The InstitutionS of Education: Compare, Compare, Compare!

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The intellectual substance that brings members together is critical to the continuing strength of the Comparative and International Education Society (CIES). This substance is clearly suggested in CIES' name and constitution. But after a promising start toward developing theories and methodologies consistent with this name, we began to lose our way as we became enamored with the emerging paradigms and methodologies of the "harder" social sciences and as many of us diverted our attention to the pressing challenges of educational development.

For example, in the February 1999 issue of the *Comparative Education Review* (*CER*), Val Rust and his colleagues analyze and report on an extensive compilation of articles in *CER*, as well as *Comparative Education* and the *International Journal of Educational Development,* over 25 years. They observe that the field today is "methodologically fragmented and pluralistic," and they lament the scarcity of comparative research: "Less than one-third of the studies reviewed relied on comparison as a strategy. We recognize that efforts have been made by the recent editors of these journals to be more inclusive in terms of comparative studies . . . but the fact remains that a large number of publications continue to fall into the category of what Bereday would define as *area studies* and Schneider would define as *foreign education.*" [1]

Thus, while the key terms "comparative," "international," and "education" are prominent in our society's name, we rarely compare; we tend more often to do "foreign" than comparative or international research, and we focus more on the context of education than on education itself.

I propose to focus, in a sense refocus, on the institutionS of education as a step toward strengthening our intellectual identity.[2] Institutions are comprised of complex norms and procedures oriented toward realizing a particular goal or ideal, and they motivate behavior toward these goals or ideals. Nelson Mandela, in his recent autobiography, *Long Walk to Freedom,* discusses the educational institution he encountered as a youth:

[1] Val D. Rust, Aminata Soumaré, Octavio Pescador, and Megumi Shibuya, "Research Strategies in Comparative Education," *Comparative Education Review* 43 (February 1999): 108–09.

[2] The "S" is used to stress that there are several institutions of education, rather than a single institution, as asserted by other institutional theorists.

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> On the first day of school my teacher, Miss Mdingane, gave each of us an English name and said that thenceforth that was the name we should answer to in school. This was the custom among Africans in those days and was undoubtedly due to the British bias of our education. The education I received was a British education in which British ideas, British culture and British institutions were automatically assumed to be superior. The educated Englishman was our model; what we aspired to be were 'black Englishmen', as were sometimes derisively called. We were taught—and believed—that the best ideas were English ideas, the best government was English government, and the best men were Englishmen.[3]

Mandela's "long walk" was, at least in part, away from this early indoctrination into the English ideal of education. I cite this passage because it neatly illustrates the way one educational institution, the English model, worked. Later, I will focus on the operations of the five other dominant educational institutions of the modern era. It is through comparing these institutions that we can address many of the important questions facing contemporary education:

- Who controls education?
- What is the purpose of education?
- How do children learn?
- How much is spent on education?
- Why are schools so resistant to change?
- Recognizing this resistance, what is the likely future of education?

I contend that we can be, should be, the field that leads in the study of contemporary education. Paraphrasing Émile Durkheim, comparative education should become the queen of the educational sciences. So, I urge us to go "back to the future," to commit ourselves to a deeper investigation of the institutions of education.

The Origins of Comparative Inquiry and Theory

Our business is education, and most of the core learning theories we recognize today stress the role of comparisons. Babies enter this world with a bundle of instincts shaped by their genetic heritage, including the ability to feel, see, and hear. Their early learning consists exclusively of comparisons between what their heritage conditions them to expect and what they experience in their early comparisons. Later learning involves comparisons between first impressions and second impressions, and so on.

The metaphor of learning has recently been extended so that we speak of learning organizations and learning societies.[4] There is little question that these larger units improve through comparative inquiry. Daniel Boorstin's

[3] Nelson Mandela, *Long Walk to Freedom* (London: Abacus, 1995), pp. 13–14, 44.

[4] Peter M. Senge, *The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization* (New York: Currency Doubleday, 1990); Jacques Delors et al., *Learning: The Treasure Within,* Report to Unesco of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century (Paris: Unesco, 1996).

fascinating account of *The Americans* details their relentless curiosity about the institutions and technology of the more advanced societies, resulting in their borrowing public ideas and stealing private ones, including the technology for spinning and weaving.[5] Similarly, as new societies emerge, draft their constitutions, and build their institutions, they search around the world for the best practices. One of the first steps of the Meiji oligarchs who led Japan out of feudalism was to send missions "to seek knowledge throughout the world" and especially to learn "Western science" so they could preserve "Eastern morality."[6] In the field of education, we know that the pioneers of modern education such as Victor Cousins in France and Horace Mann and Henry Barnard in the United States devoted months, even years, to educational tours in order to learn how other systems worked.[7]

These early efforts of comparative inquiry were transformed in the mid-nineteenth century into a new array of academic fields, now known as the social sciences. Nearly all of the early pioneers were comparative researchers. Durkheim's famous study, *Suicide,* compared the incidence of suicide of different religious groups across Europe; his famous work, *Sociological Method,* argued that the comparative method was the only method of inquiry.[8] Max Weber compared the ethical premises of the various world religions before advancing his famous hypothesis of the link between the Protestant ethic and capitalism.[9] In more recent times, we find Guy Swanson asserting in his comparison of world religions that "thinking without comparison is unthinkable. And in the absence of comparison, so is all scientific thought and scientific research."[10]

Our field of comparative education emerged as one branch of the enthusiastic rush for comparative inquiry in the mid-nineteenth century. At first, as George Bereday reminds us, there were the "borrowers" who engaged in comparison to perfect the educational systems in their countries.[11] These were followed by the "predictors" such as Sir Michael Sadler, Friedrich Schneider, Isaac L. Kandel, Robert Ulich, and Nicholas Hans, who sought to explain the nature of different educational systems by relating them to features of their societal context such as ethnic and racial complexity, language, race, or geographic size and location. While the predictors gained a foothold in comparative studies of education, their obsession with context was

[5] Daniel Boorstin, *The Americans, 1: The Colonial Experience* (New York: Random House, 1958).

[6] William K. Cummings, *Education and Equality in Japan* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1980).

[7] Charles Leslie Glenn, Jr., *The Myth of the Common School* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1988).

[8] Émile Durkheim, *Suicide* (New York: Free Press, 1951), and *The Rules of Sociological Method* (New York: Free Press, 1950).

[9] Max Weber, *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (London: Allen & Unwin, 1930).

[10] Guy Swanson, "Frameworks for Comparative Research: Structural Anthropology and the Theory of Action," in *Comparative Methods in Sociology: Essays on Trends and Applications,* ed. Ivan Vallier (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1971), p. 145.

[11] George Z. F. Bereday, *Comparative Method in Education* (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1964).

not accompanied by sufficient attention to the structures and processes of education. Thus Brian Holmes proposed the "problem-approach" of focusing on educational problems in diverse educational settings.[12] Bereday suggests that a third phase of comparative analysis was emerging in the mid-fifties, involving the "classifications of pedagogical and accompanying social facts" with a strong bias toward historical and area studies.[13] Bereday also notes that many comparative educators were committed to international education as a means of fostering a more enlightened and human world. These two strains incidentally account for the name of this society, which was founded in 1956 as the Comparative and International Education Society.

