

# The Possible Broadening of the Conceptualisation of Philosophy as a Shaping Factor of Education Systems

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## **Abstract**

*This article defends the claim that the philosophical aspect has been seriously underrated in the scheme of the conceptualization of contextual societal forces shaping education systems. The rise of neo-Marxist paradigms since the 1970s has resulted in a disproportionate emphasis on social and economic systems as factors shaping national education systems. However, empirical research has recently rendered evidence regarding how philosophical frameworks shape children's way of viewing the world and how they think. This article provides examples of this. Such philosophical and/or conceptual differences need to be factored in the design and planning of education systems. Some implications have been outlined regarding an expanded view of the role of philosophy and/or life-concept for the planning and development of education systems and for comparative education as a field of scholarly research.*

**Key words:** *comparative education; education; education systems; philosophical foundations; social forces.*

## **Introduction**

The biggest education expansion exercise in human history has taken place since the middle of the twentieth century. National education systems have moved from systems providing education to an elite minority to the systems of mass education. Because education is expensive, it has become the biggest single item of the budgets of most countries (Wolhuter, 1997; 2011-2). This expansion has been driven by a series of motivation types, ranging from political motivation (such as using education to forge national unity; to educate the population to become a part of the national political

process and to train the future force of civil servants), to the economic (for instance, viewing education as an instrument to affect economic growth and modernization) and the social (for example, employing education as a means to create social capital and as a means to make social mobility possible) (Wolhuter, 1993). For such a concentrated allocation of resources and for such a list of objectives, an education system should be as efficient as possible, and should therefore be well designed.

This article defends the claim that during the conceptualization and planning of an education system, as well as while considering the societal contextual forces relevant to such a process, the philosophical aspect has so far been understood too narrowly and has been underrated. Such an inadequate conceptualization is detectable in both the planning of education systems and in comparative education. The scholarly field has been preoccupied with the study of education systems. In order to defend this claim, we commence after this with a clarification of the concept “comparative education” and shed light on the subject of study and function of this field. This description of the subject of study of comparative education necessitates a short additional elucidation of the concept of “contextual societal forces shaping education systems”, as part of the theoretical framework of comparative education. Subsequently, the focus is shifted to the philosophical aspect as one of those forces shaping an education system, to which comparative education should pay attention. The prevailing view of the place and role of philosophy as a shaping force of education system is then assessed, against the backdrop of recently published research on the philosophical basis of the realization of the teaching and learning process. In conclusion, the implications of this assessment for comparative education itself, as well as for the planning of education systems in increasingly multicultural national societies are spelled out.

## **Comparative Education: Perspective and Significance**

In an attempt to define the concept “comparative education” and to demarcate its place within the set of Education Sciences, it has been stated that this field has a “three-in-one” perspective on education (Stone, 1983; Wolhuter, 2010, p.1).

Firstly, it offers an education system perspective. The act of education, i.e. of an educator educating an educand goes beyond the resolution power of the lens through which comparative education looks at the education phenomenon. Comparative education focuses on the education system, that is, a complex structure of educational policy, administrative structures, structures for teaching and learning, curricula, educational programmes, institutional fabric, assessment structures, etc., and educational support services.

Secondly, it offers an inter-societal perspective. Education systems are not viewed and studied as incidental structures with a life of their own, but as the outcome of societal forces which have created and shaped them. These contextual societal forces shaping education systems include demography, geography, social systems, economic systems, political systems and philosophy or life and worldview. In order

to comprehend a particular education system, it is necessary to go back to the societal forces which have shaped that education system. For example, in order to understand the Japanese education system, it is necessary to begin with a study of the geography of Japan, the demography of Japan, the social system in Japan, etc., including the dominant life and worldview in Japan.

Thirdly, comparative education has a comparative perspective. It does not contend with the study of just one education system in isolation. Several education systems (in their societal contexts) are compared. By means of such a comparison the relationships and interrelationships between societal context and education become clear.

Comparison is a typical human activity. When humans/communities/societies in the most distant past made contact with other societies/cultures for the first time, by means of war, trade, missionary endeavour or out of mere curiosity, it could be assumed that those humans compared their own societies, cultures and customs with that of the other societies with which they had established contact. With the rise of nation states in Western Europe and Northern America and with the development of technology which made international travel easier, a new kind of traveller came to the fore in the nineteenth century: mostly government emissaries were sent to countries abroad with the assignment to make a systematic, comprehensive study of their education systems, with the objective of identifying the best practices to be transferred to their own education systems. Since the beginning of the twentieth century comparative education has become institutionalized at universities. It has become a part of teacher education programmes and part of post-graduate Education courses. This shift in focus of comparative education studies from governmental departments to universities brought about a greater sensitivity to the interrelationships between societal context (shaping forces) and education systems. The belief became established that national education systems are the outcome of a set of contextual factors and for this reason education systems and practices cannot summarily be transplanted from one country to another. The transfer of elements from one education system to another can only take place and can only have a chance of success when contextual similarities and differences between the two countries are thoroughly accounted for. The comparative educationist who formulated this thesis (that education systems are the outcome of societal forces) for the first time was Michael Sadler (1861-1943) of the University of Manchester (Higginson, 1961). In his Guildford lecture in London in 1900, entitled "How far can we learn anything of practical value from the study of foreign systems of education", he used the metaphor of a plant in order to explain this process:

"In studying foreign systems of Education we should not forget that the things outside the schools matter even more than the things inside the schools, and govern and interpret the things inside. We cannot wander at pleasure among the education systems of the world, like a child strolling through a garden, and pick off a flower from one bush and some leaves from another, and then expect that if we stick what we have gathered into the soil at home, we shall have a living plant. A national system

of Education is a living thing, the outcome of forgotten struggles and difficulties, and 'of battles long ago'. It has in it some of the secret workings of national life. It reflects, while it seeks to remedy, the failings of the national character. By instinct, it often lays special emphasis on those parts of training which are national" (Higginson, 1961, p.290).

James Russell, in the spring of 1900, offered the very first course in comparative education at a university, at Teachers College, Columbia University in the United States of America (USA). The model course which Isaac Kandel taught very soon after that at the same university resulted in the spread of the teaching of comparative education to other universities in the USA after 1920.

The history of comparative education at universities in Canada can be traced back to the arrival of Peter Sandiford (from Columbia University) at the University of Toronto in 1913. His textbook entitled "Comparative Education" was published in 1918. He was attached to the University of Toronto till 1941. In Europe, the courses in comparative education began in the 1920s at the University of London and were taught by G. W. Young and Nicholas Hans, and in Prague and Warsaw they were taught by Sergius Hessen.

The third quarter of the twentieth century was characterised by an unprecedented growth in the status of comparative education at universities in North America and Western Europe. After the democratization of Greece in 1974, comparative education gained a secure foothold at Greek universities. The same happened in Spain after 1975. After 1980 the field also experienced a huge surge in Eastern Europe and China. Comparative education is currently a compulsory part of most teacher education programmes in Bulgaria (Popov, 2008, p. 33), of all teacher education programmes in the Czech Republic and in some teacher education programmes in China (Manzon, 2008, p. 216). It has also become visible at universities which have been established since 1960 in independent African states.

The significance and purpose of comparative education lie in at least four levels (Wolhuter, 2011, p. 1). On the most elementary level the significance lies in the description of education systems, in order to satisfy human beings' *sui generis* search for knowledge. At the next level comparative education interprets and helps the student to understand education systems — education systems are then explained from the contextual forces which had shaped them. At the third level education systems are assessed. As the domestic education project assumes ever greater value in times of the globalizing world, there are more and more studies measuring the place of education systems in the international line of education systems. Examples include the studies of the IEA (International Association of Educational Achievement) and the international ranking of universities (*cf.* Shin et al., 2011). At the fourth level, that of application, at least two fields of application could be distinguished. Firstly, comparative education could be employed to design new education systems or to plan to improve the existing education systems, by using international comparative perspectives. Secondly, a

number of recent publications draw attention to the (potential) value of comparative education in assisting teachers to improve their teaching practice (*cf.* Bray, 2007, p. 15; Planel, 2008). Comparative educational research can assess the success record of particular pedagogies in particular contexts. It can also contribute to the improvement of teaching practice in multicultural classes, as Planel (2008) shows in a comparative study of teaching practice in classes in schools in England and France. Research on motivation and expectations of comparative education courses harboured by student teachers has shown that they look up to comparative education to help them to improve their teaching practice (O'Sullivan et al., 2008).

## **“Societal Shaping Forces” as the Central Conceptual Tool of Comparative Education**

The inter-societal perspective is one of the distinguishing perspectives of comparative education. Education systems are structures which did not get their forms by accident; these structures are the outcome of a set of contextual societal forces or factors shaping education systems. Subsequently, the focus will be first put on how these contextual forces are understood and described within the field of comparative education. After that, the philosophical or life and worldview, as one of these forces, will be expatiated on.

Initially, that is the first time after Sadler's call for the factoring-in of societal context that attempts were made to comprehend education systems. The presentation of the societal context in comparative education literature was undifferentiated, diffuse and even unscientific. This can be illustrated by looking at the way in which the “triumvirate”, or three big experts in the field of the mid-twentieth century comparative education, Kandel, Hans and Schneider, went about with the concept of the context of education systems.

Isaac Kandel (1881–1965) of the Teachers College, Columbia University, stated it in his book “Studies in Comparative Education” (1933), which remained long, even after the Second World War, the standard textbook of comparative education. In it he openly stated that national education systems are the outcome of the “national character” of a nation. The education system of France would then be the outcome of the French national character.

Nicholas Hans (1888-1969) of the Institute of Education, University of London, went somewhat further in his opus magnum “Comparative Education: A study of Educational Factors and Traditions” (1949) by devising the following classification scheme of three groups of factors which influence the development of education in a country: natural factors, which included race, language and natural environment; religious factors, where he distinguished between Roman Catholicism, Anglicanism and Protestantism; and thirdly secular factors, and here Hans distinguished between humanism, socialism and nationalism. He illustrated the operation of these factors by referring to the education systems of England, the USA, France and the Union of the Soviet Socialist Republics.

