

**Course No. 3507/3508**

**Contemporary  
Japanese Culture  
and Society**

# Lecture No. 12

**Education**

*Kyoiku*

教育

# 1. Overview

**Japanese education – once thought of as part of the ‘Japanese miracle’ – now often viewed as having many problems. Reverse halo effect in play.**

**日本の教育 — 昔は成功例として論じられることは多かったけど、現在は問題視されがち。**

# 2 key questions

1. What content does education have? What does it teach you?

教育の内容

2. What social impact does it have? What sort of society does it help to create? 社会的な影響

**Schools sort people into social groups.**

**Long after you have forgotten the content of lessons taught in school, you still remember the atmosphere, the people, the emotions of school. And the way of studying will stay with you longer than the content of what you study.**

**授業の内容を忘れても、学校の雰囲気、エモーション、人間をずっと覚えるだろう。勉強の内容を忘れても、勉強の仕方が残る考えの癖が残る。**

# School career in Japan.

**RED =**  
**Compulsory education**

**赤 = 義務教育**

Age	School
c. 0-6	Pre-school 保育園・幼稚園
c. 6-12 [6 years]	Elementary school 小学校
c. 12-15 [3 years]	Junior high school 中学校
c. 15-18 [3 years]	Senior high 高等学校
c. 18-22+	Universities etc 大学など

# The Big Picture (2003)

<b>Universities</b>	<b>702</b>
<b>Technical colleges</b> 専門学校	<b>3,439</b>
<b>Junior colleges</b>	<b>525</b>
<b>Miscellaneous schools</b> 雜	<b>1,955</b>
<b>Senior high schools</b>	<b>5,450</b>
<b>Junior high schools</b>	<b>11,134</b>
<b>Elementary schools</b>	<b>23,633</b>
<b>Pre-schools</b>	<b>14,174</b>

# Public vs. Private 2003 (%)

<b>Level</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
<b>Pre-school</b>	<b>0.4</b>	<b>20.5</b>	<b>79.1</b>
<b>Elementary</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Junior high</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>92.9</b>	<b>6.2</b>
<b>Senior high</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>29.3</b>
<b>Junior college</b>	<b>1.8</b>	<b>7.2</b>	<b>91.0</b>
<b>Tech college</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>3.9</b>	<b>94.6</b>
<b>University</b>	<b>22.2</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>73.5</b>

***Source: Ministry of Education Science and Technology (MEXT) Survey***



## 2. Pre-school

**An educational video *Pre-Schools in Three Countries* (made by Joseph Tobin, David Wu and Dana Davidson, 1989) compares a Japanese pre-school in Kyoto with pre-schools in China and Hawaii.**

**日本・中国・ハワイの保育園の比較です。**

# Comments on the video

- 1. Strong emphasis on socialization into a group**  
共同生活は重視される
- 2. Clear separation from family life**  
家庭と一線を描く

**3. Very little formal teaching –  
just 20 minutes**

**正式的な「教育」はたった20分**

**4. Little attempt to impose  
discipline – children left to  
solve their own problems.**

**「しつけ」は子供に主に任せら  
れる**

***One item missing from the video***

**2 kinds of pre-school:**

***Yochien* (kindergarten)**

***Hoikuen* (day care center)**

**「幼稚園」対「保育園」**

# Yochien 幼稚園

- **Short hours; Mothers not usually working full-time**
- **Administered by Min. of Education**
- **Some owned by private educational institutions that go up to university**
- **短時間、お母さんたちは主に専業主婦**
- **文部科学省の管轄**
- **私立幼稚園の一部は大学まで続く学園に所属している**

# Hoikuen 保育園

- **Designed for working mothers (who get priority at public *hoikuen*).**
- **Long hours – 10 hours or more.**
- **Administered by Min. of Health, Labor & Welfare: stress parental work rather than education.**
- **働くお母さん向き。長時間。厚生労働省の管轄**

# Pre-school level

<b>National</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
<b>0.4%</b>	<b>20.5%</b>	<b>79.1%</b>

***Not enough public provision for working mothers... rationed by ability to pay.***

## So it's a dual system...

- Traditionally, working-class mothers would use hoikuen and middle-class mothers would use yochien or keep their children at home.
- 労働階級：保育園
- 中流階級：幼稚園

(例外あり)



**(That's unless you still believe  
Japan is a classless society, of  
course)**

**「無階級社会、日本」と多少イメージ  
が違いますが...**

### 3. Elementary school 小学校



# The image of school... 学校像

Note the clock...  
universal  
school symbol



Architecture is very regimented and uniform...  
– they all look the same. 建築はみんな同じ. . .

# Grim and grey...



# Some cleaner than others...





**But the same basic style**



# A 'concrete' demonstration...



**... that everyone in Japan gets  
the same deal**





**(...except for a few people who pay to go to private ones)**



# Elementary school

<b>National</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
<b>0.7</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>0.9</b>

*Dominated by public sector... totally different from kindergartens... reflects the fact that we are now in compulsory education.*

# Majority are state-run

**... and they are very EGALITARIAN.**

- 1. No setting or streaming – everyone studies together**
- 2. No special prizes for outstanding students**
- 3. Almost no competitive sports**

**徹底的な平等主義です...能力によるクラス別  
け無し、「優等生」の御褒美無し**

# Elementary school life: an example



- A few slides from the home page of Mutsumi Hokubu Elementary School in Okayama prefecture, showing sports day 2002 (岡山県・六ツ美北部小学校のHPから取った2002年の運動会のイメージ)



# Sports Day (*undokai*) 運動会



Everyone's got to stand in a straight line  
and listen to a boring speech first...

まず長い列に立ってつまらな~いおじさんのお話  
を聞くこと

# Somewhat militaristic? Sharply gendered



ちよつぴり「軍事的」な感じ？

「1年生の男の子も元気いっぱい手をふって行進。」



**Big kids lead little kids...**



As they do on the way to school

**The “Tokohan” (登校班)**

**A group of children who walk to school together.**

**Most kids walk to school; use of cars is frowned upon.**

**The kids are also expected to clean up the classroom together.**



# 2 teams – red and white hats



個人の競争ではなく、  
「組」です

No individual prizes... everything is in teams.