The Loss of Focus in Comparative Education

Given its strong affiliation to history and area studies, comparative education, at least in the United States, initially allied itself with several of the other "softer" fields typically known as "social foundations." Despite their limitations, these softer fields employed the comparative method and were respectful of the profound differences in the practice of education in different settings. But the prestige of these fields began to decline in the sixties relative to the social and policy sciences such as economics, sociology, political science, and even anthropology.

Harold Noah and Max Eckstein were among the early proponents of moving away from the softer fields and their methodologies and adopting the "scientific" methodology of variables and measurement characteristic of the harder social sciences.[14] In the process of stressing quantification and objectivism, many researchers in our field decided to do more focused work in more limited settings. The scarcity of research funds also influenced their decisions, and their research came to focus on single cases rather than comparisons.

Moreover, the work of comparative educators became increasingly allied with the new international endeavor of bilateral and multilateral agencies to transform the educational systems of the newly emerging developing nations.[15] The country-specific interests of these agencies drew many researchers from our field into consulting overseas, and in the best of cases, writing about their experiences in these countries. But only in rare instances did these consulting experiences result in observations that generalized across several countries. Thus, we find a subtle drift in both the pattern of recruitment to our field and in the work considered important. I would ar-

[12] Brian Holmes, "The Problem Approach in Comparative Education: Some Methodological Considerations," *Comparative Education Review* 2 (June 1958): 1–23.

[13] Bereday, p. 9.

[14] Harold J. Noah and Max A. Eckstein, *Towards a Science of Comparative Education* (New York: Macmillan, 1969).

[15] Gary Theisen and Don Adams, "Comparative Education Research," in *International Comparative Education*, ed. Murray Thomas (Oxford: Pergamon Press, 1990), p. 287.

gue that this drift has been away from our intellectual origins, and it has not been in any particular direction.[16]

The Reemergence of the Comparative Perspective in the Social Sciences

Comparative education is not unique in neglecting the comparative method. At least in the United States, many of the sister fields in the social sciences went through a period of neglecting comparative work from the early fifties through the early seventies. Robert Marsh, in his mid-sixties review of comparative sociology, found that no more than 5 percent of the articles published in U.S. sociological journals had a comparative or even a foreign focus.[17] At that time a similar pattern was evident in American economics and political science journals.

One reason for the lack of comparative work in U.S. academic journals at that time was the conviction that the United States was the lead society in the world and had little to learn from other societies. The prevailing view was that all societies would westernize or modernize, converging around a set of institutional arrangements determined by the most advanced or lead society, the United States. In scholarship this particular viewpoint, sometimes referred to as "unilinear evolution," was reflected in such works as W. W. Rostow's *Stages of Economic Growth* and reputedly in Talcott Parsons's *The System of Modern Societies.*[18] Some scholars even observed that the United States is such an extreme outlier or exception in most comparisons (e.g., geographic area, size of the economy, radical political decentralization, ethnic diversity) that there was little point in attempting comparisons.

Yet at the very time that U.S. academic journals were neglecting the rest of the world, the United States was locked in a cold war with the Soviet bloc or the second world of what Irving Horowitz referred to as *Three Worlds of Development.*[19] The cold war heated up in Vietnam and other trouble spots in the mid-sixties, U.S. campuses finally became engaged in debates on international issues, and a new tolerance emerged for critical intellectual perspectives that often relied on examples from other settings to develop their arguments. Barrington Moore succeeded in publishing the *Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* in a fugitive press as early as 1966.[20] By the late

[16] David N. Wilson, "Comparative and International Education: Fraternal or Siamese Twins? A Preliminary Genealogy of Our Twin Fields," *Comparative Education Review* 38 (November 1994): 449–86.

[17] Robert M. Marsh, *Comparative Sociology: A Codification of Cross-Societal Analysis* (New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1967).

[18] W. W. Rostow, *The Stages of Economic Growth: A Non-communist Manifesto* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1960). Parsons actually devotes considerable space to multilinear evolution in his earlier work, *Societies: Evolutionary and Comparative Perspectives* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1966). He sees the analysis in his *The System of Modern Societies* (Englewood Cliffs, N.J.: Prentice-Hall, 1967) to be following that approach; however, he argues that at this particular historical juncture, the United States is the lead society because of its superior adaptivity (pp. 86–121).

[19] Irving Louis Horowitz, *Three Worlds of Development* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1972).

[20] Barrington Moore, Jr., *The Social Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy* (Boston: Beacon, 1966).

seventies, a number of Moore's students, such as Theda Skocpol and Peter Evans, achieved tenure in leading universities across the country and inspired a new generation of scholars to adopt the comparative method. Thus, comparative studies began to increase in popularity in the various social sciences, including history and anthropology. For example, in the field of sociology, there are more articles in leading U.S. journals today that have a comparative dimension, and new journals have been established that devote themselves exclusively to comparative studies.

Comparisons in Comparative Education

In the field of comparative education, the comparative tradition is not totally neglected. As a prelude for reviewing recent comparisons in comparative education, I would like to recall Ingemar Fägerlind and Lawrence Saha's suggestive diagrammatic comparison of theories of social change.[21] As illustrated in figure 1, they posited four broad groupings. The first two groupings (classic cyclical and Augustinian Christian) are rarely featured in contemporary comparative work. The two mainstreams of comparative work, at least in North America, tend to reflect either the linear model or the cyclical linear model. I refer here to modernization studies on the one hand and those that draw from the conflict tradition on the other hand. The particular approach I am advocating today belongs to a fifth grouping, which might be called the "parallel cyclical linear model" (see fig. 1). It builds on many of the premises of conflict theory but predicts that the multiple conflicts that occur at particular historical junctures lead societies and educational systems on distinctively separate or parallel paths, rather than a common one.

The foundation work for this fifth grouping, such as Margaret Archer's massive study of educational governance, Fritz Ringer's careful studies of educational expansion and systematization, Brian Holmes's and Martin McLean's useful comparison of curricula, and Patricia Broadfoot et al.'s interesting work on teachers, has occurred largely outside of North America.[22] CIES invited Jurger Schreiwer to outline the European perspective in the 1995 Claude Eggertsen lecture. There is also interesting comparative work in Asia by Ikuo Amano and in Russia by Leo Gumilev that reflects this fifth grouping. Below, I will say more about this group and the particular direction I propose for its development.

[21] Ingemar Fägerlind and Lawrence J. Saha, *Education and National Development: A Comparative Perspective,* 2nd ed. (Oxford: Pergamon, 1989), p. 27.

[22] Margaret Archer, *Social Origins of Educational Systems* (Beverly Hills, Calif.: Sage, 1979); Fritz K. Ringer, *Education and Society in Modern Europe* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1977); Brian Holmes and Martin McLean, *The Curriculum: A Comparative Perspective* (London: Unwin Hyman Ltd., 1989); Patricia Broadfoot and Marilyn Osborne, "What Professional Responsibility Means to Teachers: National Contexts and Classroom Constants," *British Journal of Sociology* 9, no. 3 (1988): 265–87; Patricia Broadfoot and Marilyn Osborne, with Michel Gilly and Arlette Bucher, *Perceptions of Teaching: Primary Schools Teachers in England and France* (London: Cassell, 1993).

