

Orality, Image, Memory and *Bildung*:

Toward the Possibility of Educational Study Based on *Kulturwissenschaft*

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Purpose of the Symposium

In “Culture as an Educational Problem”, the thematic research discussion of the 51st PESJ conference held at Keio University in 2008, it was pointed out that modern Japanese education has become like “a cast-off shell” which has lost the support of culture. This situation appears to be accelerating under the data-driven society. While sharing this awareness of the problem, we will approach the classic issue of “culture and education” from a new angle in this symposium.

At this point, various studies of “cultural science (*Kulturwissenschaft*)”, which have flourished in the German speaking world since the 1990s, could be consulted. According to Aleida Assmann, a prominent memory researcher (Assmann, Aleida 2017: *Einführung in die Kulturwissenschaft. Grundbegriffe, Themen, Fragestellungen*, Berlin: Erich Schmidt Verlag.), it is targeted on, like Anglo American cultural studies, not only high culture but also everyday activities. It is characterized by its cross disciplinary nature, relying on findings from semiotics, speech act theory, iconology, literary studies, life story studies, anthropology, archaeology, neuroscience, evolutionary biology, and other disciplines. Its specific developments are too diverse, but they share a loose commonality in the recognition that they see culture as the totality of practical acts based on various symbols (Assmann 2017, S. 24ff.). Whereas the traditional humanities (or, in German terms, *Geisteswissenschaft*) see culture as an externalization of the human “spirit (*Geist*)”,

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find its essence in academics and arts as high culture, and see it as opposed to material things, nature, and technology, this cultural science sees culture not singularly but pluralistically. Furthermore, it examines issues of identity (self) formation and cultural transformation within the framework of the triadic relationship between symbolic act, media and technology, and the body. Symbolic act supports representations, media and technology serve as their material support, and the body functions as the organ of symbol production and reception. Among these, we will focus on the themes of “orality, image, and memory”, which have been neglected since the modern era in comparison to “literacy, books and history”. These themes intersect with contemporary issues such as publicness, gender, and pathos, and will become important in discussing human development and education in the future.

But can such cultural science become “cultural scientific education” as it is? We will think about this together with the presenters and participants.

Points of the Discussion

1. Discussion on the possibility of applying the results of *Kulturwissenschaft* to educational study.
2. Discussion on conceiving a new vision of life and culture that supports education in our time.
3. Discussion on the validity of the opposing axes of “orality, image, and memory” and “literacy, books, and history”.