Friedrich Schneider (1881-1969), of the Pädagogische Akademie in Bonn and later, after the Second World War, he worked at the University of Salzburg (Austria) and later at the University of Munich (Germany), in his book “Triebkräfte der Pädagogik der Völker” (“Driving forces of the education of nations”) went still further and distinguished among the following *gestaltenden Faktoren* (shaping factors) of education system development: national character, geographical environment, economy, culture, religion, social differentiation, the influence of other countries and endogenous factors.

Some comparativists subsequently tended to single out one factor as the absolute one and to portray all other factors as subsidiaries of that one factor. Robert Ulich of Harvard University, for example, in his book “The Education of Nations: A comparison in historical perspective” (1961) portrayed the historical factor as the main shaping factor of education systems.

There were also more nuanced approaches. In his book, “An Introduction to the Study of comparative education” (1957), Vernon Mallinson, a comparativist at that time attached to the University of Reading, regarded the national character or tradition as the determining factor of the type of education system of a country. However, within the “national character” or “tradition” he identifies four main determinants of the national character: inheritance (historical factor), natural environment, social heritage and education. The Dutch comparativist of the University of Leiden, on his turn, in his book “Theorie van het Onderwijsbeleid” (1971) developed a framework which included the following “vormgewenden maatschappelijke krachten” (“shaping societal forces”) of national education systems: the social system, the political system, science and technology, demography, the economic system and religion/life and worldview.

In South Africa a number of comparativists have presented their perspectives as well. Dekker and Van Schalkwyk (1989, second edition, 1995), in their book “Modern Education Systems”, distinguish among the following “situation demands” shaping the national education systems: geography, demography, social and economic system and cultural composition of national population, political system and religion or philosophy. Steyn and Wolhuter (Eds.) identify in “Education Systems of Emerging Countries: Challenges of the Twentieth Century” (2000) the following “external determinants” of education systems: geography, demography, level of science and technological development, socio-economy, language, politics and life and worldview. The most detailed scheme (as far as could be ascertained) is that of Stone who, in his book “The Common and the Diverse: A profile of Comparative Education” (1983), based on the metaphysics of the Dutch philosopher Herman Dooyeweerd, distinguished among 11 shaping forces of education systems: demography, physical environment, biotic, logical-analytical, cultural-historical, social, economic, esthetical, juridical, ethical and religious.

As the lack of space prohibits the exposition of a complete philosophical cosmology here, it will be sufficient to provide the statement of principle, that whatever the cosmological views of a comparative education scholar are, he or she should strive to

include as many aspects of reality as is possible, when he/she is describing the shaping factors of education systems. The same applies when an education system is being designed: the more of these facets are included, the more the resulting education system will comply with the exigencies of reality and of the societal environment.

During the 1960s a Copernican revolution took place in the progressive front of comparative education. This was the time of the post-Second World War rapid economic recovery of Europe, a recovery which was *inter alia* ascribed to investment in education. Theodor Schultz formulated in his 1961 presidential address to the American Association of Economists his theory of human capital (for which he was awarded the Nobel Prize in Economics in 1979) and with that he heralded a revolution in the thoughts about education (*cf.* Sobel, 1982). Since then, education has no longer been seen as a consumer item, but as a productive investment and as a factor in the production process.

In the 1960s large parts of the Global South gained independence and modernization theory viewed education in that part of the world as the best instrument to modernize countries and societies (Fägerlind & Saha, 1984, p. 49). This new view of education laid the foundation for an unprecedented investment in, and expansion of education worldwide (*cf.* Coombs, 1985). In comparative education, education itself was no longer seen as the *outcome* of societal forces, but as the *shaper* of society.

During the 1970s another change came about. The disappointing results of the unprecedented expansion of education since the end of the Second World War, which reached the maximum speed in the 1960s, resulted in a disillusionment over the value and effect of education. The disappointing results of the societal upliftment effect of education expansion came to a head with the 1973 oil crisis and the ensuing economic recession. Rather than eradicating unemployment, the educational expansion resulted in the new spectre of graduate unemployment. Instead of being an agent of social mobility, an extensive empirical analysis performed by Jencks *et al.* (1972) showed that education was not a strong agent of social mobility, and in many cases not such an agent at all.

Because of this series of disappointment a turn came in the thoughts of a number of leading scholars of comparative education. Education was once again seen as the outcome of societal forces (and not so much as the agent of social change) — not as in the pre-1960 era, but in terms of Marxist and Neo-Marxist frameworks. The school of thought of socio-economic reproduction, for example, did regard the socio-economic structure of society as the absolute (main) shaping force of education systems. The theory of socio-economic reproduction, the foundation of which had been laid by Sam Bowles and Harry Gintis in their book “Schooling in Capitalist America: Educational and reform contradictions in economic life” (1976) put it that the schools attended by working-class children offer education of a poorer quality than the schools attended by middle-class children; in this way working-class children are prepared for lower rated and remunerated work and careers. In this way the education system entrenches and

reproduces the system of socio-economic stratification in a country. While Bowles and Gintis concentrated on the USA, the paradigm of socio-economic reproduction has since then been applied worldwide, including the developing countries (*cf.* Weis, 1979) and even the erstwhile socialistic Eastern bloc countries (*cf.* Dobson & Swafford, 1980).

There are variations of this paradigm, such as the theory of cultural reproduction, the foundation of which was laid by Bourdieu and Passeron in their book “Reproduction in Education, Science and Culture” (originally published in 1970, English translation 1977; second revised edition 1990) which identifies the political and political power structures as the leading shaping factors of education systems. Then there are dependency theories which project the theories of socio-economic and cultural reproduction on the world canvass and which maintain that the developed countries deliberately dominate the education systems of the developing countries in order to keep the developing countries in a state of perpetual dependence on the developed countries.

## **The Philosophical (or Life and Worldview) as a Shaping Factor of Education Systems**

Notwithstanding the developmental trajectory at the cutting edge of the field of comparative education, as portrayed above, the ideologically uncontaminated framework of education systems being the outcome of a host of societal shaping forces remained the most common paradigm subscribed to before, during and after the 1960s. This is clear from the content analysis of articles published in the most eminent comparative education journal, the “Comparative Education Review”, since the publication of the first volume of that journal in 1957 till 2006 (Wolhuter, 2012). With the exception of the five-year period from 1967 to 1971 and again the five-year period from 1977 to 1981, the “societal factors and forces” theoretical framework was the dominant approach (Wolhuter, 2012). However, very few articles focused on the philosophical/life and worldview as a shaping factor. By far the strongest focus during the entire period of fifty years was, in order of importance, on the social, the political and the economic systems as shaping factors of education systems (Wolhuter, 2012). Scholars in the field were severely discouraged from exploring and investigating philosophy as a shaping force of education systems by an article written by Joseph Lauwerys “The Philosophical Approach to Comparative Education”, published in 1959 in the *International Review of Education* — a very prestigious and the oldest journal in the field of comparative education. Lauwerys, at the time comparative education professor at the Institute of Education of the University of London is widely considered to be one of the founding fathers of the field in Europe. He founded the Comparative Education Society of Europe (the second oldest comparative education society in the world) in 1961. Up to today Comparative Education Society of Europe conferences have been concluded with the Joseph Lauwerys’ memorial lecture. In this article, which became one of the classic publications in the field, Lauwerys claims



that it is futile to look for philosophical shaping factors of education systems. He illustrates this for example, by attempting to show that each type of liberal education, characteristic of British education; General education, characteristic of American education; *Culture générale*, characteristic of French education; *Allgemeine Bildung*, characteristic of German education and polytechnic education, characteristic of Russian education, cannot be traced back to particular, distinguishing philosophies, least of all exclusive national philosophies.

The trend in comparative education theory in journals, to eschew the study of philosophy as the shaping factor of education systems, has been reinforced by the World Bank publications on education. By the early 1990s the World Bank had emerged as the single largest producer of comparative education literature (Altbach, 1991, pp. 502-503). The pragmatic and technical ground-tone of the publications of the World Bank meant that the economic, social and political forces shaping education systems received attention at the cost of the philosophical/life and worldview. In the seminal report on education in Sub-Saharan Africa for example (World Bank, 1988), the political, social and economic matrix in which education is embedded in Africa are discussed in detail, but no attention is given to the philosophical or life and worldview bases.

The result of this technical turn was that idiographic studies of education systems either ignored or greatly underrated the philosophical or life and worldview as a shaping factor of education systems. As far as negation is concerned, McAdams' book "Lessons from Abroad: How other countries educate their children" (1995) or Husén and Postlethwaite's (Eds.) "The Encyclopedia of Comparative Education and National Systems of Education" (1988) could be cited as examples. In the latter, which contains a chapter on the education system of every country in the world, there is a deafening silence on the philosophical bases of the education systems of the countries, while in the case of each country's education system, the economic, social and political context are discussed.

In cases where the philosophical or life and worldview as shaping forces of education systems do get covered in idiographic studies of national education systems, it is usually done in the following ways. In the first place, the relationship between the education system and philosophy is explicated only at the level of education policy, i.e. the discussion on the influence of philosophical or life and worldview streams on the education system is limited to influence on education policy. The influence on other components of the education system, such as the institutional fabric, curricula or teaching methods are not covered.

In the second instance, the mainstream religions in society are mentioned and even discussed, but secular philosophies or life and worldviews, such as Humanism or modern day materialism-hedonism-materialism, are not. As an example of this we could cite Loo's chapter on the education system of Malaysia in the edited volume "Comparative Education: An introduction", of Likando, Wolhuter, Matengu and

Mushaandja (Eds.) (2011). Loo's discussion on the philosophical/life and worldview bases of education in Malaysia is limited to that of Islam as the dominant religion. Other philosophical or life and worldview facets, such as post-colonialism (especially post-colonial nationalism), and the influence of the Western philosophy and world and life view, especially in the globalised *pax Americana* world after 1990, are not mentioned, let alone discussed. Also in this case the discussion of the influence of Islam is limited to a discussion on the influence of the Islam religion on education policy.