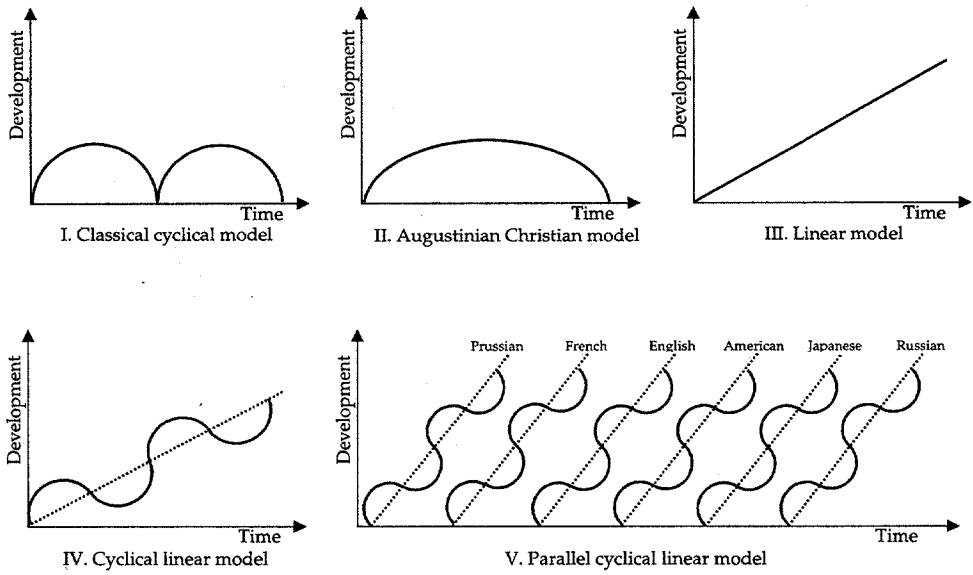

FIG. 1.—Idealized illustrations of five theories of change and development

In North America, there have also been a number of ostensibly comparative studies, but I, at least, detect a tendency in virtually all of these studies to minimize the differences between societies, to repeat the comforting thesis of the 1950s U.S. social science that all roads lead to Washington. Alex Inkeles's well-known *Becoming Modern* is an early example of this tendency.[23] John Meyer and his Stanford colleagues, while initially prepared to reject the U.S.-centric convergence thesis, after extensive research surprisingly concluded that all modern education is essentially the same; for example, in the conclusion to their volume on primary curriculums, Meyer et al. assert:

> The most important finding in our research is the relative homogeneity of the world's primary curriculum outlines in the twentieth century. This is true descriptively—in the sense that there is considerably less variation among curricular outlines than reasonable arguments would have predicted. And it is true in an explanatory sense—factors that vary among countries play a smaller role than most theories would have proposed, in affecting variations among curriculums. Further, we notice a pronounced tendency for curricular changes in particular countries to parallel each other and to take the form of conformity to world curricular patterns.[24]

Meyer, in an important article entitled "The Effects of Education as an Institution," provides a summary of these arguments and proposes that the world system is somehow leading all educational systems to converge on a common

[23] Alex Inkeles, *Becoming Modern* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1974).

[24] John W. Meyer, David H. Kamens, and Aaron Benavot, *School Knowledge for the Masses* (Washington, D.C.: Falmer Press, 1992), pp. 165–66.

institutional pattern.[25] Meyer's colleagues, working with parallel data sets and using similar methodologies, reach similar conclusions.[26] I contest this view and insist that there is not a single institution of education but, rather, several that are developing along parallel paths.[27] In other words, I suggest that the impact of the world system, insofar as it exists, has been vastly exaggerated.

Another interesting recent stream of U.S. theorizing that is as popular in academia as it is on TV networks such as CNN is what might be called global theory. Former Secretary of Labor Robert Reich's *The Work of Nations* is perhaps the most influential example of this thesis, and you will note the language even appears in the title of this conference.[28] This primarily economic theory asserts that the institutions of modern trade, industry, and finance are becoming ever more interconnected and homogeneous and that other institutions, including education, will follow suit. While not explicitly pointing to the United States as the leader, the stress on the information and communication industries that are most highly developed in the United States leads to the all too familiar America-centric predictions for future development.

Among the ambitious U.S.-based comparative studies of education, an important exception to the unlinear theorists is the recent look at socialist education coordinated by Martin Carnoy and Joel Samoff.[29] Their book reveals important differences in the practice of education around the world, highlighting four distinctive socialist models. The conflict argument developed in this book has a cyclical linear character (see fig. 1). Burton Clark's and Daniel Levy's interesting comparisons of university systems also focus on major differences and on cycles of change.[30]

I am certainly not suggesting that North America inevitably fosters a unilinear perspective. Still, we should recall Robert Nisbet's contention in his study of western theories of social change from St. Augustine to the present day that certain features of Western, and especially American, character may compel us to see similarities where differences exist.[31] These features include

[25] John W. Meyer, "The Effects of Education as an Institution," *American Journal of Sociology* 83, no. 1 (1977): 55–77.

[26] For example, Francisco O. Ramirez and John Boli, "The Political Construction of Mass Schooling: European Origins and Worldwide Institutionalization," *Sociology of Education* 60 (January 1987): 2–17.

[27] The data that Meyer et al. rely on, official reports of curricular outlines, may not be especially sensitive to actual differences. Also while Meyer et al. stress the similarities, the findings they report reveal important differences. One weakness of world systems theory is that it does not provide insight on how different areas of the world influence each other to achieve a common direction; it simply asserts that this must be happening.

[28] Robert Reich, *The Work of Nations* (New York: A. A. Knopf, 1991).

[29] Martin Carnoy and Joel Samoff, *Education and Social Transition in the Third World* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1990).

[30] Burton Clark, *The Higher Education System* (Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, 1983); Daniel Levy, *Higher Education and the State in Latin America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1986).

[31] Robert Nisbet, *Social Change and History* (London: Oxford University Press, 1969).

the American belief in inexorable progress or the possibility of improving the human condition combined with the missionary zeal that only the Americans hold the key to perfection. In this view, all are, or should become, like the Americans. In response to this American penchant for convergence, I say (in officially multilingual Canada) *vive la différence.*

InstitutionS as the Key

The concept of institutions was prominent in early social theorizing. Herbert Spencer proposed that certain institutions were critical for the survival of societies.[32] Max Weber, in comparing different economic and political institutions, developed the methodology of ideal types to describe the distinctive features of such institutions as patriarchy, patrimonialism, and bureaucracy.[33] Parsons, A. L. Kroeber, and Edward Shils, building on Weber, proposed that institutions were formed to realize particular societal values and that the constituent norms, beliefs, and regulations of particular institutions tended to derive from these core values; behavior or social action was seen as following from these normative commitments.[34] Thus, institutional theorists propose that institutions, and more specifically their core values, tend to determine social behavior. Parsons was particularly insightful in developing this approach in *The Social System* and *Structure and Process in Modern Societies.*[35]

This framework was influential in much of the early postwar thinking about social change and development in the Western democracies. Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba's influential work, *Civic Culture,* assumed that the institutionalization of Western culture was critical to the effective working of democracies.[36] Similarly, David McClelland argued that the achievement motive was critical for the success of capitalism and Inkeles argued that modern values were essential for the functioning of modern factories.[37]

However, from the early sixties conflict theorists began to suggest that other factors, such as class interests or technology, played a more critical role in shaping behavior. They also objected to the characteristic arguments of American institutionalists, such as Talcott Parsons, that social change was unilinear with the United States as the leading prototype. In the process of developing counterarguments, the conflict theorists and many subsequent theoretical schools tended to engage in a wholesale rejection of institutionalism.