## ***But team identity not emphasized***

**Cf. UK private schools: the 'house' system. Usually 4 or 5 houses... kids stay in the same house throughout their school life. At boarding schools, they may literally be 'houses'. But at Japanese elementary schools, every kid has a hat red on one side, white on the other – color membership decided randomly each year.**

**赤か白、毎回ランダムで決める。「チームアイデンティティ」を強調しない。英国と違う。**

**Used in P.E. classes too**





# Relays emphasize teamwork



... as does the tug 'o war

竹取りもそつだし





# And passing the big ball (*Odama okuri*) 大玉送り



**And group calisthenics also feature**



**All the children moving as one, like a single great body... 全員一体化して...**

**. . . perfect cooperation...**



**完全な協力...**



***... a bit like North  
Korea?***



**ちょっと「北朝鮮」という感じ？**

... maybe not. そうでもないか





**But it's not a  
perfect image of  
equality... often  
there's someone  
at the top  
それにしても、完全  
な平等主義ではな  
い。「トップ」あります。**



And there's even some violence

# *Kiba-sen* piggyback battle

騎馬戦



# Continuities from pre-school

- 1. Egalitarian.**
- 2. Stress on group activities + socialization.**
- 3. No uniform.**
- 4. Little pressure to work hard.**

**平等主義、集団活動・共同生活、制服なし、勉強する圧力はあまりない**

# Respect for environment

**Many elementary schools do not employ cleaners. Kids have to clean their own classrooms, and polish the corridors by running along them with dusters (a time-honored ritual). In some schools, the kids even have to clean the toilets – a source of fear, even horror, to many kids.**

# 学校の怪談...トイレの幽霊



**(One of Japan's most widespread urban myths concerns ghosts in school toilets... many a manga and anime focuses on this theme...)**





**Gakko no Kaidan ...  
School Ghost Stories**



# Memorization

- ***Kokugo* 国語** [lit. “national language”], i.e. Japanese. In 6 years, must learn 1,000 *kanji*.
- People often complain there is too much memorizing and not enough creativity... but with 1,850 *kanji* to learn, you have to do a lot of memorizing... *shikata ga nai!*

# Kaki-jun 書き順

It's not enough just to learn the strokes to write each kanji. You have to learn the correct stroke order (*kaki-jun*) as well. (Never could master that myself).

There's a right way and a wrong way to write a kanji. And teachers can find very small errors to correct.

# **‘Relaxed education’ ゆとり教育**

**‘*Yutori kyoiku*’ Policy adopted by the Ministry of Education since early 1990s**

- 1. No more Saturday school. Phased out; completely abolished in 2001.**
- 2. Fewer classes on mathematics and Japanese language.**
- 3. More ‘general studies’ classes with freer use of time.**

# **‘Relaxation’ under fire**

**The Education Ministry has been accused of ‘dumbing down’ education with the ‘yutori kyoiku’ program, which is widely disliked by conservative politicians and by some parents.**

**「ゆとり教育」は「学力低下」を招くと批判される**

**But if elementary school is so relaxed about studying...**

**... how will the kids be prepared for the famous “exam hell” that awaits them later in their school career?**

**「ゆとり教育」ではどうやって「試験地獄」の準備ができるか？**

**Answer: By going to *juku***



# Juku 塾 After-school crammer

- Meigaku students! How many went to juku?
- Where did you learn most, school or juku?
- Which was more fun, school or juku?
- How many had a home tutor (家庭教師、katei kyoshi)

**U.C. students! How many attended classes after school, or had a home tutor? Or did you do all your studying at school (and homework of course...)**





**Still a force to reckon with:  
the 'education  
mama' (koyoiku  
mama 教育ママ)**

# Study at *juku*...

... play or sleep at school. Because what they teach you at school, you already learned last year at *juku*.

Many educators are worried that Japanese kids don't get enough sleep because of (a) too much time at *juku* + (b) too much time playing video games etc.

# **School and juku: 2 different worlds**

**School: Cooperation, group activities, easy-paced studying.**

**Juku: Hard studying, tightly focused on exams, with teachers who know they will lose their jobs if they don't get enough kids through their exams.**

# **Result:**

**Semi-privatization of Education.**

**教育の半民営化**

**People who have the money and the desire for success send their kids to juku. The others do not.**

# IRONY 1

**Government accused of fostering “exam hell”, tries to make education more relaxing...**

**... and is accused of “dumbing down”**

# IRONY 2

**The move to more relaxed education was inspired by the bubble economy: Japan was very rich, yet people were thought to be unhappy and uncreative. Hence the move to more leisure... but by the time it was implemented, the bubble had burst.**

**1992: 1 Saturday off per month.**

**1995: 2 Saturdays off per month.**

**2002: *Saturday schooling abolished.***

# IRONY 3

**A lot of the competition is simply transferred from school to juku. Many parents don't take the general studies classes seriously and send their children to juku on Saturdays to catch up on kanji and maths. (*Not letting the kids be free and creative as the government hoped...*)**



# IRONY 4

**Many of the best teachers are at juku (or *yobiko*, see below), NOT at schools. They can make better money at juku and can ignore bureaucratic ministry regulations.**

# **Key problem often ignored:**

**It is easy to get a teacher's license in Japan. You just take a short course of a few months on the side while at college, with very little classroom training.**

**先生になるのは簡単すぎる！教員訓練は足りない**

**So often the teachers do not know what to do in their 'general studies' classes... they are lost without the manual.**

**授業には「工夫がない」... のではないか**

(By the way)

**There are lots of other kinds of juku – for learning English, gymnastics, etc. Or soroban (abacus).**

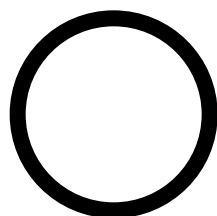
**My marutsuke incident**

**私の丸付け事件**

# MARUTSUKE 丸付け

MARU

Circle



BATSU

Cross



**Marutsuke:**

**“Putting on the marus”  
Informal term, meaning  
“marking/ grading the  
children’s work.”**

**What about  
“batsutsuke”??**

**That word does not  
exist!**

**Must not mark anything wrong...  
for it might upset the pupils.**

**If the teacher notices a mistake,  
s/he will point it out, and help  
the student get the right  
answer. Then the wrong  
answer is erased, the right  
answer written in, and a “maru”  
applied.**