Till about two decades ago Philosophy of Education was in many countries in the world the key component of teacher education programmes (*cf.* Mkabela, 1997; Wolhuter, 2010-2; Wolhuter & Karras, 2011). A deficiency was that the Philosophy of Education textbooks, instead of explicating the philosophical and life and worldview bases of education, mainly concentrated on giving an exposition of the ideas of education of the major philosophers and schools of thought in the history of Western philosophy; from Socrates and Plato right up to contemporary existentialism and postmodernism. As examples of such textbooks we could mention Gruber's (1973) "Historical and Contemporary Philosophers of Education", Nodding's (1995) "Philosophy of Education" and Gutek's (2004) "Philosophical and Ideological Voices of Education". The same could be said of Ozmon and Craver's (9<sup>th</sup> edition, 2011) "Philosophical Foundations of Education" (though the last edition of this volume now also contains a chapter on Eastern philosophies). This, probably most widely used Philosophy of Education textbook, focuses on the following philosophical thoughts: Idealism, Realism, Eastern Philosophy, Behaviourism, Phenomenology and Existentialism, Reconstructionism, Marxism, Analytical Philosophy and Postmodernism. In this way the scholarly field of Philosophy of Education is narrowed down to a mere application of the mainstream philosophies, rather than an investigation into and explication of the philosophical/life and worldview bases of education. To this must be added the criticism that most of the standard textbooks give no space to non-Western philosophies.

## **New Fountains Bursting Open**

Rather than stepping into the minefield of defining the concept "Philosophy", this article will be content with the description of the term by Morris (1982, p. 985) as a working definition: "Philosophy investigates, be it scientifically or speculatively, the orderliness and laws underlying reality/the cosmos. It investigated the nature of things (once again this could take place in a scientific or speculative way), it attempts to synthesize knowledge, and develop as much as possible the theories and statements about the structure of knowledge, ways of acquiring knowledge, ethics, values and aesthetics, and the nature of the cosmos, including human beings and society".

On the basis of this approach to the task and role of Philosophy there have appeared in recent years a number of publications which moved out of the narrow

ditch in which Philosophy of Education in general and in which the approach to the philosophical as shaping factor of education systems, found itself. In order to motivate and to illustrate this statement three sets of recent publications will subsequently be discussed: publications dealing with non-Western philosophies, the publications of Nisbett on Western versus Eastern system of thought and the publication series of the *Comparative Education Research Centre* of the University of Hong Kong.

During the past decade the field of Philosophy of Education saw the appearance of a number of publications which broke through the exclusively Western philosophical systems. One example is Reagan's "Non-Western Traditions: Alternative approaches to educational practice" (2000), which discusses the following philosophical systems: traditional African, Meso-American, traditional North American Amerindian, Confucian-Indian, Hinduistic-Buddhistic, that of the Roma in Europe and Islam. The second example is Merriam's (Ed.) book "Non-Western Perspectives on Learning and Knowing" (2007) which covers the following philosophical systems: Islam, Amerindian, Hinduism, Maori, Buddhism, Traditional African, Latin American Liberation Theology, and Confucian Eastern. While both these publications represent a welcome broadening from the exclusively Western focus which had historically characterised Philosophy of Education publications, they are, especially the latter, very speculative with many unsubstantiated, general statements and they often appear to be a politically-correct eulogy of religions and philosophies. Furthermore, both, but especially the first one, again create the impression of being nothing more than an application of the mainstream philosophies to education.

The publication of Nisbett and his collaborators, as synthesized in Nisbett's book "The Geography of Thought: How Asians and Westerns think differently and why" (2003), on the other hand, is based upon extensive empirical research. This publication contrasts the ways of thinking of the Westerners (especially Americans) with that of the Easterners (especially Chinese), that is, in particular their views of reality, the place of the self (and the human) in reality, causal attribution, the organisation of knowledge, the employment of knowledge and the use of the logic and dialectic. The differences between these two groups are related back to the heritage of Confucian philosophy in the case of the Chinese and the Greeks in the case of the West.

As far as their views of reality (cosmos) are concerned, the Westerners tend to view the world as consisting of objects, while the Easterners tend to see reality as consisting of substances. The Westerners tend to see reality as consisting of distinguishable objects. In contrast to the atomistic Western view of the world, the Easterners have a holistic image of continuous, undifferentiated substances of continual masses matter. Nisbett and his collaborators have, for example, in one experiment let Americans and Easterners (in this case Japanese) look at a photo of an aquarium for twenty seconds and then asked them to write what they had seen. The descriptions of the Americans focused more on objects; for example "I saw a big fish on the left-hand side corner, in the bottom left corner I saw a goldfish". The Japanese participants concentrated 60

percent more on the background material such as water, rocks, plants and animals and tended much more to start their descriptions with “I saw an aquarium”, while the Americans were more likely to begin their discussion with the two fish (which were very prominent in the photo) (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 89-90)

In the Westerners’ view of reality and of the world the self is much more prominent. Every individual human being is seen as having a set of characteristics. Human beings are in control of and responsible for their own behaviour, and are oriented to accomplishment of their own goals and achievements (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 47-77), while in case of the Easterners, the opposite applies. In experiments in which Western and Eastern students were asked to provide short descriptions of their typical day, the word “I” appears much more frequently in the descriptions of Western students than in the descriptions of Eastern students.

As far as causal attribution is concerned, the Westerners place much more emphasis on personal characteristics and free choice of individuals while the Easterners attach more value to circumstantial evidence. In order to illustrate this statement, Nisbett (2003, pp. 111-112) compared newspaper reports on the suicide of a Chinese student at the University of Iowa in 1991. American newspaper reports virtually exclusively focused on the student’s personality characteristics (emotional instability, psychological problems) while newspaper reports in China, in explaining his suicide, concentrated on contextual factors (“isolation of the Chinese student in America, free availability of firearms in America, pressure/stress in America put on students to achieve, etc.”).

This was a contrast to the Western view of the world as a place of objects and people, of people in control of their own behaviour, pursuing their own goals. For the Easterners interpersonal relations and relations between objects are of greater importance. In the Korean language there is no translation for a sentence such as: “Would you like to have supper with me?” but there are different translations for “you” and for “having supper” depending on who the speaker is and to whom he/she is speaking (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 52-53). Amongst North Americans a question such as “Tell me about yourself” will provoke responses teeming with personality traits of the person who was asked the question (“I am hardworking”, “I am honest”, etc.). When the Easterners answer the same question, they are apt to make more use of descriptions in terms of social roles (“I am Kim’s friend”, “I prepare supper with my sister”, etc.) These differences are also visible in the way in which children are raised and educated. While it is a common custom in North American schools to single out a child as the “child of the day”, Eastern parents and schools tend to educate children to dissolve in the group. While Western parents and schools attach value to making children feel good about themselves (Nisbett, 2003, p. 55, refers in this respect to school districts in the USA where an important point of debate has been whether the main objective of schools should be to transmit knowledge or to build the self-esteem of children), Eastern parents tend to raise children to anticipate the feelings and reactions of other people and to adjust their own behaviour accordingly.

As far as organisation of knowledge is concerned, the Westerners have a predilection for classification, for the use of categories, for the organisation of objects and for the inductive use of categories. Easterners, on the other hand, show an aversity towards taxonomies. When they do classify, they do so on the strength of relations rather than on the grounds of properties. In an experiment to test this proposition, Nisbett and his team showed a group of American children and a group of Chinese children three pictures: a fowl, a cow and grass. The children were then asked to write which two pictures go together and to explain their choice. Most Western children put the fowl and the cow together and they wrote that these two belong together since both are animals. Most Chinese children, however, placed the cow and the grass together and wrote they do so because the cow eats the grass, but the fowl does not (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 140-141).

This also accounts for the reason why Eastern children learn verbs faster than Western children, while Western children learn nouns faster than Eastern children (Nisbett, 2003, p. 152, cites comparative studies conducted by developmental psychologists to substantiate this claim). Verbs are also more prominent in Oriental languages. In Korean, Mandarin, Cantonese and Japanese verbs usually appear at the beginning of a sentence or at the end (both being prominent positions) while in Western languages they are usually hidden in the middle of a sentence (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 149-150). In Western languages generic nouns (which denote a category) are also more common than in Oriental languages. In Mandarin and Cantonese, for example, there is no way to differentiate between “*This squirrel eats nuts*” and “*Squirrels eat nuts*” (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 156-157). In Western languages it is easy to form abstract nouns, e.g. in English by adding the suffix “-ness”: “loveliness” from lovely, “boldness” from “bold” etc. In Oriental languages it is not possible to form such constructions (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 156-157). The East Asian languages are highly contextualised; words or phonemes have multiple meanings, and can only be understood within the context in which they are used (Nisbett, 2003, p. 157).

The Western historical legacy and the Aristotelian logic have a result in the thoughts of Western students and in their approach to the world tending to use the principles of logic. They tend to do so more than Oriental students who tend to attach more importance to the context, experience and credibility of things. The Western students wage an “either-or” argument with their equipment of the identity, contradiction and excluded third principles of logic. Oriental students, on the other hand, tend to wage a “both and” argument and strive towards Confucian harmony and dialectic (i.e. Easterners tend to transcend contradictions and attempt to find the truth in both sides).

Nisbett and his team compared students of the University of Michigan with students of the University of Beijing and found that the former displayed a predilection for idioms without contradictions, while the latter showed a preference for idioms with contradictions (Nisbett, 2003, pp. 173-174; 186-187).

Another fountain has burst open in the East. At the Faculty of Education of the University of Hong Kong the Comparative Education Research Centre was founded

at the end of the 1980s and developed into, after the World Bank, the second largest producer of comparative education literature in the world. This centre's book series in comparative education had commenced with the publication "The Chinese Learner: Cultural, psychological and contextual influences" (Watkins & Biggs, Eds., 1996), which focused on the traits of the Chinese learner (such as fixation on rote memorization and examination-orientation) and relay it back to the Confucian heritage of the Chinese people. The second book of the series "Teaching the Chinese Learner" (Watkins & Biggs, Eds., 2001), dealt with the teaching implications of these traits. Recently, a new version of the first book was launched — "Revisiting the Chinese Learner" (Chan & Rao (Eds.), 2009). This book once again deals with the traits of the Chinese learner, and also offers a future perspective. Nisbett (2003, pp. 210-217) asks at the end of his book how the Chinese student should be taught and makes some recommendations but without putting in place the pedagogy based on the framework of thought of the Eastern person.

## **The Road Ahead**

The publications of Nisbett and of the Comparative Education Research Centre offer a valuable broadening of the conceptualization of philosophy and of life and worldview respectively as shaping forces of education systems. This shaping force had long been denied, or at best underrated. Even in cases where it was acknowledged, it was usually limited to the level of education policy, especially the objectives of education. The publications of Nisbett and the Comparative Education Research Centre, demonstrate how a framework of a system of thinking by a group of people is determined by an inherited philosophical/life and worldview superstructure. Mindful of the didactic principle that teaching should always built upon the incipient situation, i.e. that which the educand already knows, it is important to take note of these new findings.