[32] Herbert Spencer, *Essays Scientific, Political, and Speculative* (New York: D. Appleton, 1891).

[33] Max Weber, *The Methodology of the Social Sciences* (New York: Free Press, 1949).

[34] Talcott Parsons and Edward Shils, eds., *Toward a General Theory of Action* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1951).

[35] Talcott Parsons, *The Social System* (New York: Free Press, 1951); and *Structure and Process in Modern Societies* (New York: Free Press, 1960).

[36] Gabriel Almond and Sidney Verba, *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1963).

[37] David McClelland, *The Achieving Society* (New York: Irving, 1976).

While institutionalism was rejected, those engaged in both the study and practice of social change continually confronted the stubborn reality of institutional factors: One thinks of Clifford Geertz's exploration of *Agricultural Involution* in Java and of Edward Banfield's description in the *Moral Basis of a Backward Society* of southern Italy and why it was held back from the economic take off of northern Italy.[38] And after a decade or more of tiptoeing around these realities, in recent years a new generation of institutionalists has emerged in a variety of disciplines ranging from anthropology to sociology, political science, and economics. An interesting illustration of this shift is a recent World Bank study of economic growth in East Asia through the early nineties, which places considerable stress on institutional rather than market factors. Subsequent publications about the Asian economic flu also stress institutional factors.[39]

Douglass North, in his theoretical argument for the role of institutions in economic change, notes that neoclassical economic theory predicts all societies will converge around a common economic system.[40] But that has not transpired. North suggests that there must be flaws in the theory, particularly concerning the accessibility of economic actors to accurate information. Given imperfect accessibility and the threat that implies, actors agree on various informal and formal constraints, in other words on institutions such as polities that intervene in economic transactions, property rights, and contracts. North notes that the specifics of these institutions differ widely from one locale to another. They set up different incentive structures, some that are favorable and some antithetical to development. The challenge for the researcher is to clarify these differences and their consequences.

The work of North and others has spawned a major cottage industry of interdisciplinary theorizing that frequently evokes the code words "social capital."[41] Such phenomena as the differential developmental success of small villages in the Andes and the relative prevalence of the mafia have been considered by these theorizers. The central concern of this new theoretical school is to understand why some societies achieve better outcomes than others. That, I believe, is also our central concern, the only difference being that we focus on educational outcomes. In the next sections, I will attempt to stimulate your interest in the institutionS of education.

[38] Clifford Geertz, *Agricultural Involution: The Process of Ecological Change in Indonesia* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1963); Edward Banfield, *The Moral Basis of a Backward Society* (New York: Free Press, 1958).

[39] World Bank, *The East Asian Miracle: Economic Growth and Public Policy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993).

[40] Douglass C. North, *Institutions, Institutional Change and Economic Performance* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990).

[41] See the literature reviewed in Michael Woolcock, "Social Capital and Economic Development: Towards a Theoretical Synthesis and Policy Framework," *Theory and Society* 27, no. 1 (April 1998): 151–208; also note Walter W. Powell and Paul J. DiMaggio, eds., *The New Institutionalism in Organizational Analysis* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1991).

A Personal Encounter with the InstitutionS of Education

I have come to an appreciation of the institutionS of education through a series of personal encounters, first as a student, then as a teacher, and later as a consultant. Because of my father's work in agronomy during the Green Revolution, I went to high school in India. The school I attended had once been called the East India Company School, and it had many of the characteristics of a low-class Eton or Harrod: a boarding school with many rules, mandatory chapel, an emphasis on mind and body, which included daily athletics, ritual hazing of freshmen, a strong classical thrust in the curriculum, and so forth. Many of the other schools in the hill station where I studied were similar to my own. This was my introduction to the English "representative school" (see table 1).

Many years later I joined the National University of Singapore, where I was asked to teach about education in Singapore, but the literature was scarce and controversial. So instead I decided to develop a course that compared American, Japanese, and British education. As the year went on and I heard more stories about Singapore education, I realized it was remarkably similar to the British pattern. Raffles College in Singapore is similar to Eton; these are the representative schools that set the tone in their societies. Both systems rely on *O*- and *A*-level exams. Both stream students from a young age. In other words, I found that talking about the British model enabled me to say a lot about Singapore.

It was during my Singapore period that I first discovered the importance of institutional patterns. The English pattern had been devised in the late nineteenth century but it was firmly implanted in Singapore. Nelson Mandela reminds us of its prominence in South Africa. Later travels to Sri Lanka, Pakistan, and Bangladesh confirmed that, wherever the sun shines, this model is prevalent. Similarly, after 5 years of living in Japan, I found clear traces of the Japanese model in Korea and Taiwan (and amazingly even weak traces in places such as Indonesia that experienced only brief periods of Japanese colonialism).

My experience with British, Japanese, and American education led me in 1991 to develop an institutional critique of the then-popular educational production function literature.[42] While others, using International Association for the Evaluation of Educational Achievement (IEA) data, sought vainly to explain the superior academic achievement level of Japanese school children using the IEA data and variables such as student-teacher ratios, quality of teachers, and hours of homework, I argued that Japanese middle schoolers obtained higher scores on these tests simply

[42] William K. Cummings, "Examining the Educational Productional Function: U.K., U.S. and Japanese Models," in *International Perspectives in Educational Productivity*, ed. Herbert Walberg and David W. Chapman (Greenwich, Conn.: JAI Press, 1992), pp. 4–21.

TABLE 1
EDUCATIONAL MODELS OF PRUSSIA, FRANCE, UNITED KINGDOM, UNITED STATES, JAPAN, AND RUSSIA

	Prussia	France	United Kingdom	United States	Japan	Russia
Period of genesis	1742–1820	1791–1870	1820–1904	1840–1910	1868–90	1917–35
Ideal	Loyal Mandarin	Technical elite	Educated gentleman	Continuous development of the individual	Competent contribution to group	Socialist achievement
Representative school	Primary school	Lycée, grand école	Public school	Comprehensive high school, liberal arts college	Primary school	General school
Scope	Whole person, many subjects, humanistic bias	Cognitive growth, academic subjects, arts/science	Academic subjects, civic and religious values, culture and cocurriculum	Cognitive development, civic values, social skills	Whole person, wide range of subjects, moral values, physical and aesthetic skills	Whole person, broad curriculum, technical bias
Learning theory	Natural unfolding	Mental discipline	Hereditary brillance	Aptitude and growth	Effort	Interactive
School and classroom technologies	Lectures, self-study	Lectures, exams	Tutors, cocurriculum, boarding school	Individualized courses and instruction	Teacher-centered use of groups, school as unit	Collective learning
Administration	Quasi-decentralized	Centralized	Private	Decentralized	Quasi-decentralized	Centralized
Administrative style	Autocratic	Authoritarian	Leadership	Management	Cooperation	Collective control
Unit costs	Moderate	Moderate	High	Variable	Moderate	Moderate to high
Source of finance	Local state	State (church)	Fees	Local taxes	State	State

because the Japanese institutional model places its greatest emphasis on basic education. In contrast, the American model places greater stress on higher education. However, as predicted by institutional theory, there is some evidence that the pace of Japanese schooling slows at the tertiary level, while it accelerates in the United States, so that by the end of college, the Japanese achievement edge is erased.[43] Anthropologists would say my critique is an illustration of age-grading, one component of the institutions of education.

