progressive education movements in US education due to his conception of education as the means whereby educators "facilitate the naturally developing tendencies and potential of the child" (Matthews, 2003, p. 54). This concept became the philosophical catalyst for the thoughts of future Constructivists such as Piaget and Vygotsky.

Inquiry-Based and Student-Centered Approaches: Dewey's Progressive Education

John Dewey was referred to as the "Father of Progressive Education" in *The New York Times* when he passed away in 1952. He earned this title in part because his educational philosophy emphasized the importance of inquiry-based and student-centered approaches in education. He made significant contributions to the movement of progressive education, the goal of which was "to establish new schools that would be democratic rather than authoritarian, that would make learning meaningful and pleasurable by focusing on the needs and interests of children" (Zilversmit, 1993, p. 1). The movement of progressive education had a strong influence on the schooling systems in the US during the 1920s and 1930s when American society was rapidly transformed by industrialization, urbanization, and immigration. Many educational reformers of the time tried to accommodate these rapid social changes by establishing schools to help students develop as individuals. (Zilversmit, 1993). This core belief stemmed from John Dewey's writings.

Dewey was influenced by Charles Darwin, who stated that ultimate truths could be found in the flow of this ever-changing world. Dewey posited that if the world was changing constantly, then human beings, as a part of nature, must also change constantly in order to survive in and adapt to the changing world. For Dewey, learning was an essential process for humans to adapt themselves to the living environment (Zilversmit, 1993). Dewey (1916) considered this to be the very definition of life: "[l]ife is a self-renewing process through action upon environment" (p. 3). Dewey concluded that education needed to support humans' individual physical and mental growth by creating opportunities for children to have valuable and meaningful experiences. This also meant that schooling needed to pay more attention to each child's development because each child has their own pace and way of learning (Zilversmit, 1993). In this way, he criticized industrial modes of education, and argued for the importance of empowering individual *assets* in each child, such as the child's "constructive impulse" and "art instinct." Learning, according to

Dewey, could only happen through engaging with a child's own interests and abilities. Therefore, education needed to start with the children's own interests instead of adults' already-made curriculum.

Throughout the long history of American education, there has been a consistent theme of striving to empower individuals for the purpose of realizing democracy. As a result of the influence of these various schools of thoughts and movements, Western education is typically "characterized by low power distance, high individuality and low uncertainty avoidance" (Durkin, 2011, p. 17). In contrast, the pedagogical traditions of education in East Asian countries, including Japan, are typically characterized as means of establishing harmony and avoiding conflicts between people in society. Having sketched the history context underlying P4C in the US, we are now in a better position to consider some points of contact and contrast it has with education in Japan.

II. THE JAPANESE PEDAGOGICAL TRADITION

The Japanese education system developed from a unique blend of Western traditions, Confucianism, feudalism, and imperialism (Beauchamp, 1992; Kono & Shimizu, 2019). The origins of modern Japanese institutionalized education emerged in the Edo period (1603-1867), and was further developed in the Meiji period (1868-1911) with the main objective of empowering the centralized government. In the Meiji period, the government tried to catch up with Western countries in terms of industry and modernization, and organized a country-wide formal education system that took inspiration from various Western educational systems. However, as Japanese citizens began to internalize the idea of a democratic society, the government grew concerned about the possibility of dissent and integrated certain aspects of Confucianism into the education system to emphasize the necessity of loyalty to the emperor (Arakawa, 2004). The history of Japanese education is rich and complex, often shifting dramatically based on the values imposed on it. Although the Japanese education system has a long history of evolving and shifting its values, it has rarely implemented a ground-up, as opposed to a top-down, approach to education. We are interested in the possibility of a ground-up approach to educational values in Japan. To explore this possibility, we now turn to the complex influences of Confucianism and Confucian harmony on Japanese education.