However, with this broadening of the conceptualization of the philosophical we cannot be content. The findings regarding the Eastern students, for example, should not remain in isolation, but should be built into an education system providing appropriate education to Eastern students. In this regard the field of comparative education can play a valuable part in the improvement of the teaching practice within increasingly multicultural societies. Nisbett (2003) rightfully asks at the end of his book whether now, in the globalised world of increasingly multicultural societies, attempts should be made to preserve various, different thought systems and intercultural understanding and whether tolerance with respect of thought systems should be developed, or should an attempt be made to move towards a synthesis consisting of the best elements of both Western and Eastern systems of thought. This is a question which should be contemplated within the field of comparative education. Also, in the Global South, comparative education, together with its sibling science, Philosophy of Education should follow the example of Nisbett's Western-Eastern perspective on thought systems, and based upon empirical research reconstruct Southern system(s) of thought and spell out the implications thereof for educational planning and practice in the Global South.

As has repeatedly been explained by authors such as Strauss (2009, pp. 46-59, 631; 2001, p. 134); Coletto (2008, p. 461; 2009, pp. 294-298); Lategan (2008, pp. 179-180, 191; 2010, pp. 152-153; 2010, pp. 152-153); Kubow (2011, pp. 163-164) and Weideman (2010, 158-159, 170), the field of comparative education should thoroughly pay attention to its theoretical and philosophical bases. The exposition above shows that scholars in the field of comparative education have, at times in the past, attempted to heed to this call, though these attempts were not always successful. Comparative Education on the one hand, and planners of education systems on the other hand, should, however, attempt to strive towards founding their projects on as extensive cosmology (worldview) as possible, anthropology (view of human beings), and society and knowledge view (epistemology), to name only a few of philosophical bases.

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# Mogućnost proširenja konceptualizacije filozofije kao čimbenika koji oblikuje obrazovni sustav

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## Sažetak

*Ovaj rad podržava tvrdnju da je filozofski aspekt već dugo ozbiljno podcijenjen u shemi konceptualizacije kontekstualnih društvenih čimbenika koji oblikuju obrazovni sustav. Porast neomarksističkih paradigmi od 1970-ih rezultirao je neproporcionalnim naglaskom na društveni i ekonomski sustav kao čimbenike koji oblikuju nacionalne obrazovne sustave. Međutim, empirijska istraživanja nedavno su pružila dokaze o tome kako filozofski okviri oblikuju način na koji djeca gledaju svijet i njihov način razmišljanja. Ovaj članak daje za to primjere. Takve filozofske i/ili konceptualne razlike trebaju se uključiti u proces kreiranja i planiranja obrazovnog sustava. Navedene su neke implikacije povezane sa širim pogledom na ulogu filozofije u planiranju i razvoju obrazovnih sustava i komparativne pedagogije kao područja akademskog istraživanja.*

**Ključne riječi:** društveni čimbenici; filozofski temelji; komparativna pedagogija; obrazovanje; obrazovni sustavi.

## Uvod

Najveći val širenja obrazovanja u ljudskoj povijesti dogodio se nakon sredine dvadesetog stoljeća. Nacionalni obrazovni sustavi prestali su biti sustavi koji pružaju obrazovanje elitnoj manjini i postali su sustavima za masovno obrazovanje. Budući da je obrazovanje skupo, ono je postalo najveća pojedinačna stavka u proračunima mnogih zemalja (Wolhuter, 1997; 2011-2). To širenje obrazovanja potaknuto je nizom različitih tipova motivacije, od političke motivacije (kao što je korištenje obrazovanja da bi se izgradilo nacionalno jedinstvo, da bi se obrazovali građani tako da postanu dio nacionalnog političkog procesa i da bi se uvježbala buduća radna snaga državnih službenika), preko ekonomske motivacije (na primjer poimanje obrazovanja kao instrumenta kojim se utječe na ekonomski rast i modernizaciju), pa do društvene motivacije (na primjer korištenje obrazovanja kao sredstva u stvaranju društvenog

kapitala i kao sredstva koje može osigurati društvenu mobilnost) (Wolhuter, 1993). Zbog tako koncentrirane dodjele sredstava i zbog takvog popisa ciljeva, obrazovni sustav trebao bi biti što je više moguće učinkovit i zbog toga bi trebao biti i dobro osmišljen.

U ovom je radu podržana tvrdnja da je tijekom konceptualizacije i planiranja obrazovnog sustava, kao i prilikom razmatranja kontekstualnih društvenih čimbenika bitnih za takav proces, filozofski aspekt do sada bio preusko shvaćen i podcijenjen. Takva neadekvatna konceptualizacija može se uočiti i u planiranju obrazovnih sustava i u komparativnoj pedagogiji. Akademsko područje previše je zaokupljeno proučavanjem obrazovnih sustava. Da bi se ta tvrdnja podržala, nakon ovoga ćemo početi s pojašnjenjem pojma „komparativna pedagogija”, te rasvijetliti predmet proučavanja i funkcioniranja tog područja. Takav opis predmeta proučavanja komparativne pedagogije zahtijeva dodatno objašnjenje pojma „kontekstualni društveni čimbenici koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave”, kao dijela teorijskog okvira komparativne pedagogije. Nakon toga je naglasak na filozofskom aspektu kao jednom od čimbenika koji oblikuju obrazovni sustav, a na koji bi komparativna pedagogija trebala obratiti pažnju. Zatim se procjenjuje dominantan stav o mjestu i ulozi filozofije kao čimbeniku koji oblikuje obrazovni sustav, a koji je u suprotnosti s nedavno objavljenim istraživanjima o filozofskoj osnovi provođenja procesa učenja i poučavanja. Kao zaključak se navode implikacije procjene za samu komparativnu pedagogiju, ali i za planiranje obrazovnih sustava u društvima koja postaju sve više multikulturalna.

## Komparativna pedagogija

U pokušaju da se definira pojam „komparativna pedagogija” i da se razgraniči njezino mjesto u skupini pedagoških znanosti navedeno je da to područje ima *tri- u-jedan* perspektivu o obrazovanju (Stone, 1983; Wolhuter, 2010, str. 1).

Prvo, ona pruža perspektivu o obrazovnom sustavu. Sam čin obrazovanja, tj. nastavnika koji obrazuje učenika, nadilazi moć rezolucije leće kroz koju komparativna pedagogija promatra obrazovni fenomen. Komparativna pedagogija usredotočena je na obrazovni sustav, tj. na kompleksnu strukturu obrazovne politike, administrativnu strukturu, strukturu poučavanja i učenja, na kurikule, obrazovne programe, strukturu institucija, načine ocjenjivanja i popratne obrazovne službe.

Drugo, ona pruža međudruštvenu perspektivu. Obrazovni sustavi ne promatraju se niti analiziraju kao slučajne neovisne strukture, nego kao ishod društvenih čimbenika koji su ih stvorili i oblikovali. Ti kontekstualni društveni čimbenici koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave uključuju demografiju, geografiju, društvene sustave, ekonomske sustave, političke sustave, filozofiju ili pogled na život i svijet. Da bi se razumio određeni obrazovni sustav, neophodno je vratiti se na društvene čimbenike koji su ga oblikovali. Na primjer, da bi se razumio japanski obrazovni sustav, potrebno je započeti s proučavanjem geografije Japana, njegove demografije, društvenog sustava itd., uključujući pogled na život i svjetonazor koji prevladavaju u Japanu.

Treće, komparativna pedagogija ima komparativnu perspektivu. Ona ne proučava samo jedan izolirani obrazovni sustav nego uspoređuje nekoliko obrazovnih sustava u njihovu društvenom kontekstu. Zahvaljujući takvoj komparaciji, veze i međusobne veze između društvenog konteksta i obrazovanja postaju jasne.

Uspoređivanje je uobičajena ljudska aktivnost. Kada su ljudi/zajednice/društva u najdaljoj prošlosti prvi put uspostavili kontakt s drugim društvima/kulturama ratovanjem, trgovanjem, misionarskim aktivnostima ili zbog čiste znatiželje, moglo bi se pretpostaviti da su uspoređivali svoja društva, kulture i običaje s onima društava s kojima su uspostavili kontakt. Stvaranjem nacionalnih država u zapadnoj Europi i sjevernoj Americi, razvojem tehnologije koja je omogućila međunarodna putovanja, nova vrsta putnika postala je uočljiva u devetnaestom stoljeću: većinom su izaslanici vlada bili poslani u strane države sa zadatkom da odrede najbolju praksu koja bi se mogla prenijeti na njihov obrazovni sustav. Od početka dvadesetog stoljeća komparativna pedagogija postala je institucionalizirana na sveučilištima. Postala je dijelom programa obrazovanja nastavnika i učitelja, kao i dijelom poslijediplomskih studija pedagogije. Ta promjena u središtu studija komparativne pedagogije od vladinih odsjeka na sveučilišta urodila je većim razumijevanjem međusobnih veza između društvenog konteksta (čimbenika koji ga oblikuju) i obrazovnog sustava. Prihvaćeno je stajalište da su nacionalni obrazovni sustavi rezultat niza kontekstualnih čimbenika i zbog toga se obrazovni sustavi i praksa ne mogu samo jednostavno „presaditi” iz jedne države u drugu. Prijenos elemenata iz jednog obrazovnog sustava u drugi može se jedino dogoditi i jedino imati priliku za uspjeh kada se kontekstualne sličnosti i razlike između dviju država mogu temeljito objasniti. Komparativni pedagog koji je prvi oblikovao tu tezu (da su obrazovni sustavi rezultat društvenih čimbenika) bio je Michael Sadler (1861. – 1943.) sa Sveučilišta u Manchesteru (Higginson, 1961). U svom predavanju (Guildford) u Londonu 1900. pod nazivom „U kojoj mjeri možemo naučiti bilo što od praktične važnosti iz studija o stranim obrazovnim sustavima” on je iskoristio metaforu o biljci da bi taj proces objasnio:

„Tijekom proučavanja stranih obrazovnih sustava ne bismo smjeli zaboraviti da su sve stvari izvan škole puno važnije od onoga što je unutar škole, te da one vode i interpretiraju ono što je unutar škole. Ne možemo proizvoljno lutati među obrazovnim sustavima svijeta, kao dijete koje šeta vrtom i ubere cvijet s jednog grma, a nekoliko listova s drugog grma i onda očekuje da će, kada zabode cvijet i listove u zemlju nakon što dođe kući, izrasti živa biljka. Nacionalni sustav obrazovanja je živo biće, rezultat zaboravljenih nastojanja, poteškoća i davnih bitaka. On u sebi nosi tajne sile nacionalnog života. On odražava, a u isto vrijeme pokušava i popraviti, nedostatke nacionalnog karaktera. On instinktivno često stavlja poseban naglasak na one dijelove obrazovanja koji su nacionalni” (Higginson, 1961).