Toward a Theory of the InstitutionS of Education: Core Propositions

Over the last several years, I have also enjoyed opportunities to visit and study education in a number of countries in the French, German, and Russian cultural spheres, and these experiences have enabled a further elaboration of the institutional approach as applied to education. Below are the ten core principles:

1. *The concept of the ideal person is the core of an educational system.*—All of the great educational proposals begin with a vision of the type of person that society prefers.[44] Confucianism stressed the virtuous official; medieval classical education favored the devout servant of God; the French Enlightenment favored the savant with encyclopedic knowledge and quick wit; American educators came to believe in the individual with his or her possibilities for continuing development throughout the life cycle.

2. *In times of rapid ideological, political, and economic change, new thinking about education may emerge and potentially lead to educational reform.*—Education like other institutions has mechanisms to buffer itself from outside influence. But under the pressure of the triple revolutions that began in the mid-eighteenth century leading to the modern era, traditional institutions, including those providing education, experienced much stress. The temporal peaking of these triple revolutions differed in each of these settings, as noted in table 1. Modern education was first conceived in Prussia and France, last in Russia. And in the settings of France, Japan, and Russia this stress was relatively severe and temporally compact, leading to major change over a relatively brief time span. In contrast, in Prussia, the United States, and especially the United Kingdom, the stress was less severe and thus change was more gradual.

3. *The most fundamental educational reform is the creation of a new concept of the ideal person.*—In the Early Modern period, many new concepts emerged. But for various reasons, only six of these survived. Each of these concepts was

[43] John J. Cogan, Judith Torney-Purta, and Douglas Anderson, "Knowledge and Attitudes towards Global Issues among Pre-service Teachers and College Students in the United States and Japan" (paper presented at the Comparative and International Education Society, Toronto, Canada, 1986).

[44] Robert Ulich, *Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1947).

the invention of prominent leaders who were advocating a sociopolitical revolution that favored rising class interests. The leaders often referred to foreign examples when promoting change. The American proponents of the common school cited Prussian and French precedent. Lord Forster, arguing in 1870 for the United Kingdom's First Education Act, said: "If we are to hold our position among men of our own race or among the nations of the world we must make up the smallness of our numbers by increasing the intellectual force of the individual." [45]

The six new concepts and the institutional patterns that evolved from these concepts largely displaced the former educational traditions. Yet each pattern built in some degree on the prior traditions of education, which were resident in the geographic space where they were conceived. Thus, the new French pattern, while rejecting the sacred thrust of earlier education, retained the prior emphasis on encyclopedic knowledge and other Enlightenment principles such as the stress on oral recitation and exams. In contrast, the new English and Prussian patterns retained the prior sacred emphasis. In Japan, the traditional emphasis on moral education was retained, while all other subjects were replaced by a Westernized curriculum. The new concepts were constructed through combining tradition, foreign ideas, and indigenous creativity.

4. *Notions of who should be taught, what they should be taught, how people learn, and how education should be organized follow from a society's conception(s) of the ideal person.*—Institutions are built with a concern for internal consistency, and the foundation of this search for consistency is the values or goals the institutions seek to realize. In education, these values or goals are embodied in the ideal person. Where the ideal person is an elite (as in the case of the United Kingdom and France), the educational system is likely to be more restrictive. Where the ideal person is expected to have diverse functions, the curriculum is likely to be more holistic. Table 1 summarizes my understanding of the key decisions made by the leaders of selected early modern societies as they constructed their new educational systems.

5. *The representative school is the principal vehicle for nurturing the ideal person.*—Among the first acts of educational leaders was the creation of a "representative" school to embody their new ideals.[46] In the Japanese case this was the new primary school; within 4 years of the Charter Oath on education, some 22,000 new primary schools had been established, following a common ideal. American educational leaders were fixated on the college. Only 16 years after the pilgrims landed at Plymouth Rock, Harvard College was founded; by the time of the American Revolution there were 85 colleges

[45] Michael Young, *The Rise of the Meritocracy* (London: Penguin, 1955), p. 34.

[46] Detlef K. Muller, Fritz Ringer, and Brian Simon, *The Rise of the Modern Educational System: Structural Change and Social Reproduction 1870–1920* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1967).

in the 13 colonies, compared with only two colleges in all of England. Napoleon, concerned about building a new technical elite from the ranks of the French bourgeoisie, placed his greatest stress on the lycée and the *grande école polytechnique.*

6. *A society is likely to establish numerous schools, which, while they vary in level, size, and location, reflect the institutional pattern of the representative school.*—The initial thinking about schooling was instituted in these first representative schools. Later thinking about education for other levels tended to derive from this initial thinking. For example, the organization of Japanese middle and high schools tends to follow from the primary school; at all three levels, there is a common curriculum with no electives, and students stay in the same homeroom classrooms throughout the day, while teachers move from class to class. In contrast, in the United States high schools and junior high schools tend to adopt the institutional pattern of the college, with students enjoying numerous electives that they pursue by moving from one classroom to another throughout the day.

7. *Educational change, since the emergence of these six concepts and their representative schools, has largely focused on their refinement, expansion, and systematization.*—As will be noted below, in each of the core societies there are periodic cries of crisis followed by much reform rhetoric. Despite that, education today in all of these societies bears a very close institutional resemblance to the education conceived in the early decades of the respective modern revolutions.

8. *Educational leaders, in the process of systematizing education, seek to buffer the "core" educational processes from external influence.*—Mechanisms such as boards or trustees, school boards, and public exams are instituted for this purpose. In times of economic strain, the buffers established for universities and the vocational/technical sector are most vulnerable. In times of political/ideological strain, the primary levels are most vulnerable.

9. *Each institutional pattern provokes counterpatterns that have some impact on educational practice—the magnitude of which depends on the openness of the political system and on the strength of opposition politics.*—Just as each of these new educational reforms replaced a prior pattern, critics soon emerged to suggest yet other alternatives. Over time, the thinking of these critics became more elaborate and was either promoted by independent educators or opposition political organizations. For example, in Japan some of the early Meiji leaders withdrew from the ruling oligarchy to found their own private schools (later enlarged as comprehensive school systems). In the United Kingdom, the socialist party was persistently critical of the elitist education favored by the dominant conservative party, and especially after World War II, when the socialists enjoyed power over an extended period of time, they translated their critical thinking into new schools such as the comprehensive high

school and the redbrick universities.[47] In the Soviet Union there was always a strain between the proponents of education to cultivate the Soviet citizen and those stressing the need for a higher level of technical expertise; yet another group stressed the need for a more humanistic education. In the American case Diane Ravitch has provided an excellent account of the persisting dialectic between excellence and equity.[48]

10. *The six patterns have had a profound impact on the educational landscape, resulting in the worldwide diffusion of six distinct patterns of education.*—I feature only six institutional patterns in this schema as, over most of the modern period, these were the only societies that both enjoyed continuing national integrity and were sufficiently powerful as to have extensive influence, through empire, trade, and other means, over other nations. Education in most other modern settings came to emulate the educational institutions of these six core nations, as I will illustrate below.