Achieving National Unity Through Confucianism, Imperial Ideology and Feudalism

Beauchamp (1992) described Japanese education as deeply influenced by Confucian ideas and values throughout the history of its development. Confucianism was introduced to the Japanese educational system by Japanese scholars in the Edo period (1603-1867) as a means for the government to utilize the Confucian virtue of loyalty (忠) to justify the current political system (Lam, 2019). The Tokugawa government and other feudal lords organized Confucian academies called "Shoheizaka Gakumonjo (昌平坂学問所)" and "Hanko (藩校)" for young men belonging to the samurai (warrior) class (Hmeljak Sangawa, 2017). Moreover, there were also private academies for non-samurai citizens called "Shijuku (私塾)" offering Confucian studies, and it was in institutions like these that people such as Ito Hirobumi (伊藤博文) and Takasugi Shinsaku (高杉晋作), who would later become political leaders during the Meiji reformation, were educated (Hmeljak Sangawa, 2017). Later in the Meiji period (1868-1911), ideas of Confucianism were used to instill feelings of nationalism in Japanese society by advocating for

the idea that "[t]he relationship between the emperor and the people was [comparable] to that of father and son" (Tamai & Lee, 2012, p. 34).

The Meiji government, aware that Japan "had fallen dangerously behind the West as the industrial revolution got under way" during the isolationist Edo period, issued the "Gakusei (学制)" in 1872 (Duke, 2009, p. 1). This "was designed to provide an elementary education for all Japanese children regardless of social class or gender," and "marks the true beginning of modern education in Japan" (Duke, 2009, p. 58). Strongly influenced by Western educational traditions concerned with empowering individuals but interpreting that empowerment solely in terms of industrial power, Gakusei focused on developing each individual student's ability to perform a wide variety of tasks by developing a new curriculum that included many kinds of technological knowledge. This knowledge, in addition to empowering individuals to perform different kinds of work, also helped prepare the population for a variety of industrial jobs that would contribute to the modernization of the country.

However, this new educational policy did not address the lingering worries of those eager to use education to uphold Confucian morality and Japanese Imperial ideology (皇道主義) among the populace, and it was largely due to the influence of figures eager to uphold these traditions that the "Imperial Rescript on Education" (教育二関 ス ル勅語) was issued by the emperor in 1890. In contrast to the "Gakusei," which was inspired largely by Western ideas and written in an impartial voice, this document has "the emperor speaking to his subjects, members of the army and students in school," and defines "morality of the individual as loyalty to the emperor and the country" (Duke, 2009, p. 368). As Duke concludes, it is these two documents that would come to define Japanese education in the early 20th century: "The academic curriculum biased towards Western science and mathematics continued from the early days of the Gakusei," while "the moral foundation of the school based on 'The Imperial Rescript' of 1890 would henceforth stem from Confucianism, with imperial ideology at the core" (Duke, 2009, p. 369).

After World War II, Japanese education and politics were re-organized by the General Head Quarter (GHQ), which was mainly organized by the US government, to be demilitarized and democratized (Yoshida, 2016). As a result, Japan's national standard of education began to be influenced by American pragmatists' ideas, specifically the ideas of Dewey. However, once the GHQ left the country, the Japanese education system shifted its focus to industrial education methods, which focused on rote memorization and drills based on a set curriculum. This form of mass education was seen as an essential aid to the country's economic recovery after the devastation of the war (Yoshida, 2016; Kono & Shimizu, 2019).

Traditionally, Japanese society's cultural emphasis has centered on group conformity and a hierarchical social structure. Some scholars, such as Beauchamp, see this as simply the result of the influence of Confucian values. For Beauchamp, in Confucian societies "citizens are expected to defer to authority and to contribute to a harmonious social order rather than pursue personal goals, which are perceived as selfish individualism" (Beauchamp, 1992, p, 9). However, Kono and Shimizu (2019) argued that Confucianism alone is not sufficient to explain the development of the current Japanese educational system.

Authoritative teacher-student relationships in Japanese schooling culture were utilized by the government during the Meiji period in the national move towards industrialization and modernization. These relationships, in turn, can be traced back to feudal social structures (what is often referred to as *mura-shakai* (村社会), literally "village society") which have existed since

the Kamakura period (1185-1333) in Japan, and were organized by hierarchical relationships among all residents in villages. This feudal education system was supposed to teach residents to follow certain rules as well as transmit traditional knowledge and ways of living to younger generations in order to organize collective societies (Yasumura, 2016). These three factors (Confucianism, Modernization, and lingering Feudal social influences) have combined to create what are now seen as the traditional negative characteristics of Japanese education: authoritative teacher-student relationships, peer pressure, and gender inequality in classrooms (Kono & Shimizu, 2019).