James Russell je u proljeće 1900. ponudio prvi kolegij komparativne pedagogije na sveučilištu, i to na Učiteljskom koledžu Sveučilišta u Kolumbiji, u SAD-u. Sličan kolegij koji je držao Isaac Kandel ubrzo nakon toga imao je za rezultat širenje studija komparativne pedagogije na druga sveučilišta u SAD-u nakon 1920. godine.

Povijest komparativne pedagogije na sveučilištima u Kanadi može se pratiti unatrag do dolaska Petera Sandiforda (sa Sveučilišta u Kolumbiji, SAD) na Sveučilište u Torontu 1913. Njegov udžbenik „Komparativna pedagogija” objavljen je 1918. Radio je na Sveučilištu u Torontu sve do 1941. U Europi su kolegiji komparativne književnosti počeli 1920-ih na Sveučilištu u Londonu i držali su ih G. W. Young i Nicholas Hans, dok ih je u Pragu i Varšavi držao Sergius Hessen.

Treću četvrtinu dvadesetog stoljeća okarakterizirao je nezapamćeni porast statusa komparativne pedagogije na sveučilištima u Sjevernoj Americi i zapadnoj Europi. Nakon demokratizacije Grčke 1974. godine komparativna pedagogija našla je čvrsto uporište na grčkim sveučilištima. Isto se dogodilo i u Španjolskoj nakon 1975. Nakon 1980. komparativna pedagogija doživjela je i velik porast u istočnoj Europi i u Kini. Trenutno je obvezni dio većine obrazovnih programa u izobrazbi učitelja u Bugarskoj (Popov, 2008, str. 33), svih nastavničkih obrazovnih programa u Češkoj i dio nekih nastavničkih obrazovnih programa u Kini (Manoz, 2008, str. 216). Postala je vidljiva i na sveučilištima koja se utemeljena nakon 1960. godine u neovisnim afričkim državama.

Značaj i svrha komparativne pedagogije mogu se razaznati u barem četiri stupnja (Wolhuter, 2011, str. 1). Na osnovnom stupnju važnost nalazi se u opisu obrazovnih sustava, da bi se zadovoljila svojevrсна ljudska potraga za znanjem. Na sljedećem stupnju komparativna pedagogija interpretira obrazovne sustave i pomaže studentima da ih razumiju – obrazovni sustavi su tada pojašnjeni uz pomoć kontekstualnih čimbenika koji su ih oblikovali. Na trećem stupnju obrazovni sustavi se ocjenjuju. Kako domaći projekt obrazovanja poprma sve veću vrijednost u doba globaliziranog svijeta, tako se javlja sve više i više istraživanja koje se bave mjestom obrazovnih sustava na međunarodnom popisu obrazovnih sustava. Primjeri uključuju istraživanja Međunarodnog udruženja za obrazovna postignuća (International Association of Educational Achievement) i međunarodnu rang listu sveučilišta (usporedba: Shin i sur. 2011). Na četvrtom stupnju, stupnju primjene, mogu se razlikovati barem dva polja primjene. Kao prvo, komparativna pedagogija mogla bi se iskoristiti pri osmišljavanju novih obrazovnih sustava ili planiranja poboljšanja u postojećim obrazovnim sustavima, korištenjem međunarodne komparativne perspektive. Kao drugo, brojni noviji objavljeni članci skreću pažnju na (potencijalnu) vrijednost komparativne pedagogije kao pomoći nastavnicima u poboljšanju vlastite nastavne prakse (usporedba: Bray, 2007, str. 15; Planel, 2008). Istraživanja u području komparativne pedagogije mogu procijeniti dokaze o posebnim pedagogijama u određenom kontekstu. Ona također može pridonijeti poboljšanju nastavne prakse u multikulturalnim razrednim odjelima, kao što je Planel (2008) pokazao u komparativnoj studiji o nastavnoj praksi u razrednim odjelima u školama u Engleskoj i Francuskoj. Istraživanja o motivaciji i očekivanjima budućih nastavnika o kolegijima komparativne pedagogije pokazala su da oni očekuju kako će im komparativna pedagogija pomoći u poboljšanju vlastite nastavne aktivnosti (O’Sullivan i sur., 2008).

## **„Društveni čimbenici koji oblikuju obrazovni sustav“ kao glavni konceptualni alat u komparativnoj pedagogiji**

Međudruštvena perspektiva jedna je od prepoznatljivih perspektiva komparativne pedagogije. Obrazovni su sustavi strukture koje nisu slučajno dobile svoj oblik. Te strukture rezultat su niza kontekstualnih društvenih čimbenika koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave. Stoga će se naglasak najprije staviti na to kako se ti kontekstualni čimbenici shvaćaju i opisuju u polju komparativne pedagogije. Nakon toga će se razraditi filozofski, životni i opći svjetonazor.

To je prvi put nakon Sadlerova apela da se u obzir uzme društveni kontekst kada se pokušavaju razumjeti obrazovni sustavi. Uvođenje društvenog konteksta u literaturu koja se bavi komparativnom pedagogijom nije bilo prepoznatljivo, nego neprecizno, pa čak i neznanstveno, što se može ilustrirati gledajući način na koji je „trijumvirat“, tj. tri velika stručnjaka u polju komparativne pedagogije iz sredine dvadesetog stoljeća – Kandel, Hans i Schneider – pristupio objašnjavanju pojma konteksta u obrazovnim sustavima.

Isaac Kandel (1881. – 1965.) s Učiteljskog koledža Sveučilišta u Kolumbiji, SAD, spomenuo ga je u svojoj knjizi „Studije u polju komparativne pedagogije“ (1933) koja je dugo, čak i nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata, bila vodeći udžbenik iz komparativne pedagogije. U njoj je Kandel otvoreno rekao da su nacionalni obrazovni sustavi proizvod „nacionalnog karaktera“ jedne nacije. Obrazovni sustav Francuske bi tada bio proizvod francuskoga nacionalnog karaktera.

Nicholas Hans (1888. – 1969.) s Obrazovnog instituta Sveučilišta u Londonu otišao je nešto dalje u svojem najvažnijem djelu „Komparativna pedagogija: studija o obrazovnim faktorima i tradicijama“ (1949) jer je osmislio sljedeću shemu klasifikacije triju skupina čimbenika koji utječu na razvoj obrazovanja u nekoj državi: prirodni čimbenici, koji uključuju rasu, jezik i prirodni okoliš; vjerski čimbenici, u kojima navodi rimokatoličanstvo, anglicizam i protestantizam; svjetovni čimbenici, koji su za Hansa humanizam, socijalizam i nacionalizam. Ilustrirao je djelovanje tih čimbenika analizirajući obrazovne sustave Engleske, SAD-a, Francuske i republika bivšeg Sovjetskog Saveza.

Friedrich Schneider (1881. – 1969.) s Pedagoške akademije u Bonnu, a poslije, nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata, sa Sveučilišta u Salzburgu (Austrija), a potom sa Sveučilišta u Münchenu (Njemačka), otišao je još jedan korak dalje u svojoj knjizi „Pokretačke sile nacionalnog obrazovanja“. U njoj razlikuje sljedeće čimbenike koji oblikuju obrazovni sustav: nacionalni karakter, geografski položaj, ekonomiju, kulturu, religiju, društvenu stratifikaciju, utjecaj drugih zemalja i endogene čimbenike.

Neki komparativni pedagozi su nakon toga pokušali predstaviti jedan čimbenik kao glavni, najutjecajniji, a sve ostale prikazati kao njegove popratne čimbenike. Na primjer, Robert Ulich sa Sveučilišta Harvard u svojoj je knjizi „Obrazovanje nacija:

komparacija kroz povijesnu perspektivu" (1961) prikazao povijesni čimbenik kao glavnu snagu koja oblikuje obrazovne sustave.

Bilo je još nekoliko detaljnijih pristupa. U svojoj knjizi „Uvod u komparativnu pedagogiju“ (1957) Vernon Mallinson, komparativni pedagog koji je tada predavao na Sveučilištu u Readingu, smatrao je da je nacionalni karakter ili tradicija glavni čimbenik koji oblikuje obrazovni sustav u nekoj državi. Međutim, unutar pojmova „nacionalni karakter“ i „tradicija“ on razlikuje četiri glavne odrednice nacionalnog karaktera: nasljeđe (povijesni čimbenik), prirodni okoliš, društveno nasljeđe i obrazovanje. Nizozemski komparativni pedagog sa Sveučilišta u Leidenu je u svojoj knjizi „*Theorie van het Onderwijsbeleid*“ (1971) izradio okvir koji je uključio sljedeće društvene čimbenike koji oblikuju nacionalne obrazovne sustave: društveni sustav, politički sustav, znanost i tehnologiju, demografiju, ekonomski sustav i religijski/ životni / opći pogled na svijet.