So, to reiterate, in this schema there are six institutionS of modern education, each developing along a distinctive trajectory. There is at least one premodern pattern, the Islamic pattern, that also deserves note, as it resisted the onslaught of modernism and has continued to exert a major influence on the practice of education.

Comparing the Major Patterns

The core patterns emerged at different periods in the global process of modernization. In each instance there were unique confluences of internal and external forces, necessarily inviting distinctive responses. Referring to the parallel cyclical linear model portrayed in figure 1 above, proposition 2 stresses the different starting dates for each institution (staggered across the *x* axis), proposition 6 notes that the institutions may vary in their development rates and, hence, the angle of their trajectory, and proposition 9 highlights the conflicts in each institution's development. The particular circumstances associated with each pattern limit their comparability. Nevertheless, several broad generalizations can be advanced.

Those patterns that emerged as one outcome of major social revolutions tended to express a greater departure from the past and to move toward expansion and systematization at a more rapid pace. The French, Japanese, and Russian systems were most closely associated with such revolutions, and in each case the main pieces of the new system were articulated in a decade and largely realized within three decades. In contrast, the English system evolved at perhaps the slowest pace, reflecting the ability of English parliamentary democracy to avert a major revolutionary rupture.

Those systems created out of a peasant and/or worker revolution tended

[47] Keith Evans, *The Development and Structure of the English School System* (London: Hodder & Stoughton, 1985).

[48] Diane Ravitch, *The Troubled Crusade: American Education, 1945–1980* (New York: Basic Books, 1983).

to place a greater stress on equality for all. The American Revolution gave birth to the phrase "all men are created equal," and the French Revolution proposed "liberty, fraternity, and equality." But both of these revolutions were essentially urban middle-class bourgeois revolutions, and the major educational beneficiaries were these same classes; for example, school funding in the United States became related to the wealth of local communities, thus sharply handicapping most rural areas. In contrast, in Japan many of the core revolutionaries were lower samurai from rural and comparatively peripheral areas. These samurai insisted on the development of provisions in various social services that insured equal treatment for rural people; for example, special regulations and allowances were introduced to attract qualified teachers to mountainous areas and offshore islands.

The latecomers, reflecting their genesis in a period of heightened nationalism, tended to place a greater stress on moral education. Most emphatic was the determination of the Russian system to develop a socialist consciousness and of the Japanese to emphasize moral education and imperial statism. In contrast, the French system, formed on the basis of Enlightenment ideas that stressed the separation of church and state and the supremacy of reason, tended to minimize the school's socializing role. Similarly, in the United States, by the late nineteenth century family and church were looked to for values education rather than the school. Prussia would seem an exception to this generalization, as piety and loyalty were strong themes in Prussian popular education from the early eighteenth century.

Those patterns created later tended to be more centralized and to receive relatively more state support—and they incidentally also had a leaner administrative system. By the middle of the nineteenth century it was widely accepted that both work and war required literate men; the presumed national benefits of popular education encouraged the newer nations to not only assume responsibility for funding education but also for insuring its effective realization. Japan, on the advice of an American adviser, briefly experimented with local funding of education only to discover that the people would not pay, so after only a few years of this experiment, the Meiji state took over the full burden of financing the public school system. The new Soviet Russian state was, from the beginning, determined to use central government funds for financing education. The reliance on state support was associated with a uniform curriculum, a central system for exams and textbook production, and other centralizing tendencies. These apparently led to greater efficiency. For example, in Japan today only one-eighth of all educational personnel are involved in administration, whereas in the United States over three-eighths of educational personnel are involved in administration and support.[49]

[49] See Cummings, "Examining the Educational Production Function."

TABLE 2
PERCENT OF EDUCATIONAL EXPENDITURES ALLOCATED TO DIFFERENT SCHOOL LEVELS IN OECD COUNTRIES, 1994

Country	Preschool	Primary	Secondary	Tertiary
Japan	1.6	42.0	45.7	10.7
France	11.5	20.1	49.8	18.7
Germany	7.0	15.6	52.6	24.8
United Kingdom	1.6	30.9	46.8	20.7
United States	3.5	34.2	34.5	27.9
OECD mean	7.0	32.3	42.6	25.7

SOURCE.—Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), *Eduction at a Glance: OECD Indicators, 1995 Edition* (Paris: OECD, 1995).

Those institutions created later moved faster to universal mass education—and to place more of their funds in basic education. The commitment of the late developers to mass literacy and to the use of schools for promoting officially approved values led them to place an especially strong emphasis on the early school years, for it is in these years that it is possible to have the greatest impact. Nations such as Japan and Russia place a considerable stress on basic education. In contrast, France under Napoleon looked to the educational system to train engineers for the army and the empire; thus the major stress was on the lycée and the *grandes écoles* for this advanced technical education of the few. The United States developed a fascination with higher education. Thus, as recent studies show, a greater proportion of U.S. educational expenditures go to higher education, and a greater proportion of Japan's expenditures go to basic education, while on the European continent, a greater proportion goes to secondary education.[50] This difference is illustrated in table 2.

The Explanatory Power of the Institutions Approach

Our attention thus far has been focused on the core patterns of education as they were implemented in different settings. However, one reason for our focus on these six examples is that, in each instance, the nation-state responsible for building a modern educational system also decided to build an empire. And as the respective nations expanded their empires and systematized their offices for colonial administration, they saw fit to include an educational dimension in their portfolios of colonial public services. The imperial nations differed in their enthusiasm for sponsoring colonial education, with the Americans and Japanese being the most enthusiastic and the French possibly the least so. But in their devotion to exporting their respec-

[50] OECD, *OECD at a Glance* (Paris: OECD, 1995); also see M. Edith Rasell and Lawrence Mishel, "Shortchanging Education: How U.S. Spending on Grades K–12 Lags Behind Other Industrial Nations," Economic Policy Institute Briefing Paper (EPI, Washington, D.C., 1990), p. 11.

tive indigenous models to the colonies, they were all alike.[51] In various areas it is possible to observe the imprint of the core models.

Structure of Finance and Control

A recent comparative study of the decentralization and privatization of education in 129 countries found that there were essentially eight patterns for coordinating these two administrative/financial options.[52] At the one extreme were some nations that were totally centralized and did not allow a private sector; at the other extreme were several nations where the central and local government stayed out of schooling, leaving this task to the private sector. In between were the many nations that were partly decentralized, partly privatized. Those under the influence of the former socialist bloc were least likely to have private schools. Of particular interest was the finding that most former French colonies and the Latin American nations had patterns similar to those in France—for example, a relatively poorly supported and highly selective primary level followed by a more generously supported and academically rich secondary level. Similarly, the former Japanese colonies have patterns similar to the Japanese model. In other words, in regard to centralization and privatization, the former colonies still tend to follow the model set up by the former colonial powers.

