

Life and Culture as Support for Education

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Hasegawa Nyozeikan (1875-1969), born in Fukagawa, Tokyo in 1875, was a progressive journalist and thinker who maintained an anti-authority and anti-fascist stance throughout the Meiji, Taisho, and Showa periods. He developed a unique "philosophy of common sense" based on the ethos of the craftsmen's world of downtown Edo, while also learning from British empiricism and American pragmatism (Hasegawa, 1987). In a series of lectures given on NHK after World War II, he discussed culture, philosophy, democracy, ethics, entertainment, religion, and education in the crisp downtown Edo dialect of rakugo. Even today, when the media environment has changed drastically, he seems to have included some thoughts on "culture and education," the theme of this research discussion, that are worth listening to.

According to Nyozeikan, there are two types of education. One is "verbal education," which is provided by educators through educational institutions, and the other is "education of life", which is provided in daily life between people and between people and things. For the former to function, he says, the latter must be strongly alive.

This educational theory is easy to understand at first, but as one reads further, it begins to take on a more complex aspect. In other words, even in school education, which mainly focuses on "language education," "life education" through mutual communication by means of the teacher's facial expressions, actions, movements, and vocal sounds is also at work, and "language education" also exists in "life education. For example, the latter is said to be "education through language or action in literature, drama, storytelling, rakugo, and other forms of education" (Ibid., p. 245). He places particular emphasis on drama.

As I mentioned earlier, seeing with the eyes and hearing with the ears all the phenomena and forms of human life that come into contact with the sense of sight and hearing, this is the education of life. It is not life itself, but the art of living, which is also a kind of life education. These are not literature of written language, but literature of

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spoken language. (Ibid., p. 245)

For Nyozekean, the basis of school education is the "education of life" in the world of action, but art, which looks back on that world and expresses it in a fictional way, also plays an important role. It seems that Nyozekean considers the two together as "culture" and considers them to support education. So, what does he mean by "culture"? Let us take a closer look. In his lecture, Nyozekean, first and foremost, bitterly criticizes the cultural philosophy influenced by German philosophy (probably the neo-Kantian school) that dominated prewar Japan, especially during the Taisho Democracy period. They say that the culture they refer to means the idea of pure and absolute beauty that is far away from our daily lives, and high art as the embodiment of such beauty, and that this is a perversion of the true meaning of the word. They counterpoint this with the British way of seeing culture.

Culture, however, is the form of our human life. Form is to the mind as it is to objects. [...omitted...].

In other words, according to empirical thinking, it comes from the relationship between man and man, and from the relationship between man and nature, and it is not a "idea" that comes first and foremost, but a form of human behavior.

Actions, in other words, are the things we do daily, such as eating, exercising, playing games, and various occupational tasks. While you do these things, you will naturally develop a form of behavior. That is culture. (Ibid., pp. 47-48)

The interaction between people and between people and nature and the environment creates "feel-good forms," sharpening the senses and developing culture. Thus, while based on the everyday world, the culture of form develops in a complex and specific way along all aspects of professional life, and the culture of objects and the culture of mind of carpenters, peasants, scientists, philosophers, and religious people, respectively, develop. And all of them were born and developed to enhance everyday life, not for the sake of beauty per se, or for the sake of a priori ideas.

As he himself noted, his understanding of culture, based on British empiricism, recalls the aesthetic empiricism of pragmatism. However, we must not forget that Nyozekean's family was the master carpenter who led the construction of Edo Castle. Although not preserved in written form and therefore out of our sight, Edo thought probably included not only the Confucian and Buddhist ideas of the samurai and

educated people, but also a kind of rational and ethical life philosophy, or ethos, that was nurtured in the lives of merchants and craftsmen and supported their education and livelihood. I believe that this ethos was still alive in Nyozezan, who was born in the early Meiji period, and as a result, he was attracted to and studied British empiricism and American pragmatism, which were similar, and developed a language to discuss modern society. For Nyoseki, culture is the totality of the forms of things and minds with a kind of ethics, which are created through the interaction between human beings in their daily lives, and between human beings and nature and the environment, and which have been refined and developed into art, thought, and religion.

By the way, the idea of insisting on the close relationship between life and culture has something in common with Muneyoshi Yanagi (1889-1961), who led the folk-art movement, "Mingei movement", in the Taisho era (1912-1926), although it was still before World War II. As is well known, Yanagi was a contributor to "Shirakaba," a religious philosopher, a William Blake scholar, and an introducer of modern European art such as Rodin's. He was also deeply interested in local cultures and made efforts to introduce and preserve them, sometimes in opposition to the state power. He was a person who devoted himself to the introduction and preservation of local cultures including Korean Peninsula, Okinawa, Ainu, and Tohoku. Moreover, he paid attention not to the works of famous artists, but to vessels, kimonos, and tools made by nameless craftsmen. In the Buddhist aesthetics based on the Pure Land philosophy that Yanagi developed after World War II, he saw in these works a beauty that transcended the dualism of beauty and ugliness, the "beauty of the indivisible," and criticized such a thought which says that the beauty is the result of skillful workmanship and the ugliness fails to attain that level of perfection. We see beauty in the work of the "Myokonin" (uneducated pious believers of the Jodo Shinshu sect), which is born out of a desire to make something beautiful, and which, while aiming for practical use, is the result of the potential of the object itself ("jinenhoni"). Fearing the collapse of this world, he developed the Mingei (folk art) movement. At first glance, this may appear to be a restoration of the past, but in fact, it was a cultural editorial effort to create a new culture.