U Južnoj Africi velik broj komparativnih pedagoga također je predstavio svoje perspektive. Dekker i Van Schalkwyk (1989, drugo izdanje 1995) u svojoj knjizi „Moderni obrazovni sustavi“ razlikuju sljedeće „situacijske zahtjeve“ koje oblikuju nacionalne obrazovne sustave: geografiju, demografiju, društveni i ekonomski sustav, kulturološki sastav stanovništva, politički sustav, religiju ili filozofiju. Steyn i Wolhuter (ur.) u knjizi „Obrazovni sustavi novih zemalja: izazovi dvadesetog stoljeća“ (2000) prepoznali su sljedeće „vanjske odrednice“ obrazovnih sustava: geografiju, demografiju, stupanj razvijenosti znanosti i tehnologije, socioekonomiju, jezik, politiku, pogled na život i svijet. Najdetaljniji pregled (koliko je to moguće utvrditi) izradio je Stone, koji je u svojoj knjizi „Uobičajeno i različito: profil komparativne pedagogije“ (1983), utemeljenoj na metafizici nizozemskog filozofa Hermana Dooyeweerd, prepoznao 11 čimbenika koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave: demografiju, fizičku okolinu, biotičke čimbenike, logičko-analitičke čimbenike, kulturno-povijesne čimbenike, društvene, ekonomske, estetske, pravne, etičke i vjerske čimbenike.

Kako nedostatak prostora ovdje onemogućava prikaz cjelokupne filozofske kozmologije, zadovoljit ćemo se prikazom principa da, bez obzira na to kakve kozmološke stavove komparativni pedagog ima, on bi trebao težiti tome da uključi koliko god je moguće aspekata realnosti kada opisuje čimbenike koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave. Isto vrijedi i za proces kreiranja obrazovnog sustava: što se uključi više čimbenika, to će više novostvoreni obrazovni sustav odgovarati stvarnim potrebama i društvenom okruženju.

Tijekom 1960-ih dogodila se svojevrсна kopernikanska revolucija u naprednom polju komparativne pedagogije. To je bilo vrijeme nakon Drugoga svjetskog rata, kada je Europa prolazila kroz rapidni ekonomski oporavak koji je, između ostaloga, bio pripisan i ulaganju u obrazovanje. Theodor Schultz je u svojem predsjedničkom obraćanju Američkom udruženju ekonomista 1961. godine iznio svoju teoriju ljudskog kapitala (za koju je dobio Nobelovu nagradu za ekonomiju 1979.). Time je najavio revoluciju u promišljanjima o obrazovanju (usporedba: Sobel, 1982). Od tada se

obrazovanje više nije shvaćalo kao potrošačka tema, nego kao isplativo ulaganje i kao čimbenik u proizvodnom procesu.

U 1960-im veliki dijelovi južnog dijela svijeta stekli su neovisnost, pa je moderna teorija vidjela obrazovanje u tom dijelu svijeta kao najbolji instrument za modernizaciju država i društava (Fägerlind i Saha, 1984, str. 49). Taj novi pogled na obrazovanje omogućio je do tada neviđeno ulaganje u obrazovanje, kao i širenje obrazovanja diljem cijelog svijeta (usporedba: Coombs, 1985). U komparativnoj pedagogiji obrazovanje više nije bilo smatrano proizvodom društvenih čimbenika, nego čimbenikom koji *oblikuje* društvo.

Tijekom 1970-ih došlo je do još jedne promjene. Porazni rezultati nezapamćenog širenja obrazovanja nakon kraja Drugog svjetskog rata, koje je doživjelo svoju najveću brzinu u 1960-ima, imali su za posljedicu razočaranje u vrijednost i utjecaj obrazovanja. Razočaravajući rezultati društvenog uzdizanja kao jednog od učinaka širenja obrazovanja dosegli su svoj vrhunac 1973. kada je nastupila naftna kriza i ekonomska recesija kao posljedica te krize. Umjesto da reducira nezaposlenost, širenje obrazovanja dovelo je do nove postupne nezaposlenosti. Umjesto da bude pokretač društvene mobilnosti, obrazovanje ili nije bilo dovoljno jak čimbenik za to ili uopće nije bilo pokretačka snaga društvene mobilnosti, kako je pokazalo opsežno empirijsko istraživanje koje su proveli Jencks i suradnici.

Zbog tih razočaranja došlo je do preokreta u idejama brojnih vodećih stručnjaka komparativne pedagogije. Obrazovanje se ponovno smatralo rezultatom društvenih čimbenika (a ne više pokretačem društvenih promjena); ne kao u razdoblju prije 1960-ih, no u skladu s marksističkim i neomarksističkim okvirom. Ideje socio-ekonomske reprodukcije, na primjer, nisu smatrale socio-ekonomsku strukturu društva glavnim čimbenikom koji oblikuje obrazovne sustave. Teorija socio-ekonomske reprodukcije, čije su temelje postavili Sam Bowles i Harry Gintis u svojoj knjizi „Školovanje u kapitalističkoj Americi: obrazovne i reformističke kontradiktornosti u ekonomskom životu” (1976), navodi da škole koje pohađaju djeca iz radničke klase nude obrazovanje slabije kvalitete nego škole koje pohađaju djeca iz srednje klase. Na taj se način djeca iz radničke klase pripremaju za lošije i slabije plaćene poslove i karijere. Tako obrazovni sustav podržava i reproducira sustav socio-ekonomske stratifikacije u državi. Dok su se Bowles i Gintis usredotočili na SAD, paradigma socio-ekonomske reprodukcije se od tada primjenjuje širom svijeta, uključujući zemlje u razvoju (usporedba: Weis, 1979), pa čak i prijašnje socijalističke zemlje iz istočnog bloka (usporedba: Dobson i Swafford, 1980).

Postoji nekoliko varijacija te paradigme, kao što je teorija o kulturnoj reprodukciji, čije su temelje postavili Bourdieu i Passeron u svojoj knjizi „Reprodukcija u obrazovanju, znanosti i kulturi” (objavljena je 1970, u engleskom prijevodu 1977; drugo revidirano izdanje objavljeno je 1990.) Teorija kulturne reprodukcije smatra da su političke strukture i strukture političke moći vodeći čimbenici koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave. Zatim, postoje teorije ovisnosti koje projiciraju teorije socio-



ekonomske i kulturne reprodukcije na svijet kao svojevrsno slikarsko platno i koje tvrde da razvijene zemlje namjerno dominiraju obrazovnim sustavima zemalja u razvoju da bi te iste zemlje u razvoju držale u stanju stalne ovisnosti o razvijenim zemljama.

## **Filozofski (ili životni i opći) svjetonazor kao čimbenik koji oblikuje obrazovne sustave**

Bez obzira na razvojnu putanju modernog polja komparativne pedagogije, kako je prikazano, ideološki netaknut okvir obrazovnih sustava kao rezultata domaćih socioloških čimbenika koji ih oblikuju ostao je najčešće prihvaćena paradigma prije, tijekom i nakon 1960-ih. To se jasno može vidjeti iz analize sadržaja stručnih članaka objavljenih u najeminentnijem časopisu o komparativnoj pedagogiji, *The Comparative Education Review*, od objavljivanja prvog izdanja tog časopisa 1957. do 2006. (Wolhuter, 2012). Osim dva petogodišnja razdoblja, od 1967. do 1971. i od 1977. do 1981. teorijski okvir o „društvenim čimbenicima i silama“ bio je dominantan pristup (ibid). Međutim, malo članaka bavilo se filozofskim/životnim i općim svjetonazorom kao čimbenikom koji oblikuje obrazovni sustav. Nadasve najjači naglasak tijekom cijelog pedesetogodišnjeg razdoblja, po redu važnosti, bio je na društvenim, političkim i ekonomskim sustavima kao čimbenicima koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave (ibid). Stručnjaci u polju komparativne pedagogije bili su uvelike obeshrabreni da bi ulazili u istraživanje i ispitivanje filozofije kao čimbenika koji oblikuje obrazovne sustave zbog članka koji je 1959. godine objavio Joseph Lauwerys, „Filozofski pristup komparativnoj pedagogiji“ u *International Review of Education*, prestižnom i najstarijem stručnom časopisu u polju komparativne pedagogije. Lauwerys, koji je tada bio profesor komparativne pedagogije na Obrazovnom institutu Sveučilišta u Londonu, nadaleko je smatran jednim od osnivača polja komparativne pedagogije u Europi. Osnovao je Europsko društvo za komparativnu pedagogiju (drugo najstarije društvo za komparativnu pedagogiju na svijetu) 1961. godine. I danas konferencije Europskog društva za komparativnu pedagogiju završavaju memorijalnim predavanjem Josepha Lauwerysa. U tom članku, koji je postao klasik u navedenom polju, Lauwerys tvrdi da je besmisleno tražiti filozofske čimbenike koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave. To je ilustrirao tako što je pokušao pokazati da se nijedan tip liberalnog obrazovanja, koji je karakterističan za obrazovanje u Britaniji; opće obrazovanje, karakteristično za obrazovanje u Americi; *Culture générale*, karakteristično za obrazovanje u Francuskoj; *Allgemeine Bildung*, karakteristično za obrazovanje u Njemačkoj; obrazovanje na veleučilištima, karakteristično za obrazovanje u Rusiji, ne može dovesti u vezu s određenom, prepoznatljivom, isključivo nacionalnom filozofijom.

Pokušaji da se u časopisima koji se bave komparativnom pedagogijom izbjegne proučavanje filozofije kao čimbenika koji oblikuje obrazovni sustav dobili su podršku u člancima koje je izdao The World Bank o obrazovanju i pedagogiji. Do ranih 1990-ih The World Bank se pokazao kao najveći pojedinačni izdavač literature o

komparativnoj pedagogiji (Altbach, 1991, str. 502-503). Pragmatične i tehničke osnove izdanja The World Banka pokazale su da su ekonomski, društveni i politički čimbenici koji oblikuju obrazovni sustav dobili pažnju na štetu filozofskog, životnog i općeg svjetonazora. U iznimno važnom izvješću o obrazovanju u Subsaharskoj Africi, na primjer (The World Bank, 1988), u kojem se detaljno raspravlja o političkoj, društvenoj i ekonomskoj matrici od koje je obrazovanje u Africi satkano, pažnja se uopće ne poklanja filozofskom i općem svjetonazoru.

Rezultat tog tehničkog preokreta bio je taj da su idiografske studije obrazovnih sustava ili zanemarile ili uvelike podcijenile filozofski i životni svjetonazor kao čimbenika koji oblikuje obrazovne sustave. Što se tiče negiranja, McAdamsova knjiga „Lekcije iz inozemstva: kako druge zemlje obrazuju svoju djecu” (1995) ili knjiga Huséna i Postlethwaitea (ur.) „Enciklopedija komparativne pedagogije i nacionalnih obrazovnih sustava” (1988) mogu se navesti kao primjeri. U drugoj, koja sadrži poglavlje o obrazovnom sustavu svake zemlje na svijetu, vlada zapanjujuća tišina o filozofskoj osnovi obrazovnih sustava različitih zemalja, dok se u raspravama o obrazovnom sustavu svake zemlje spominju ekonomski, društveni i politički kontekst.