Exam-Oriented Pedagogy and the "Direct Approach"

Within the Japanese educational system, teachers have traditionally been characterized as the primary authority and source of knowledge in the classroom. This establishes a clear hierarchical order where teachers can control how students study and learn (Kambara, 2020). Continuing this tradition, most Japanese educational institutions use the "direct approach," a pedagogical technique which encourages students to passively learn from their teachers by rote memorization in order to succeed in an exam-oriented system (Kambara, 2020). Despite the differences in values between the Japanese and Western education systems, there is an analogue to memorization and exam-focused pedagogy in the West: Paulo Freire's critique of the "banking model" of education.

> Education thus becomes an act of depositing, in which the students are the depositories and the teacher is the depositor. Instead of communicating, the teacher issues communiques and makes deposits which the students patiently receive, memorize, and repeat. This is the "banking" concept of education, in which the scope of action allowed to the students extends only as far as receiving, filing, and storing the deposits (1970;1993, p. 72).

Despite the drawbacks of this approach, Japanese students have scored well in international assessments such as the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) in the last several years. This relative success could be attributed to the influence of Confucianism, since the same results have also been found in other East Asian countries that share Confucian influences, like China, Singapore, and South Korea (Schenck, 2015). The relative success of direct instruction makes sense since it enables teachers to efficiently teach highly specialized concepts and encourages students to practice and memorize exam-relevant information. These taken together can lead to improved test performance (Kambara, 2020). These benefits aside, the direct approach has been criticized for failing to nurture students' critical and creative thinking skills, and for being less effective for long-term knowledge and skill retention (Zhao, 2013; Schenck, 2015; Kambara, 2020). For Freire, this criticism is unsurprising, since models like these de-emphasize creativity, curiosity, and eliminate genuine inquiry.

> For apart from inquiry, apart from the praxis, individuals cannot be truly human. Knowledge emerges only through invention and re-invention, through the restless, impatient, continuing, hopeful inquiry human beings pursue in the world, with the world, and with each other (1970;1993, p. 72).

Zhao (2013) has replied to these criticisms, saying that Confucian approaches in education have been misunderstood and wrongly criticized by many scholars. He suggested that the Confucian approach and Constructivist theory share four themes: they emphasize "reflective teaching and learning, cooperative inquiry, integration of theory and practice, and the ultimate goal of education as social transformation" (Zhao, 2013, p. 12). In other words, the criticism of a "Confucian approach" to education as being excessively exam-oriented and overvaluing rote memorization was a misleading characterization of Confucian ideas. One possible reason to distinguish the memorization practices of the Western and Confucian education is that they have different systems of values and cosmologies. In response to the prompt, "What is Confucianism?" Roger T. Ames grounds the complexities of this comparison in Confucian cosmology, which is not easily reduced to a Western analogue.

> In this Confucian tradition, we might say that becoming human is made explicit when *xin* ("heart-mind" 心) is taken as the generalized initial conditions (what we are conventionally inclined to consider inherent "nature") and *xing* (性) is construed as the ongoing cultivation and articulation of these initial conditions through effective social living (what we would generally consider as "second nature"). The important point here is that Confucianism would place an emphasis upon an aggregating "second nature" as the primary locus of culture and the resource for the enculturation of succeeding generations (2010, p. 72).

It is worth taking time to unpack the shift from the focus on "first nature," which is associated with an individual's abilities to learn, to a social or community-focus on "second nature." According to Ames, the Confucian notion of human being is better understood as an ever-changing, social and community-embedded human becoming (2016, pp. 142-146). This reversal takes the community, and concerns about one's harmony within it, as the given, and individuality as an achievement. Instead of building communities as distinct reasoning individuals, we begin as an interconnected group working toward understandings of ourselves (Ames 2011; Ames 2020). This plays out in education through the explorations of our roles in the classroom, which Ames articulates as a fundamental difference between Confucian and Western cosmologies.

> When we ask the question, "Who comes first, parent or child, teacher or student?" the answer must be that as correlatives these dyads are isomorphic, emerging simultaneously as the context for each other. This is also the case with "first" and "second" nature. After all, there can be no "first nature" that is not embedded within "second nature" as its initial conditions, and there is no "second nature" that is not grounded in and ultimately the product of a cultivated "first nature." (2010, p. 72)