***No evidence of the original  
mistake remains.***

**(An educational disaster, in  
my humble opinion)**

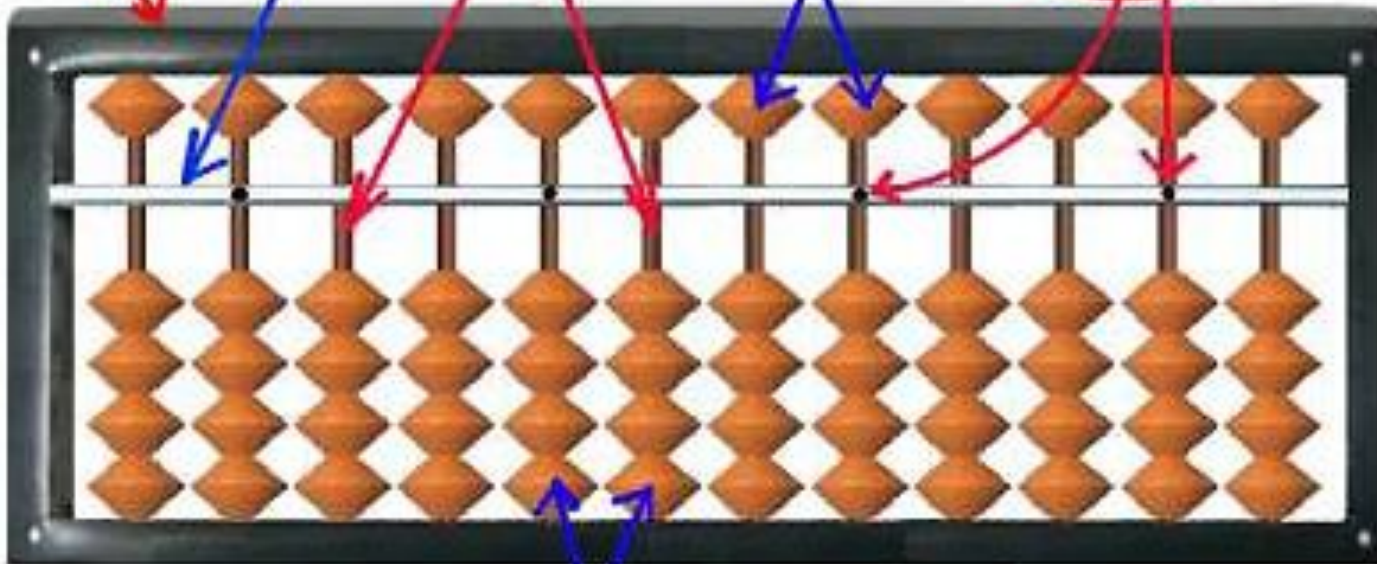
# Soroban

そろばん

ていいてん  
定位点

わく はり けた

五だま



一だま

<b>Is a pattern emerging?</b>	<b>Pre-school level</b>	<b>Elementary / junior high</b>
<b>Upper class</b>	<b>Home tutor / university yochien</b>	<b>Private school</b>
<b>Middle class</b>	<b>Yochien</b>	<b>State school + juku</b>
<b>Working class</b>	<b>Hoikuen</b>	<b>State school, no juku</b>

# 4. Junior high school 中学校



**Look the same as elementary schools...**





**With their clocks...**





# But the private sector is more noticeable...

<b>Level</b>	<b>National</b>	<b>Public</b>	<b>Private</b>
<b>Elementary</b>	<b>0.7</b>	<b>98.4</b>	<b>0.9</b>
<b>Junior high</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>92.9</b>	<b>6.2</b>