U slučajevima u kojima se filozofski i životni svjetonazor kao čimbenici koji oblikuju obrazovni sustav ipak spominju u idiografskim studijama o nacionalnim obrazovnim sustavima, to se obično radi na jedan od ovih načina. Kao prvo, veza između obrazovnog sustava i filozofije objašnjava se jedino na stupnju obrazovne politike, tj. rasprava o utjecaju filozofskog, životnog i općeg svjetonazora na obrazovni sustav ograničena je na njihov utjecaj na obrazovnu politiku. Utjecaj na druge sastavnice obrazovnog sustava, kao što su struktura institucija, kurikuli ili nastavne metode, nije spomenut.

Kao drugo, glavne religije u društvu se spominju i o njima se čak i raspravlja, ali svjetovna filozofija ili životni i opći svjetonazor, poput humanizma ili modernog materijalizma i hedonizma, uopće nisu spomenuti. Kao primjer mogli bismo citirati Loovo poglavlje o obrazovnom sustavu u Maleziji u uređenom izdanju „Komparativna pedagogija: uvod”, Likanda, Wolhutera, Matengua i Mushaandja (ur.) iz 2011. Loova rasprava o filozofskom i životnom svjetonazoru kao osnovama obrazovanja u Maleziji ograničena je na islam kao dominantnu religiju. Drugi filozofski aspekti, kao što je postkolonijalizam (osobito postkolonijalni nacionalizam), kao i utjecaj zapadnjačke filozofije i životnog i općeg svjetonazora, posebno u globaliziranom *pax Americana* svijetu nakon 1990, uopće nisu ni spomenuti, a kamoli analizirani. Također je u ovom slučaju rasprava o utjecaju islama ograničena na razgovor o utjecaju islamske religije na obrazovnu politiku.

Do prije otprilike dvadesetak godina filozofija obrazovanja bila je u mnogim zemljama svijeta ključna sastavnica programa za obrazovanje nastavnika (usporedba: Mkabela, 1997; Wolhuter, 2010-2; Wolhuter i Karras, 2011). Nedostatak je bio u tome što su se udžbenici iz filozofije obrazovanja, umjesto da objašnjavaju osnove filozofskog, životnog i općeg svjetonazora u obrazovanju uglavnom usredotočili na izlaganje ideja

o obrazovanju koje su iznijeli glavni filozofi i filozofske škole u povijesti zapadnjačke filozofije, od Sokrata i Platona do suvremenog egzistencijalizma i postmodernizma. Kao primjere takvih udžbenika možemo navesti Gruberovo (1973) djelo „Povijesni i suvremeni filozofi obrazovanja“, Noddingovu (1995) „Filozofiju obrazovanja“, Gutekove (2004) „Filozofske i ideološke glasove obrazovanja“. Isto bi se moglo reći i za Ozmonove i Craverove (9. izdanje, 2011) „Filozofske temelje obrazovanja“ (iako posljednje izdanje tog djela sada sadrži poglavlje o istočnjačkim filozofijama). Taj, vjerojatno najviše korišteni udžbenik iz filozofije obrazovanja, temelji se na sljedećim filozofskim mislima: idealizmu, realizmu, istočnjačkoj filozofiji, biheviorizmu, fenomenologiji i egzistencijalizmu, rekonstrukcionalizmu, marksizmu, analitičkoj filozofiji i postmodernizmu. Na taj se način akademsko polje komparativne pedagogije svelo na puku primjenu vodećih filozofija, umjesto na istraživanje i objašnjavanje filozofskog i životnog svjetonazora kao temelja obrazovanja. Tome treba dodati kritiku da u većini standardnih udžbenika nema mjesta za filozofije koje nisu zapadnjačke.

## Pronađeni novi izvori

Da ne bismo zakoračili u opasno područje definiranja pojma „filozofija“, ovaj članak će se zadovoljiti radnom definicijom termina koju je dao Morris (1982; str. 985): „*Filozofija istražuje, znanstveno ili nagađanjem, red i zakone koji su u pozadini stvarnosti/svemira. Istraživala je prirodu stvari (na znanstveni način ili špekuliranjem), pokušava sintetizirati znanje i razviti što je bolje moguće teorije i tvrdnje o strukturi znanja, načinima stjecanja znanja, etici, vrijednostima, esteticima, prirodi svemira, uključujući i ljudska bića i društvo.*”

Na temelju tog pristupa zadatku i ulozi filozofije u posljednje vrijeme pojavili su se brojni članci koji su se maknuli iz uskog rova u koji je filozofija obrazovanja općenito zapala i u kojem se također našao i pristup filozofiji kao čimbeniku koji oblikuje obrazovne sustave. Da bismo motivirali i ilustrirali tu tvrdnju, u daljnjem ćemo tekstu analizirati tri skupine radova objavljenih u posljednje vrijeme: radovi koji se bave nezapadnjačkim filozofijama, radovi Nisbetta o razlikama između zapadnjačkog i istočnjačkog načina razmišljanja i niz radova koje je objavio *Centar za istraživanja komparativne pedagogije Sveučilišta u Hong Kongu*.

Tijekom proteklog desetljeća u polju filozofije obrazovanja objavljeni su brojni radovi koji su se probili kroz isključivo zapadnjačke filozofske sustave. Primjer je Reaganovo djelo „*Nezapadnjačke tradicije: alternativni pristup obrazovnoj praksi*” (2000) u kojem se raspravlja o sljedećim filozofskim sustavima: tradicionalnom afričkom, srednoameričkom, tradicionalnom sjevernoameričkom i amero-indijanskom, konfucijskom i indijskom, hinduističko-budističkom, romskom (u Europi) i islamskom. Drugi primjer je Merriamina (ur.) knjiga „*Nezapadnjačke perspektive o učenju i znanju*” (2007) koja obrađuje sljedeće filozofske sustave: islamski, amero-indijanski, hinduistički, maorski, budistički, tradicionalni afrički, latinoameričku teologiju oslobođenja, istočnjački konfucijski. Dok oba rada predstavljaju dobrodošli

odmak od isključivo zapadnjačkog pogleda koji je kroz povijest karakterizirao radove o filozofiji obrazovanja, oni, posebno drugi, sadrže mnoga nagađanja i nepotvrđene, opće tvrdnje, pa se često čini da su one politički korektni hvalospjevi o religijama i filozofijama. Nadalje, obje, a posebno prva, ponovno stvaraju dojam o tome da nisu ništa više nego primjena vodećih religija u obrazovanju.

Objavljen rad Nisbetta i njegovih suradnika, koji je usustavljen u Nisbettovoj knjizi „Geografija mišljenja: kako Azijci i zapadnjaci razmišljaju drugačije i zašto” (2003), međutim, temelji se na opsežnom empirijskom istraživanju. Taj rad suprotstavlja način razmišljanja zapadnjaka (posebno Amerikanaca) načinu razmišljanja istočnjaka (posebno Kineza), tj. njihove poglede na stvarnost, mjesto pojedinca (i čovjeka) u stvarnosti, kauzalne atribucije, organizaciju znanja, primjenu znanja i upotrebu logike i dijalektike. Razlike između tih dviju grupa mogu se pripisati nasljeđu konfucijske filozofije kod Kineza i nasljeđu Grka kod zapadnjaka.

Što se tiče pogleda na stvarnost (svemir), zapadnjaci vide svijet koji se sastoji od stvari, dok istočnjaci vide stvarnost koja se sastoji od materije. Zapadnjaci smatraju da se stvarnost sastoji od prepoznatljivih predmeta. Suprotno atomističkom pogledu na svijet koji imaju zapadnjaci, istočnjaci imaju potpunu sliku o trajnoj, nediferenciranoj stvari. Nisbett i njegovi suradnici su, na primjer, u jednom eksperimentu pustili Amerikance i istočnjake (u ovom slučaju Japance) da gledaju u fotografiju akvarija dvadeset sekundi, pa ih onda pitali da napišu što su vidjeli. Opisi Amerikanaca bili su više orijentirani na stvari; na primjer: „Vidio sam veliku ribu u lijevom uglu akvarija, a na dnu sam u lijevom uglu vidio zlatnu ribicu.” Japanski sudionici su se 60 % više usredotočili na materijale kao što su voda, kamenje, biljke i životinje, pa su više započinjali opis s: „Vidio sam akvarij”, dok su Amerikanci češće započinjali opise govoreći o dvije ribe (koje su bile jako uočljive na slici) (Nisbett, 2003, str. 89-90).

U zapadnjačkom pogledu na stvarnost i na svijet osoba je daleko najviše naglašena. Smatra se da svaki pojedinac ima skup karakteristika. Ljudska bića mogu kontrolirati i odgovorna su za svoje ponašanje, a usredotočena su na postizanje vlastitih ciljeva i postignuća (Nisbett, 2003, str. 47-77), dok kod istočnjaka vrijedi upravo suprotno. U eksperimentima u kojima su zapadnjački i istočnjački studenti bili zamoljeni da daju kratak opis svog uobičajenog dana, riječ „ja“ pojavila se puno češće u opisima koje su dali zapadnjački studenti nego u opisima koje su dali istočnjački studenti.

Što se tiče kauzalne atribucije, zapadnjaci više naglašavaju osobne karakteristike i slobodan izbor pojedinca, dok istočnjaci više važnosti pridaju intuitivnim dokazima, tj. nagađanju. Da bi ilustrirao tu tvrdnju, Nisbett (2003, str. 111-112) je usporedio novinske članke o samoubojstvu kineskog studenta na Sveučilištu u Iowi 1991. Američke novine su se praktički usredotočile samo na osobne karakteristike toga studenta (emocionalna nestabilnost, psihički problemi), dok su se novine u Kini, pokušavajući rasvijetliti njegovo samoubojstvo, usredotočile na kontekstualne aspekte („izolacija kineskog studenta u Americi, laka dostupnost oružja u Americi, pritisak/stres koji se u Americi stavlja na studente da postignu što bolji uspjeh itd.“).