Administrative Nomenclature

During the colonial period, the basic administrative structure for managing extensive educational systems was established, and each imperial power developed a distinct terminology. The British empire favored such concepts as district office, circuit or division office, state office, and the central ministry of education. The French developed a different language reflecting the homeland pattern of commune, department, academy, and university. The Americans used such terms as local school districts, counties, and states. To a remarkable extent these distinctive traditions of nomenclature remain in place. An interesting example is Cameroon, a nation that now includes territories that had previously been under English and French administration. While there have been initiatives to increase the integration

[51] There are a number of excellent studies of colonial education. Carnoy focuses on the transplant of the British system to India and Jamaica; Kelly examines the French assimilationist approach in French Indo-China; Ashby highlights both the British and French impact on higher education in India and Africa; Tsurumi looks at the Japanese approach in Taiwan; and Hong follows up with a thoughtful study of Korea. See Martin Carnoy, *Education as Cultural Imperialism* (New York: D. McKay, 1974); Gail Kelly, *Franco-Vietnamese Schools, 1918–1938: Regional Development and Implications for National Integration* (Madison: University of Wisconsin—Madison, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, 1982); Eric Ashby, *Universities: British, Indian, African: A Study in the Ecology of Higher Education* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1966); E. P. Tsurumi, *Japanese Colonial Education in Taiwan, 1895–1945* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 1977); M. Hong, "Japanese Colonial Education in Korea, 1910–1945" (Ph.D. diss., Harvard Graduate School of Education, 1992).

[52] W. K. Cummings and Abby Riddell, "Alternative Policies for the Finance, Control, and Delivery of Basic Education," *International Journal of Educational Research* 21, no. 8 (1994): 751–76.

of these territories, their educational systems remain largely distinct, as reflected in the terminology for describing the parallel educational structures and the parallel administrative systems.[53]

Not only does the language of administration persist, but so do many of the colonial practices relating to selection and assignment of personnel, remuneration, and promotion; similarly, the organizational charts of the central ministries often reflect colonial precedent. In sum, in many countries the colonial imprint is firmly etched in current practice.

Language of Instruction

In the colonial period, the language of instruction in the top schools was invariably the language of the imperial power, as this was the language used by the colonial government that provided the major employment opportunities for graduates of the colonial educational system. In many colonial educational systems, schools of the lower tier were allowed to carry out instruction in the "vernacular" languages. However, in the colonial systems of Japan and France, there was little tolerance for these vernacular options. With independence, the former colonial territories became free to choose whatever language of instruction they preferred. Those that achieved independence through revolutionary struggle such as Indonesia, China, and various Middle Eastern countries were most likely to reject the colonial language, while many others initially maintained the former colonial arrangement. Over time an increasing number of countries have revised their approach to make one or more indigenous languages the official language of instruction while retaining the former colonial language or one of the other metropolitan languages (usually English) as an alternate language. Even so, today the majority of the nations of the world use one of the metropolitan languages as their primary language of instruction.

Curriculum

A number of comparative studies have been conducted on the structure of national curricula. These studies tend to stress that most nations follow a uniform modern curriculum with a stress on mathematics, the sciences, and social studies. However, a careful examination of the evidence collected in these studies indicates a strong residual colonial influence on national curriculums.[54] Countries influenced by the Asian and Russian models are more likely to stress "whole person" education, while those influenced by the French model place the greatest stress on the cognitive mastery of academic specialties, what Holmes referred to as "encyclopaedism."[55] Similarly,

[53] Ministry of Education, *Handbook of Education* (Yaounde, Cameroon: Ministry of Education, 1992), as cited in William K. Cummings and Frank P. Dall, *Implementing Quality Primary Education for Countries in Transition* (New York: Unicef, 1995), p. 43.

[54] See the challenging report of John Willinsky, *Learning to Divide the World: Education at Empire's End* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1998).

[55] Holmes and McLean (n. 22 above), p. 11.

Meyer et al. find that one of the strongest predictors of whether a country includes religion in its curriculum is colonial background; countries under English colonial tutelage were more likely to approve of religious studies, while those under French and American tutelage were less likely.[56]

Exams

Related both to decisions on the language of instruction and curriculum structure are the procedures that contemporary educational systems use to evaluate their students.[57] Remarkably, a large proportion of those nations that were once under British tutelage still look to British examining bodies to supervise the ordinary and advanced-level accomplishments of their secondary-level students. Those under French tutelage often look to France, particularly for secondary-level completion, as this is a major criterion for entrance to a French university. In contrast with the European influence is the growing influence of the U.S. approach of machine gradable multiple-choice tests. A well-known example is the TOEFL test, and American experts (often associated with the Educational Testing Service) in collaboration with indigenous colleagues have introduced these procedures into at least 20 nations, primarily for university admissions. Nations that have colonial and or strong neocolonial ties with the United States are the most receptive to this form of testing.[58]

Rates of Access and Retention

The Japanese and Soviet emphases on primary education led these systems to expand their primary sectors at the most rapid rates, and to reach full enrollment of all primary aged children in the shortest period.[59] Japan, which began its modern education system in 1872, had full enrollment by 1900, 4 years before the United Kingdom made a legal commitment to compulsory education. France, with its focus on secondary education, was slow to promote universal access and was so painstaking in insuring that children achieved the appropriate academic standard that only a relatively small proportion of children completed primary education until well into the twentieth century. These differences in practice were translated to the colonies and, even after the colonies gained independence, were perpetuated in the postcolonial educational systems. Thus, the developing Francophone countries' sphere tends to have the lowest rates of access and the highest rates of

[56] Meyer et al. (n. 24 above).

[57] Max A. Eckstein and Harold J. Noah, *Secondary School Examinations: International Perspectives on Policies and Practice* (New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press, 1993).

[58] An interesting discussion of the issues can be found in Stephen P. Heyneman, "Uses of Examinations in Developing Countries: Selection, Research, and Education Sector Management," *International Journal of Educational Development* 7, no. 4 (1987): 251–63.

[59] Jeffrey Williamson, "Human Capital Deepening, Inequality and Demographic Events along the Asia Pacific Rim," in *Human Resource Development along the Asia-Pacific Rim,* ed. Naohiro Ogawa et al. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 129–58.

TABLE 3
CROSS-NATIONAL CORRELATES OF NATIONAL ENROLLMENT RATES, 1985

Correlate	Primary Enrollment Ratio	Secondary Enrollment Ratio
GNP per capita	.29	.67
Population	.16	.04
Population density	.10	.20
Urbanization	.52	.81
Ethnic complexity	−.36	−.45
Centralized government	−.37	−.53
Centralized finance	−.20	−.40
English tradition	−.09	−.04
Continental (French) tradition	−.30	−.46

SOURCE.—Dean Nielson and William K. Cummings, eds., *Quality Education for All: Community Oriented Approaches* (New York: Garland Publishing, 1997), p. 17.

dropouts, while those influenced by the Soviet and Japanese models excel in these respects.[60] Table 3, which reports the correlates of several factors with 1985 gross enrollment rates at the primary and secondary level for 85 countries, shows that countries with a Francophone tradition have the lowest enrollment ratios.