**And now competition heats up**

**Hensachi tests 偏差値**

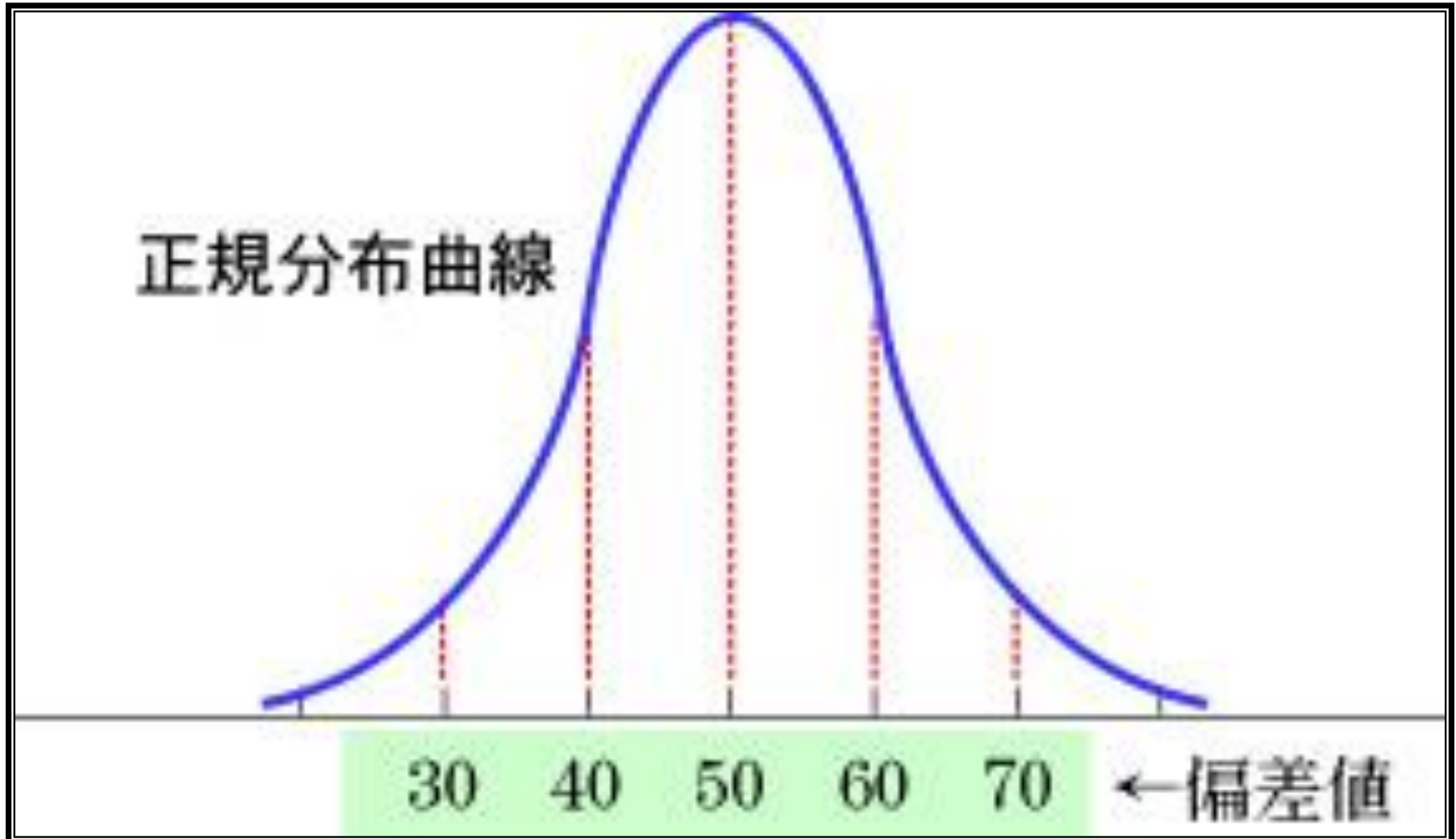
**Standard deviation / T-tests**

**Applied nationwide, attempting  
to place each student in Japan  
in a percentile of the entire  
school-age population**

**Starts in elementary  
school**

***... but taken far more  
seriously in junior  
high school.***

# The hensachi bell curve



**If you're at the wrong end of the  
curve...**

**... you can study very hard to  
improve...**

**... or you can give up and drop  
out**

**偏差値がイマイチ？どうする？頑張っ  
て勉強する？それとも**ギブアップ**？**



**Who cares  
about  
hensachi  
scores  
anyway?**

**偏差値なんか、  
どうでもええ  
じゃないか**





**Kids who  
drop out are  
classed in  
various ways:  
'bad kids'  
(*furyo*) 不良  
are often  
condemned**

**There's some sympathy for school refusers (*toko kyohisha*) 登校拒否者**



**. . . who may  
be victims of  
bullying (*ijime*)  
いじめ... a  
much  
discussed  
social problem**

# **It makes you wonder...**

**... if the furryo kids who do the bullying, and the weak kids who get bullied ... might be the very same kids who are hitting and being hit way back in the pre-school stage.**

**「いじめっ子」と「いじめられっ子」は幼稚園・保育園から育てられるかな？**

**It makes you wonder...**

**Is it really OK to let very young children have so much freedom to create their own society?**

**Will that society necessarily be a nice one?**

**... or will it be like 'Lord of the Flies'...**



Nowadays  
school  
refusing can  
be seen as  
quite sensible,  
or even  
glamorous  
登校拒否は  
「かっこいい」?





# **My son's experience**

**He refused to go to school and the teacher made all the other kids write letters to him apologizing for their own behavior and criticizing him for his behavior.**

**At another school, some girls refused to use the gym apparatus after him because it was 'polluted' by his contact.**

# **In extreme cases...**

**Teachers become quite unable to control their class and it ‘collapses’ (*gakkyu hokai* 学級崩壊, Cf. Lec #7) Another popular phrase. The whole class has to be disbanded and relocated among different schools.**

家庭崩壊  
学級崩壊  
学校崩壊

松居 和

学級崩壊を  
超える授業

『学級崩壊』  
からの立ち直り

川村 秀尚

A publishing industry ?