Harmony-Seeking and Conformity-Oriented Japanese Tradition

Just as the Socratic method has been interpreted and practiced in different ways by different individuals, the interpretations of Confucian values and pedagogy also vary across different regions and time periods. Tamai and Lee (2002) suggested that it is certain that Confucianism has strongly influenced East Asian countries, but that "[a] closer look at each country [⋯] finds various Confucian traits throughout the history of East Asia, and interesting differences

in social values emerge" (p. 34). For example, Tamai and Lee (2012) conducted comparative surveys of college students in Japan and South Korea and found that "[t]he Japanese attitude of conforming to authority and identifying themselves with the group" (p. 39) in order to maintain harmony stood out as one of the core Confucian values, while Korean students placed the ideas of "searching for knowledge" and "propriety" at the center of Confucianism. Further, "in Japan, it is likely that "self-expressiveness" is suppressed in the course of conforming to the group under the name of "harmony" (Tamai & Lee, 2002, p. 39). Japanese students, in other words, tend to assume that suppressing themselves in a group helps establish "harmony." However, Li 's (2008) argument tried to correct this understanding of the Confucian value of "harmony" as merely conformity.

> We may summarize this Classical Confucian concept of harmony as follows. First, harmony is a metaphysical as well as a moral concept; it both describes how the world operates and prescribes as to how human beings ought to act. Second, Confucian harmony is not 'perfect agreement'. Co-existing parties in harmony are different from one another. While harmony does not preclude sameness altogether, sameness itself is not harmony. Harmony is sustained by energy generated through the interaction of different elements in creative tension (p. 427).

One of the foremost practitioners of p4cHI in Japan, Toyoda (2019), also argued that the concept of harmony in Confucianism needs to be reconsidered. Rather than thinking of harmony as a means of merely converting individual differences into a social "sameness," Toyoda argued that it can be seen as a way to establish deeper understandings between people in a community through dialogues. According to Toyoda, in order to cultivate the Confucian sense of "harmony" through philosophical dialogues, "[t]here are two important aspects to be considered: first, we need to create a place where students are willing to share different voices; and second, students need to be empowered with the ability to encounter and compare differences and create their own new ideas from them" (Toyoda, 2019, p. 165).

Toyoda's work has profound implications for a cross-cultural study of implementing p4cHI. Implementing the p4cHI approach in the context of Japanese education could be an intersection of a Constructivist approach, which pursues students' individual autonomy and critical thinking, and the Confucian approach, which is deeply rooted in East Asian countries and pursues a harmonious community by creating a place to share different ideas and feelings. Nontrivially, both Confucian and p4cHI approaches take the social and communal aspects of human living as essential starting points. While these frameworks are not built from identical value systems, there are clear paths for cultural exchange and harmony (Ames, 2016). Even though memorization-based pedagogy is similar cross-culturally, the differences of the underlying values of the Confucian and Western Democratic educational systems could play a key role in the development of new pedagogical approaches in Japan.

Need for p4cHI in Japanese Education

Since the 1990s, Japan's Ministry of Education has been searching for a new educational goal (学習指導要領) for the nation's educational system. Since that time, teachers and administrators across the country have been searching for new pedagogical approaches that can help satisfy the

goals of nurturing children's "nurturing proactive, interactive and authentic learning" (Outline of the revision of courses of study, 2017, p. 1). which was chosen to be the official educational goal in the school year of 2020. This goal was set in order to help students survive and flourish in a constantly changing society, where AI and other new technologies promise to radically change the nature of work and living standards across the world (Kono & Shimizu, 2019; Tsuchiya, 2019). The Japanese government now thinks that it is more important for citizens to be able to think critically for themselves, communicate with others efficiently, and solve unpredictable problems rather than simply accumulate knowledge by memorizing information in textbooks. It is in part because of this administrative change in goals, and the recognition of a changing society, that many educators in Japan are interested in implementing inquiry-based learning such as the p4cHI approach.

Furthermore, Tsuchiya (2019) argued that there are three major benefits for students in Japan to practice P4C/p4cHI approaches. First, internalizing the habit of "pursuing truths", as Socrates did, helps students think for themselves and construct their own thoughts in spite of peer pressure in classrooms. Second, nurturing critical thinking skills encourages students to reflect on their everyday lives and empowers them to pursue a better life for themselves. Instead of merely following rules and being supervised by teachers and parents, students are encouraged to construct their own ways of living and make decisions for themselves. Third, creating a space and time for students frees them from school orders and the culture of oppressive conformity. These three benefits directly connect to the goal for Japanese education brought up by Toyoda (2019): transforming Japanese society from a state of oppressive conformity to a state of thriving harmony. Tsuchiya (2019) explained that supporting students in realizing their own thoughts is also effective for nurturing students to be open-minded, such that they could listen to and accept different ideas and thoughts.