Purpose and Procedures in Higher Education

The institutional approach even proves useful for explaining important variation in the purposes and procedures of higher educational institutions. Germany and France represent the oldest models. In the German case, under the leadership of Baron von Humboldt, the German university made an important commitment to basic research. France, rather than imitate this model, decided to focus research in institutes, assigning the function of elite teaching to the universities and especially to the *grandes écoles.* The English university also placed its primary focus on teaching in order to nurture essential leadership qualities in each new generation of elites. In contrast to these older universities, the American university, especially after the Morill Act (1862), developed an important commitment to public service; this pattern has been emulated in many of the newly developing societies.

A recent analysis of the International Survey of the Academic Profession indicates that institutional commitments have a clear imprint on the academic roles of the respective systems, as illustrated in table 4.[61] A related study suggests that the systems vary in the types of opportunities they make

[60] H. Dean Nielsen and William K. Cummings, *Quality Education for All: Community-Oriented Approaches* (New York: Garland, 1997).

[61] William K. Cummings, ed., "Special Issue: The Service University in Comparative Perspective," *Higher Education* 35, no. 1 (January 1998): 1–12.

TABLE 4
AVERAGE NUMBER OF HOURS PROFESSORS IN 11 COUNTRIES DEVOTE TO DIFFERENT ACADEMIC DUTIES

	Teaching	Research	Service	Administration	Other
Australia	22.4	13.6	5.1	8.5	3.3
Brazil	17.3	12.3	10.1	6.0	4.0
Germany	17.3	19.5	7.0	13.3	4.1
Hong Kong	19.0	13.9	6.6	8.7	4.2
Israel	17.7	20.7	6.2	6.1	4.1
Japan	19.4	21.0	5.6	6.4	4.3
Korea	23.1	17.2	4.6	5.1	4.1
Mexico	16.9	11.8	11.2	7.0	4.7
Sweden	16.5	17.1	6.7	8.0	4.8
United Kingdom	21.8	13.6	6.6	10.1	4.2
United States	18.9	17.0	9.0	7.2	4.0

available to women, both as students and teachers.[62] The English and the Continental systems, because of their steeper academic hierarchies, provide the fewest opportunities for women's advancement. Among the older systems, those that favor service and teaching are somewhat more open to women. Most notable is the prominence of women in the relatively newer systems of Australia and Latin America.

Overseas Study and Intellectual Linkages

The former colonial powers seek to perpetuate through such means as the British Council, the Alliance Française, United States Information Agency, and the Japan Foundation their influence in their former colonies. Because of the similarities in educational systems and even in content, pupils who complete education in a former colony often find they are best prepared to pursue further education in the higher educational institutions of their former imperial nation. Thus pupils from India and Kenya look to the United Kingdom, those from the Philippines and Korea (which the United States helped to reconstruct after World War II) look to the United States, and those from Francophone Africa look to France. Over time, the destinations of overseas study have gradually pluralized, and in view of the vast size of the American higher educational system, increasing numbers of students from all nations have selected the United States.[63] Even so, the colonial ties are still evident, sustained through foreign assistance and both formal (e.g., the various Commonwealth associations) and informal ties.

In sum, the institutional approach enables an understanding of a wide range of educational issues. Other comparative theories, because of their

[62] William K. Cummings and Olga Bain, "Barriers to the Career Advancement of Academic Women: Societal, Institutional, Organizational or Gendered?" working paper (University of Buffalo, 1999).

[63] William K. Cummings, "Foreign Students," in *International Higher Education: An Encyclopedia,* ed. Philip Altbach (New York: Garland, 1991), pp. 107–25.

primary focus on the context of education as contrasted to its structure and processes, are not as helpful in accounting for many of the comparative and international educational issues discussed above.

The Futures of Late Modern Education

The focus of my remarks has been on modern education, which first emerged in the mid-eighteenth century and now is 250 years old. There is a widespread belief, both inside and outside of the educational world, that modern education is in trouble. Indeed, in country after country there are frequent cries for reform. Hence, many reforms have been launched. But what can be made of all of this? Will modern education be dethroned, and, if so, what will be the future or futures of education?

Of course, some theorists—postmodern and chaos theorists—suggest that education is losing its structure, and there is no clear future.[64] But, at least from the perspective outlined above, education cannot realize a change of the magnitude suggested by these theories unless there is a concurrent revolution in ideology, politics, and the economy. There may be chaos at the edges leading to interesting innovations such as home schooling and an expansion of shadow educational providers. But the impact, at least for the next few decades, is likely to be modest.

Another line of thinking, prominent in such international institutions as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank, sees a single future shaped by the exigencies of high technology and the global economy. The unifuturists argue that educational systems need to prepare for this inexorable future by raising academic standards, stressing global skills, including language and mastery of information technology. A corollary of this approach is that the upper tier of all educational systems should stress the same cutting edge fields: the information sciences, biotechnology, the environmental sciences, business management, and so on.

In contrast to the unifuturists, "institutionS theory" would propose several futures that build on the foundations or strengths of the current educational systems.[65] Thus the United States and Western Europe might continue to pioneer in the information and communication sciences and in the leisure industries; East Asia might pioneer in the biological sciences as well as selected applied sciences; while several of the developing countries might search for their comparative advantage through stressing agriculture, light

[64] For an interesting application of chaos theory to education, see Ash Hartwell, "Scientific Ideas and Education in the 21st Century," in *The International Handbook of Education and Development: Preparing Schools, Students, and Nations for the Twenty-First Century,* ed. William K. Cummings and Noel McGinn (Oxford: Pergamon, 1997), pp. 675–93.

[65] The many futures argument is developed in Cummings and McGinn, eds.

industry, and construction. The specific choices made by each country will differ, leading to multiple futures.

Implications for Our Field

I would like to conclude by repeating my conviction that the Comparative and International Education Society needs to restore its commitment to the comparative perspective. There are many roads to this end, but I have placed special emphasis on institutionS theory, as I am convinced that it is robust, and it reflects the society's intellectual heritage. I have presented a particular set of propositions that reflects and builds on that heritage.

The institutionS approach has a number of implications for the conduct of research. First, on methods, it favors a revival of the classical holistic or ideal-type methodology over the "scientific" approach of dividing social phenomena into discrete variables. The task is to search for relations between institutional complexes as independent variables and particular outcomes such as language policy or teacher educational practices as dependent variables.

While the institutionS approach favors comparisons, it opposes senseless comparisons such as those often used by international agencies, which report differences between aggregate statistical categories such as Asia, Africa, or Latin America; there is too much variation within these categories. Real differences are grounded in time and place. Futhermore, while the institutionS approach encourages comparisons, they need not be between nations. Comparisons of cities or large metropolitan areas may be more interesting and even more meaningful in our new global village. Similarly, it makes sense to place a greater emphasis on comparisons between lesser political units such as states or regions. Comparisons of the same unit over time are also important. However, not all research needs to be comparative. Case studies are important stepping stones to comparisons, particularly if they are designed with an eye to other cases that have been or will be completed.

The core argument is that the institutionS approach has more explanatory power than do other approaches for the questions that interest us and, more generally, for the questions facing education as a whole—and that is the most critical criterion in the evaluation of theories. I have also noted that we will be in good company if we place more emphasis on the institutionS approach, for we find a similar tendency in nearly all of the allied social sciences.

It is essential that the Comparative and International Education Society keeps a focus on its intellectual core—the institutionS of education. And every comparative educator should respect a simple dictum: compare, compare, compare! If we do this, we will surely make a unique and critical contribution to the professional community of educators.