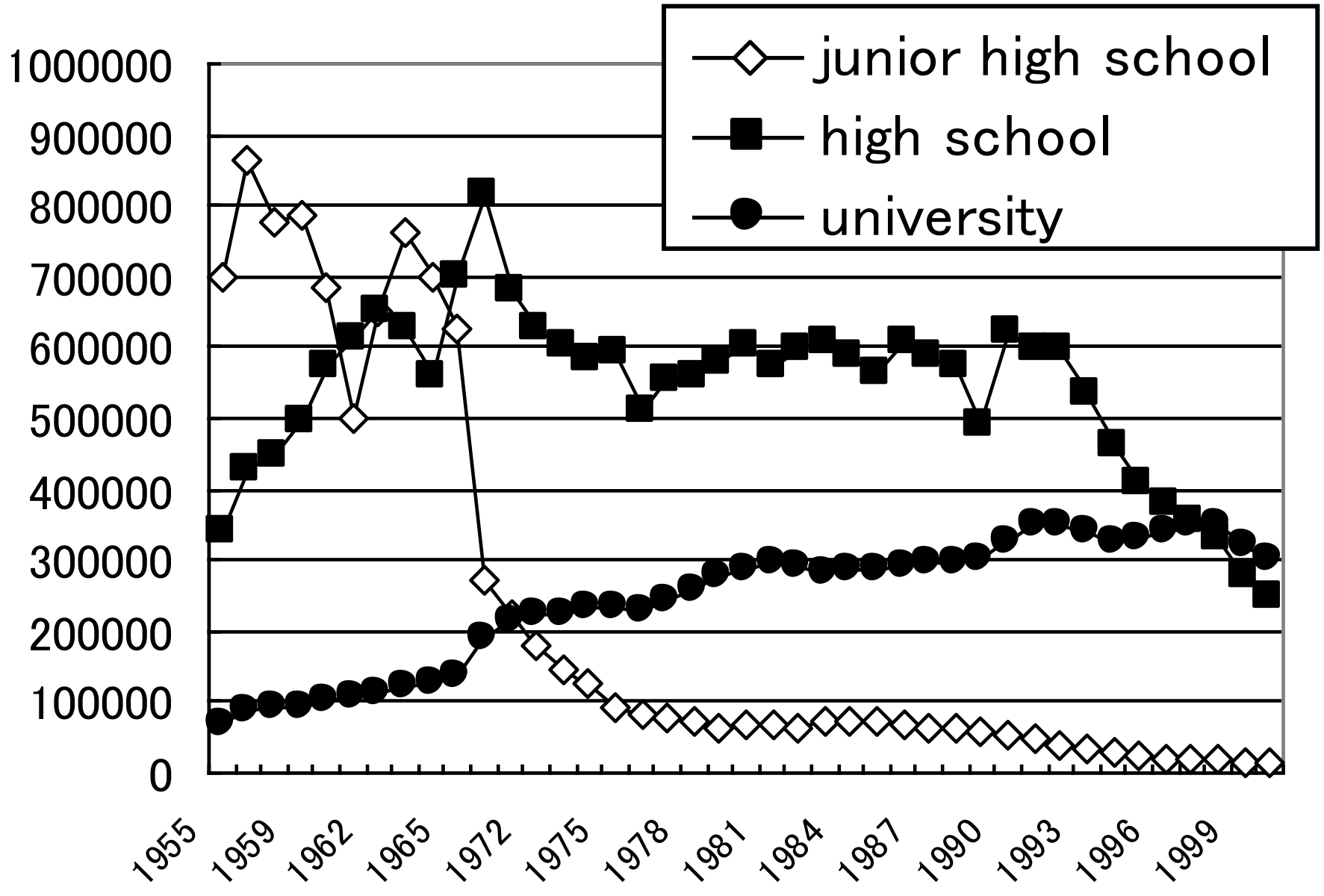
## **5. Senior high school**

**Not compulsory, and entrance is by competitive examination.**

**Nearly everyone (c. 98% of population) goes, but only enough places at state high schools for about half.**

**The rest must go to private schools and pay fees.**

# At which stage do students leave education?



# End of compulsory education

Level	National	Public	Private
Junior high	0.9	92.9	6.2
<b>Senior high</b>	<b>0.2</b>	<b>70.5</b>	<b>29.3</b>

*Elite private schools at the top end; dump private schools at the bottom end. Insufficient public schools; penalty for failing to get into one is having to pay a lot more for low-level education.*



# **Placement counseling** **(*shinrô shidô*) 進路指導**

**A subtle process by which students are placed in 'suitable' senior high schools while they go through junior high school.**

**They are advised which school to apply for. It may not be possible to apply for two, because...**

***They often have their  
exams on the same day  
and at the same time.***

***高校入試は同日・同時間という  
ケースが多い。***

***Key point!***

# Vocational high school vs Academic High School

**工業・商業高等学校対総合高等学校**

**Again – a dual system.**

**Vocational schools prepare you  
for working-class jobs,  
academic schools for university  
entrance or white-collar  
employment.**

# **Key term: “Warming up” & “cooling out”**

**Students must be “warmed up” -- encouraged to study hard, with the promise of rewards (good jobs, wealth etc.). But many will not get the rewards. So their ambitions must be “cooled down” ... by sending them to vocational high school etc.**

# **Comparative study on high school education**

**JAPAN**

**vs**

**SOUTH KOREA**

<b>Country</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>% going to university</b>	
		<b>Academic high school</b>	<b>Vocational high school</b>
<b>Japan</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>49.5</b>	<b>18.8</b>
	<b>Female</b>	<b>37.5</b>	<b>12.0</b>
<b>South Korea</b>	<b>Male</b>	<b>70.8</b>	<b>14.3</b>
	<b>Female</b>	<b>68.5</b>	<b>13.9</b>

Country	Gender	% going to junior college	
		Academic high school	Vocational high school
Japan	Male	1.4	2.1
	Female	16.2	11.0
South Korea	Male	14.6	39.8
	Female	17.3	30.4



Country	Gender	% going to special training school (senmon gakko)	
		Academic high school	Vocational high school
Japan	Male	13.8	18.9
	Female	20.0	22.3
South Korea	Male	—	—
	Female	—	—

Country	Gender	Total % going to higher education		
		Academic high schools	Vocational high school	All high schools
Japan	Male	64.9	40.0	58.1
	Female	73.8	47.0	67.6
South Korea	Male	86.5	54.9	72.4
	Female	87.5	44.6	75.8

# Source:

**“Educational Aspirations and the Warming-up/Cooling-down Process: A Comparative Study between Japan and South Korea”**

**By NAKAMURA Takayasu**

***Social Science Japan Journal*, Vol. 6 No. 2**

**October 2003**

## 6. University 大学

**So you want to go to college? Then get ready for a lot more exams...**

**Some students take the exams year after year... they are called 'ronin'**

**浪人**

**... literally meaning 'masterless samurai.'**

**Is it 6+3+3+4?**

**Or**

**6+3+X+3+X+4**

**?**

# A Yobiko class 予備校の授業



# The pecking order

1. Tokyo University (Todai 東大)
2. Kyoto University (Kyodai 京大)
3. Osaka University (Handai 阪大)
4. Tokyo Institute of Technology
5. Tohoku University (東北大)
6. Keio University (Keidai 慶大)

*Only Keio is a private school.*



Source: Kawai Juku Survey 2001

**Based on**

- (1) Research standards;**
- (2) Survey of reputation;**
- (3) Graduate employment outcomes;**
- (4) Difficulty of getting in.**

# The Akamon 赤門







**Clock tower theme still persists**

# Todai Entrance Exam Question

At Valls, the borders of the Netherlands, \_\_\_\_\_, and Belgium meet. The Maas river winds south from Vaals, descending from \_\_\_\_\_, Holland's only mountainous region. The surrounding area is farmland; the primary crops are apples, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_. After skirting the border of \_\_\_\_\_, the Maas passes through \_\_\_\_\_, a forest 70 km. wide and \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ km. long.