Kono & Shimizu (2019) argued that another reason why Japanese people are showing interests in the P4C/p4cHI approaches was their emerging skepticism towards the authority of the Japanese government. When the Great East Japan Earthquake and Tsunami struck in 2011, it was revealed that the Japanese government did not have a proper crisis management program in place, and many citizens were required to make their own decisions and manage on their own as best as they could until the government finally set up policies to support the victims of the disaster. This issue urged Japanese citizens to reevaluate the importance of autonomous thinking and encouraged them to think about a variety of issues in life, such as "community reconstruction, the problems of energy and the environment, and also about the meaning of life, death, family, friendship, human ties, and true values in their life" (Kono & Shimizu, 2019, p. 143). This kind of movement is pushing the country to be more democratic, and thus practicing dialogical and inquiry-based approaches in education is now receiving more support across Japanese society. As Japan prepares to face unprecedented ecological and socio-political challenges, this shift has the potential to strengthen local communities and adapt to changes.

On the Possibility of Implementing p4cHI in Different Cultural Classrooms

In the Japanese educational context, however, Tanaka and Makaiau (2019) asserted that the possibility and ways of transforming the Japanese curriculum by adopting fundamentally inquiry-based education approaches need to be considered and explored deeply. One cause for concern that they identify is the structural differences between the education systems in

Japan and the US. In particular, US educators have adopted inquiry-based and student-centered approaches to emphasize values of diversity, inclusivity, and critical self-reflection. These shifts are embedded within, and in many ways respond to, the American Democratic context.

In contrast, the Japanese government is trying to implement inquiry-based and student-centered approaches through a strongly "top-down" approach, meaning that government officials and authority figures are recommending that educators implement these approaches in their classes. This will likely be a challenge because the very nature of student- and inquiry-based approaches is to question, challenge, and mold the structures and assumptions that are built into education. That is, they resist "top-down" dictation by design. Tanaka and Makaiau (2019) highlight this by showing that dictating changes in educational standards does not always immediately lead to changes in the way teachers and administrators organize their classrooms.

This kind of tension also arises when attempting to apply these methods in new cultural contexts. The differences between the Japanese education system, the Chinese education system, and the educational context of p4cHI often lead to complications. In the 1990s, some Chinese educators were strongly interested in the p4cHI approach and wanted to implement it in their own classrooms in China. However, there were difficulties in implementing the p4cHI approach in Chinese classrooms, which usually had over 50 students on average. It was difficult to have all students sit in a circle and to give each student the chance to share their ideas. Moreover, it was difficult for the Chinese school curriculum to include open-ended philosophical inquiries regularly. To address this, Chinese educators adapted some tools and principles of the p4cHI approach and established a new pedagogy called "Elicitation Inquiry Style Teaching" method (启发探究式教学法*qifa tanjiu shi jiaoxue fa*) which encouraged students to think critically in the contexts of the Chinese curriculum (Li, 1998). Li (1998) argued that:

> [E]ducation is a kind of social endeavor with its own rules and principals, and when educators probe these out, the results from their efforts can transcend national boundaries and contribute to the whole of mankind (p. 40).

One reason that p4cHI has been so successful and adaptable for various cultures is that it is student-focused rather than content-focused. In Deweyan terms, p4cHI encourages students to develop prosocial skills and habits of questioning and inquiry that extend beyond any particular topic covered in class. This approach does not eliminate the importance of content, but expands what counts as content to include the self-awareness and biases of the participants. Each student is encouraged to come to the class as themselves and practice wading through questions and concerns together. One crucial aspect of p4cHI in particular is its attempt to engage with its roots in American culture through an ongoing commitment to questioning itself and the cultural values it carries. The mere fact that p4cHI grew and matured embedded in an indigenous context among many Native Hawaiian communities is nontrivial (Jackson, 2011, 2012).