To je u suprotnosti sa zapadnjačkim pogledom na svijet koji je mjesto za stvari i ljude, za ljude koji kontroliraju svoje ponašanje, slijede svoje ciljeve itd. Za istočnjake su međusobni odnosi i odnosi među stvarima od veće važnosti. U korejskom jeziku ne postoji prijevod za rečenicu kao što je: "Biste li željeli večerati sa mnom?", ali postoje različiti prijevodi za riječi „ti / vi” i za „večerati”, ovisno o tome tko je govornik i kome se on ili ona obraća (Nisbett, 2003, str. 52-53). Kod Amerikanaca će pitanje kao što je: „Reci/te mi nešto o sebi” izazvati odgovore koji obiluju osobinama osobe kojoj je pitanje postavljeno („Ja sam vrijedan”, „Ja sam iskren” itd.) Kada istočnjaci odgovaraju na pitanje, oni se pokušavaju služiti opisima vezanim uz njihove društvene uloge („Ja sam Kimin prijatelj”, „Ja pripremam večeru sa svojom sestrom” itd.) Te razlike mogu se uočiti i u načinu na koji se djeca odgajaju i obrazuju. Dok je uobičajeno u školama u Americi izdvojiti dijete koje je „dijete dana”, roditelji i škole na istoku odgajaju djecu tako da ih uče da se stope s grupom. Zapadnjački roditelji i škole pridaju važnost tome da se djeca dobro osjećaju u svojoj koži (Nisbett, 2003, str. 55 govori o nekim školskim područjima u Americi u kojima se odvija važna debata o tome trebaju li škole prenositi znanje ili kod djece graditi samopoštovanje). Za razliku od njih, istočnjački roditelji odgajaju djecu tako da budu sposobna predvidjeti osjećaje i reakcije drugih ljudi i da prema tome prilagode svoje ponašanje.

Što se tiče organizacije znanja, zapadnjaci imaju sklonost klasificiranju, upotrebi kategorija, organiziranju stvari i induktivnoj uporabi kategorija. Istočnjaci, međutim, pokazuju nesklonost taksonomiji. Kada ipak klasificiraju, tada to čine na temelju jačine veza umjesto na temelju osobina. U eksperimentu napravljenom da bi se testirala ta tvrdnja Nisbett i njegov tim pokazali su grupi američke i grupi kineske djece tri slike: kokoš, kravu i travu. Djeci su nakon toga rekli da napišu koje dvije slike idu zajedno i da objasne svoj odgovor. Većina zapadnjačke djece grupirala je kokoš i kravu i napisali su da su ih stavili zajedno jer su obje životinje. Većina kineske djece, međutim, grupirala je kravu i travu i napisala da su to učinili jer krava jede travu, a kokoš ne (Nisbett, 2003, str. 140-141).

To također objašnjava i razlog zbog kojeg istočnjačka djeca uče glagole brže od zapadnjačke djece, dok zapadnjačka djeca uče imenice brže od istočnjačke djece (Nisbett, 2003, str. 152, citira komparativne studije koje su proveli razvojni psiholozi da bi potvrdili tu tvrdnju). Glagoli su također i izraženiji u orijentalnim jezicima. U korejskom, mandarinskom, kantonskom i japanskom jeziku glagoli se obično pojavljuju na početku ili na kraju rečenice (a to su oba istaknuta mjesta), dok su u zapadnjačkim jezicima glagoli obično skriveni u sredini rečenice (Nisbett, 2003, str. 149-150). U zapadnjačkim jezicima opće imenice (koje označavaju kategoriju) su također učestalije nego u orijentalnim jezicima. U mandarinskom i kantonskom, na primjer, ne mogu se razlikovati rečenice: „Ova vjeverica jede lješnjake” i „Vjeverice jedu lješnjake” (Nisbett, 2003, str. 156-157). U zapadnjačkim jezicima lako je stvarati apstraktne imenice. Na primjer, u engleskom jeziku dodavanjem sufiksa „-ness” dobije se apstraktna imenica „loveliness” od riječi „lovely”, „boldness” od riječi „bold” itd. U

orijentalnim jezicima nije moguće stvarati takve strukture (Nisbett, 2003, str. 156-157). Istočnoazijski jezici iznimno su kontekstualni; riječi ili fonemi imaju višestruka značenja, pa se mogu razumjeti samo unutar konteksta u kojem se koriste (Nisbett, 2003, str. 157). Zapadnjačko povijesno nasljeđe i Aristotelova logika imaju rezultat u načinu razmišljanja zapadnjačkih studenata koji su u svojem pristupu svijetu skloni više se koristiti principima logike. Tome su više skloni nego istočnjački studenti koji više važnosti pridaju kontekstu, iskustvu i vjerodostojnosti stvari. Zapadnjački studenti pokreću „ili – ili” argumentiranje sa svojim identitetom, kontradiktornošću i isključenim trećim principom logike. Orijentalni studenti, s druge strane, pokreću „i – i” argumentiranje težeći prema konfucijskom skladu i dijalektici (tj. istočnjaci više nadilaze kontradiktornosti i pokušavaju naći istinu u objema stranama).

Nisbett i njegov tim usporedili su studente sa Sveučilišta u Michiganu sa studentima Sveučilišta u Pekingu i došli do spoznaja da su studenti u prvoj grupi imali sklonost korištenju idioma bez kontradiktornosti, dok su studenti u drugoj grupi više voljeli koristiti idiome s kontradiktornošću (Nisbett, 2003, str. 173-174 i 186-187).

Drugi je novi izvor pronađen na istoku. Na Pedagoškom fakultetu Sveučilišta u Hong Kongu Centar za istraživanja komparativne pedagogije osnovan je potkraj 1980-ih i razvio se u drugog najvećeg svjetskog izdavača literature u području komparativne pedagogije, odmah iza izdavača World Bank. Niz knjiga koje je taj Centar objavio o komparativnoj pedagogiji započeo je s izdavanjem knjige „Kineski učenik: kulturološki, psihološki i kontekstualni utjecaji” (Watkins i Biggs, ur. 1996), koja se usredotočila na karakteristike kineskih učenika (kao što je prihvaćenost učenja napamet i učenje za ispite) i povezala ih s konfucijskim nasljeđem kineskog naroda. Drugi niz knjiga, „Poučavanje kineskih učenika” (Watkins i Biggs, ur. 2001) bavio se načinom na koji karakteristike učenika utječu na nastavni proces. Nedavno je izdana nova verzija prve knjige – „Revidirana analiza kineskog učenika” (Chan i Rao, ur.). Ta se knjiga još jednom bavi karakteristikama kineskih učenika, no također nudi i buduću perspektivu. Nisbett (2003, str. 210-217) na kraju svoje knjige postavlja pitanje kako bi kineske učenike trebalo poučavati i iznosi neke preporuke, no bez naglašavanja pedagogije utemeljene na istočnjačkom načinu razmišljanja.

## **Put pred nama**

Nisbettova izdanja i izdanja Centra za istraživanje komparativne pedagogije pružaju vrijedno proširivanje konceptualizacije filozofije i životnog i općeg svjetonazora kao čimbenika koji oblikuju obrazovne sustave. Taj čimbenik je dugo bio odbačen ili u najboljem slučaju podcijenjen. Čak i u slučajevima u kojima je bio priznat, bio je ograničen na stupanj obrazovne politike, pogotovo obrazovnih ishoda. Rad Nisbetta i izdanja Centra za istraživanje komparativne pedagogije pokazuju kako je način razmišljanja grupe ljudi određen naslijeđenim filozofskim / životnim i općim svjetonazorom. Imajući na umu didaktički princip da bi se poučavanje uvijek trebalo temeljiti na prvobitnoj situaciji, tj. na znanju koje učenik već posjeduje, važno je uzeti u obzir i te nove spoznaje.

Međutim, ne možemo biti zadovoljni širenjem konceptualizacije filozofije. Rezultati koji se tiču istočnjačkih studenata, na primjer, ne bi trebali ostati izoliran slučaj, nego bi se trebali ugraditi u obrazovni sustav pružajući prikladno obrazovanje istočnjačkim studentima. U tom slučaju polje komparativne pedagogije može odigrati važnu ulogu u poboljšanju nastavnog procesa unutar društava koja postaju svakim danom sve više multikulturalna. Nisbett (2003.) je s pravom postavio pitanje na kraju svoje knjige bi li se sada, u globaliziranom svijetu sve većeg broja multikulturalnih društava, trebalo pokušati očuvati razne, različite načine razmišljanja i međukulturalno razumijevanje, kao i bi li trebalo razvijati toleranciju prema različitim načinima razmišljanja, te bi li trebalo krenuti prema sintezi najboljih elemenata i zapadnjačkog i istočnjačkog načina razmišljanja. To je pitanje o kojem bi trebalo razmisliti sa stajališta komparativne pedagogije. Također, u južnom dijelu svijeta komparativna pedagogija, zajedno sa svojom sestrinskom granom znanosti, filozofijom obrazovanja, trebala bi slijediti primjer Nisbettove zapadnjačko-istočnjačke perspektive o načinu razmišljanja i, na temelju empirijskih istraživanja, ponovno konstruirati južnjački način razmišljanja i navesti njegove implikacije za planiranje i provođenje obrazovanja u južnom dijelu svijeta.

Kako su već nekoliko puta objasnili autori poput Straussa (2009, str. 46-59, 631; 2001, str. 134), Coletta (2008, str. 461; 2009, str. 294-298), Lategana (2008, str. 179-180, 191; 2010, str. 152-153; 2010: 152-153), Kubowa (2011, str.163-164) i Weidemana (2010, str. 158-159, 170), polje komparativne pedagogije trebalo bi detaljno posvetiti pažnju svojoj teorijskoj i filozofskoj osnovi. Navedena objašnjenja pokazuju da iako su stručnjaci u polju komparativne pedagogije više puta u prošlosti već pokušali skrenuti pažnju na tu činjenicu, njihovi pokušaji nisu uvijek bili uspješni. Komparativna pedagogija s jedne strane, a stručnjaci koji izrađuju planove obrazovnih sustava s druge strane, trebali bi pokušati težiti tome da svoje projekte temelje na što je više moguće opsežnijoj kozmologiji (pogledu na svijet), antropologiji (pogledu na ljudska bića) i pogledu na društvo i znanje (epistemologija), da navedemo samo nekoliko filozofskih osnova.