**Key to success?**

***Memorizing tons and tons  
of useless information.***

# More class distinctions

1. **Top public universities (Tokyo, Kyoto etc.)**
2. **Top private universities (Waseda, Keio, Doshisha etc.)**
3. **Other public and private universities**
4. **2-year colleges (*tanki daigaku; tandai*) (短期大学) Mainly for women...**
5. **Technical colleges (*senmongakko*) 専門学校**

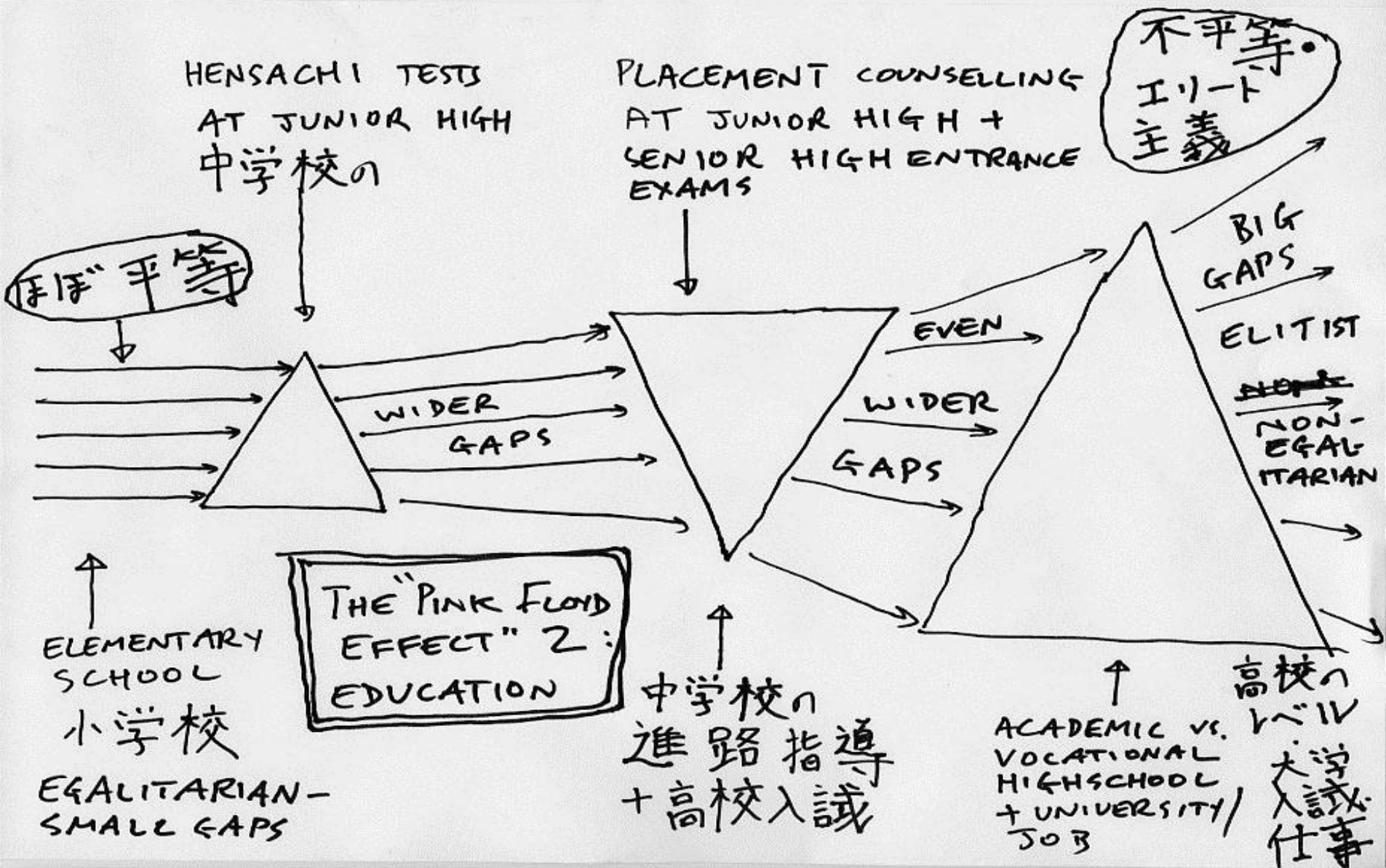
# Private sector dominates...

Level	National	Public	Private
Junior college	1.8	7.2	91.0
Tech college	1.6	3.9	94.6
University	22.2	4.3	73.5

***... except at the elite end of the four-year universities... a legacy of the Meiji-era struggle to cultivate a domestic ruling class***



# Pink Floyd Effect strikes again?



# Yet egalitarian theme survives

**Japanese universities are highly ranked. Yet WITHIN each university, there is relatively little ranking of students. One's grades (成績) are of relatively little importance.**