Instead of cross-examination or American notions of democracy, p4cHI can help students develop the skills of co-inquiry. For contexts with large class sizes, for example, the methods can be adapted to serve the needs of the student. The Plain Vanilla format of p4cHI, which is quite difficult to use with a large group of people, is not a practice that can only be realized one way. The outcomes and impacts of p4cHI come from its values and on its emphasis on community-centered practice. Likewise, one needn't engage in critical Socratic interrogations to achieve the

benefits of the Socratic method. Instead, these methods should be understood in terms of their place in larger student- or content-focused frameworks. Rather than applying and testing out new methods in various cultural contexts, we should be evaluating and questioning the underlying values of our pedagogical systems. It is exactly this kind of questioning and social reflection that inspired scholars like John Dewey and Paulo Freire. As Ryan (2015) argued, encountering different cultural backgrounds could "create productive new education models and results" (p. 2). Our hope is that ongoing projects on p4cHI in the Miyagi prefecture will help contribute to the creation of just such a new model, and which pursues empowering individuals in Japan while taking into consideration the tradition and development of the country (Watanabe, 2023).

CONCLUSION

One of the purposes of this paper was to obtain a deeper understanding of the major characteristics of the developments in American education which have influenced the P4C/p4cHI approaches. This included identifying and contrasting the underlying value systems of American education, which often culminate in the production of good democratic citizens. Another purpose was to examine the cultural background of Japanese education that might contrast with the characteristics of the education in the Western tradition. Following World War II, Japanese politics and government drew significant inspiration from the US as they strove to implement democratic systems and pursue a democratic society. However, Japan's long history and its various cultural influences, which have historically modeled Japanese education systems, are not easily washed away. Nevertheless, there are an increasing number of educators and researchers who are strongly interested in introducing inquiry-based and student-centered educational approaches such as P4C and p4cHI to Japanese education.

The values encoded in these education systems and the societies they are embedded within are at the forefront of this discussion. Despite their differences, the Japanese and American education systems are influenced by notions of good citizenship and overcoming adversity. The need to empower students to ask bigger questions and work through social and cultural differences have contributed to calls for new pedagogical practices and frameworks, like P4C and p4cHI. One feature that these approaches share is a radical shift from traditional values of individualism, competition, and argumentation to those of community-building, empathy, and wonder (Jackson 2011, 2017). The mere fact that asking big questions and working through complex global problems as a group could be fun is empowering and altogether missing from traditional approaches.

There are many ongoing P4C/p4cHI research projects in Japanese schools that are producing promising results. While it can be difficult to compare and generalize educational outcomes from these programs, we are encouraged by the observations of teachers at these schools. For example, when educators in Miyagi witnessed the p4cHI approach in a classroom for the first time, they recognized that it was radically different from anything they had previously seen in a Japanese educational context. They were impressed that students were not only actively participating in the inquiry, but were enjoying it. The experience of joy in learning is not an accident, but the result of an educational approach that values student creativity, curiosity, and wonder. It may not be possible to accurately predict how a program like p4cHI would impact the entirety of the Japanese education system, or how p4cHI will change in a Japanese context, but it is clear that these changes will be rooted in our systems of value. One thing is clear: we have

a lot to learn from our students and teachers. It is our hope that we can continue to learn from the experiences of students and educators in Japan as they adapt to our challenging and ever changing world.

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Abstract

Philosophy for Children (P4C) is an educational approach built on a radical shift in values that has garnered global attention in recent years. The adaptation of P4C through the philosophy for children approach in Hawai'i (p4cHI) to the educational context of Japan is especially noteworthy because of the unique history and context of the Japanese education system. The Japanese educational context formed with influence from major value systems like Western Democracy and Confucianism. To explore the possible implications of P4C-based pedagogy in Japan, we will examine the unique historical connections between the Japanese and Western education systems and their underlying values.

P4C is rooted in, and was developed in response to, Western pedagogical traditions and value systems and are thus best understood in this context. The influences of John Dewey and

pedagogical practices like the Socratic Method on Lipman's P4C situate it within the broader historical conversation about the importance of using education to promote good citizenship in Western Democracy. The p4cHI approach was developed and drastically changed in the process of implementing Mathew Lipman's P4C approach in the educational context of Hawai'i. We will outline these influences in order to provide some context for the values that these systems carry and to act as grounds for some comparison with education in Japan.

In the first half of this paper, we will explore some major characteristics of, and movements in, the Western pedagogical tradition that have had an impact on the development of P4C and p4cHI, such as Socratic method and inquiry-based and student-centered pedagogical approaches. We do this, in part, because of the important roles that these approaches have played in the history of education in Western countries (Friesen & Scott, 2013). With this context in place, we will then examine how the Japanese educational system has developed into its current state and point out some of its characteristics. Our goal is to explore how the value systems and educational contexts influence, and could be influenced by, pedagogical movements like p4cHI.