About one hundred years after Nyozezan criticized the cultural philosophy of the neo-Kantian philosophy, Kulturwissenschaften (cultural science), a cross-disciplinary cultural study that transcends the boundaries of the humanities and sciences, is flourishing in Germany, and the traditional German concept of culture that Nyozezan had criticized is being substantially modified. This is characterized by the shocking title of Friedrich

Kittler's collection of essays, *"Die Austreibung des Geistes aus den Geisteswissenschaften"* (1980), which was one of the leading exponents of cultural science. Banish the spirit and study culture. What does it mean? His main work, *"Writing Systems (Aufschreibesysteme) 1800-1900"* (originally published in 1985, translated into Japanese in 2021), is a media-historical cultural study that exposes how our perception of the world changes when the tools of writing change. Kittler's position criticizes the view that culture is an externalization of spirit, a basic assumption from Hegel to Geisteswissenschaftliche Pädagogik and perhaps the Frankfurt School, and argues that the objects and media, although being considered mere tools of the spirit, are the main subject of the discussion of people and culture. That is, the cultural technology, which is the way of handling objects and media (letters, paper, printing technology, typewriters, phonographs, canvases, boards, films, etc.), must be studied as main theme. The emphasis has shifted from subjects and spirit to objects and media. This is a way of looking at culture based on the same concept as the "Actor Network Theory (ANT)" of Latour, who studies scientific anthropology in France.

There, the psyche or the spirit as an entity and the human being as a reflective and conscious person of life, in other words, as a subject, is also not assumed. This idea is said to be already recognized in Cassirer's "philosophy of symbolic forms," which is also considered one of the origins of the cultural studies. Cassirer himself began his work as a neo-Kantian in Marburg, but in his interactions at the University of Hamburg with another source of cultural science, Aby Warburg, who pursued cross-disciplinary iconography as a matter of cultural memory while evading the scrutiny of the "border guards", Cassirer underwent a departure from transcendental philosophy, in which the spirit plays a leading role, to symbol philosophy, in which the symbolic form seems to be the subject. According to Cassirer, culture is nothing more than a network of various symbolic forms in tension with each other, behind which one cannot find a unified spirit or thought (see Makabe 2022).

In this way, culture is no longer the totality of classical works and texts created by the spirit, but the totality of cultural technologies carried out in daily life and produced as a result, and human beings are merely the performers of these practical acts. For example, Hans Belting's image anthropology (Bildanthropologie) and Horst Bredekamp's "Imageology (Bildwissenschaft)" are not interpretations of the spiritual meaning of paintings and sculptures that are considered masterpieces, but rather the previously neglected illustrations, notated the "Imageology (Bildwissenschaft)" focuses on the relationship between the image (Bild) and its material support (media), as well as its practical use. It is a pragmatics, not a semantics, of the icon. The focus is on how images

are used in everyday life and in ritual practice, what meaning emerges from this performative process, and what kind of world emerges.

Thus, contemporary German cultural science seems to be changing the traditional concept of culture. Culture is no longer spoken of in the singular, but in the plural. The logic behind the practical acts (Praktiken) of using objects, media, and cultural technologies is explored, and changes in perception of the world through media, identity transformation of ethnicity groups, and cultural memory are considered.

But how does this redefinition of the concept of culture by the cultural studies affect pedagogy? This may already be seen in the historical anthropological research of Christoph Wulff and his colleagues, who consider culture as rituals and performative acts based on the concept of mimesis. In Japan, I think we can feel some of this influence in the studies of Shoko Suzuki and Yasuo Imai, as well as in the presentations by the speakers.

There are two questions I would like to ask you all in common here.

(i) Is a "cultural scientific pedagogy" possible? Can we really talk about culture and education without the "spirit"? Pedagogy has so far taken subject formation, autonomy or freedom, culture, humanity, and nation-building as its main concepts when discussing the relationship between education and culture. However, cultural science observes cultural issues from the opposite direction as described above, from the standpoint of the post-human, and perhaps describes education in this direction as well. We can already see this in the study of "fusion of humanities, arts, and sciences". However, I believe that this trend and "pedagogy" will eventually separate. We cannot think of "pedagogy" without the main axis concept as described above. Or are we witnessing the "end of pedagogy"?

(ii) Although I have said that the cultural concept of cultural science is coming closer to the cultural concept of Nyozeikan and Yanagi, it is also true that there is a significant difference that cannot be overlooked. The culture of food, clothing, and house that make up our lives have already become entangled in the culture industry, the massive information industry, and the global economy, and the ethos that has been cultivated in tradition and has ethical implications has already been lost. Nyozeikan and Yanagi hoped that the practical acts and behaviors of daily life and physical and performative culture

would play a role in supporting education through letters and books, but this may be a difficult assumption to make in the present age.

At the same time, however, I also believe this. No matter how much we have changed, we must live with our children, who will be responsible for the future, by sharing food, clothing, and house with them. Even if the family and lifestyle no longer have the form envisioned by Nyozeke and Yanagi, we must still live a life in which we can feel joy, anger, sorrow, and pleasure with them. If this is the case, then we need to consider a new form of life and culture that will support education. And this is first and foremost a problem for us as adults ourselves.

So, I ask you all. Is it possible to conceive of a new life and culture that supports education today? If so, what will be important in doing so? Ms. Mishiro's klezmer music revival movement sounds like a promising example. Ms. Komatsu's ABR experiment as "activation of internal images" seems to me to provide an opportunity to create a new culture by rethinking our lives in a reflective way. In addition, Mr. Yamana's position of seeking a new metaphor of memory between the human metaphor of memory and the network metaphor of memory, I sense a "pedagogical" attitude that is different from the trends in cultural science. I would be happy to hear from you about this part of your research, which is out of the scope of cultural science trends.

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