**大学はランキングされるが、大学内、学生たちはあまりランキングされない。**

# *E.g. here*

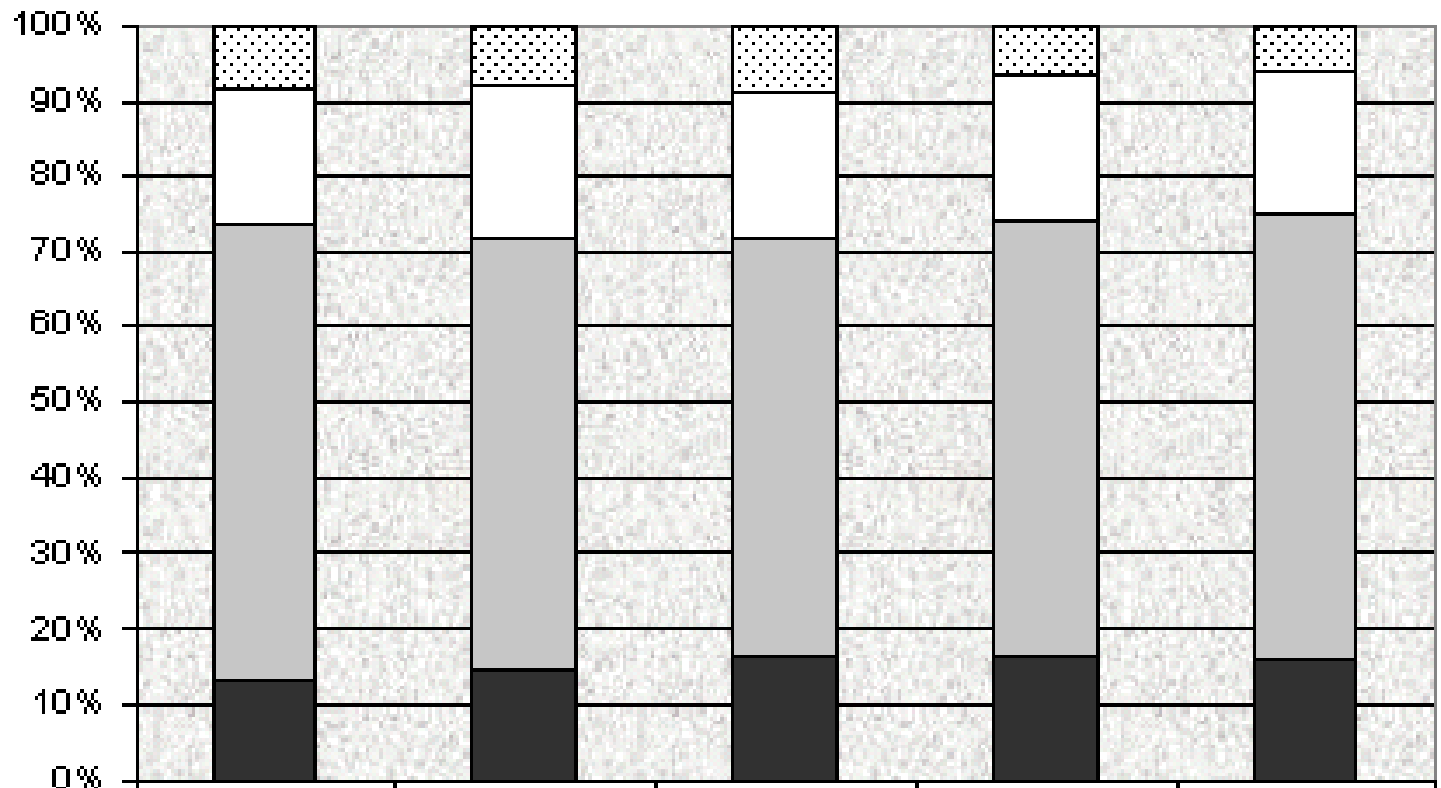
**Meiji Gakuin has no honor roll – no special recognition for excellent students, no merit-based scholarships.**

**When students graduate, they all receive exactly the same diploma.**

**Unlike in Britain, where degrees are classified first, upper second, lower second, third, and ‘ordinary’ (no honours).**

**See example from Edinburgh University.**

## Proportion of Degree Classifications awarded by the University of Edinburgh



	1999/2000	2000/2001	2001/2002	2002/2003	2003/2004
■ % of Firsts	13.3%	14.3%	16.3%	16.4%	16.2%
■ % of Upper Seconds	60.4%	57.4%	55.6%	57.8%	58.7%
□ % of Lower Seconds	18.2%	20.5%	19.3%	19.2%	19.4%
▨ % of Thirds and Other	8.1%	7.8%	8.9%	6.6%	5.7%

**Academic Year when Degree awarded**

# When and how are you ranked?

**In Britain, too, universities are ranked. But when you graduate and look for a job, a first-class degree from a middling school will be a big plus on your CV (curriculum vitae / resume / rirekisho / 履歴書). You may be preferred to a candidate from a much more famous university who only has a lower second. In the US, an excellent GPA may have the same effect.**

# But in Japan...

... the worst student from Todai will probably beat the best student from Meiji Gakuin – although that is totally unfair! The Meigaku student's excellent grades will probably not even be looked at.

**Conclusion:** Ranking systems exist in all three countries, but the US and UK tend to rank **individuals** while Japan ranks **institutions**.

**(Reminds me of Chie Nakane  
中根千枝 and her distinction  
between frame 枠 and  
attribute 資格 a little.)**



# Change coming?

**Government figures show that the population of children in Japan has declined for 25 years in a row, hitting an all time low of 18 million children under the age of 15.**

**This is 14% of Japan's population.**

**Children under 15 constitute 21% of the USA population.**

**25年連続の少子化**

# Fewer young people...

**The government estimates that Japan's population will start falling rapidly from 2006 onward when mortality rates finally catch up with the falling fertility rate...**

**2006年から人口減少が始まるのではない  
か**

**... means less exam competition.**

**Many less famous private  
universities cannot get enough  
students (*tei'in ware* 定員割れ)**

**They struggle to attract students by  
offering free trips to Disneyland etc.  
for anyone who gets into the  
university...**

**... after they've paid their admission fees of course.**

**入学金は「支払い済み」という  
条件で...**

Meiji Gakuin is **NOT** like  
that!... (Needless to say)

言うまでもなく、明治学院は  
全然違います

# Post-graduates 大学院生

**Although so many Japanese youths go to university, very few stay on for graduate studies.**

**Japan: c. 10% of university grads go on to postgrad studies.**

**Korea: c. 30% of university grads go on to postgrad studies.**

Those that do go to grad school

... are not necessarily the elite. Often grad school is a place for the guys who didn't quite make it in the *shuushoku* 就職 employment race.



# ***To sum up:***

**The tension between egalitarianism and elitism runs right through the education system... but if we step back and examine the institution, the general pattern seems to be a gradual shift from radical egalitarianism to obsessive elitism.**

# Senpai/kohai 先輩・後輩

(I couldn't decide where to put this bit so it ended up at the end)

There is a different kind of hierarchy in Japanese education, between older and younger students.

Senpai 先輩 senior

Kohai 後輩 junior

Dokyusei 同級生 age mate

# Senpai/kohai reciprocity

**The senpai should be kind and encouraging to the kohai; the kohai should be respectful and obedient to the senpai.**

**That's the ideal. In practice, senpai can bully kohai in the name of "teaching them a lesson."**

**Some of this is institutionalized. Eg in sports, senpai get to use the showers first, kohai have to clean up the gym, etc.**

# **Your time will come**

## **後輩は先輩になる**

**I say it's a different kind of hierarchy because eventually students will graduate from kohai to senpai. Hard feelings about the subordinate kohai role are offset by the thought that eventually you will get to be boss.**

**(Unlike the hensachi curve where students tend to stay near the high end or low end permanently.)**

# When Hierarchies Collide

- What if a kohai understands mathematics better than his senpai?
- *Asking a younger student for help can be very embarrassing.*
- 先輩が後輩に勉強の助けを求めるのは面通は丸つぶし??

**Maybe the drop-outs are having  
more fun than us anyway**



# “Diploma Disease” 「ディプロマ病」

**Ronald Dore, 1976. *The Diploma Disease*. London: George Allen & Unwin Ltd.**

**Argues that late developing countries they tend to put heavy stress on education, especially qualifications.**

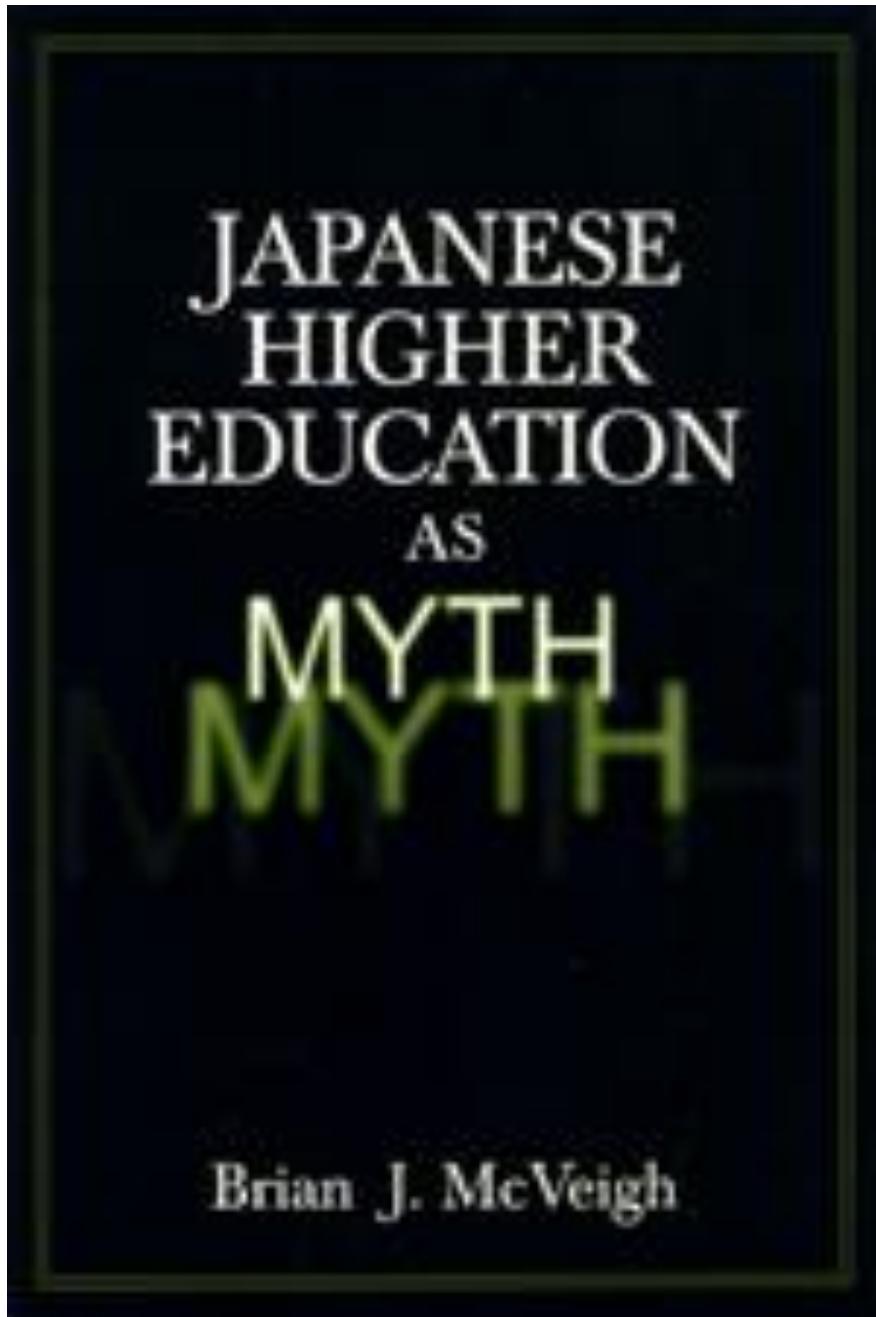




ロナルド  
ドアー

**Ronald Dore**

***Finally, let's look at one critique that sees the education system as a powerful center of social control....***



**Brian McVeigh and his book (2002)**

- **"There is a dark spirit plaguing the Japanese university classroom. It is the ghost of opinions suppressed, voices lost, self-expressions discouraged, and individuality restrained. The ghost is malevolent, and in its vengeance demands silence, self-censorship, and indifference from the students it haunts." -- Brian McVeigh**

# **MEXT** (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology)



**Evil Empire...?**

**悪の帝国？**

# The McVeigh Theory マックヴェー論

## **MEXT's conservative nationalist agenda**

- 1. Supports business interests – which need skilled, disciplined manpower**
- 2. And it supports presenting positive images of Japan and its history – it is nationalistic**

**文部科学省：保守的、国家主義。資本家が必要とする労働力の供給+日本のイメージアップは目的だと。**

# Key points in debate

- **(a) The ‘Imperial Rescript on Education’ from the Meiji period – which was abolished during the post-war occupation.**
- **(b) The national anthem (Kimigayo)**
- **(c) The national flag (Hinomaru)**
- **All of these are seen by the left as symbols of Japans militaristic and imperialistic past.**

# US-inspired change

- **After the War, the American Occupation tried to get rid of the elements in Japanese society which they saw as responsible for the war. These included symbols such as the Imperial Rescript, and the control of the state over the curriculum and textbooks.**



# Aim of education?

## BEFORE

*"to promote loyalty to the Emperor and filial piety, thus to achieve national unity under the father Emperor"*

**(Imperial Rescript on Education, 1890)**

# Aim of education?

**AFTER**

***"the full development of  
personality and respect for  
the value of the individual"***

**(1947 Fundamental Law on  
Education)**

## *Back to the Meiji Era?*

**McVeigh argues that the state is now trying to get back the power it lost during the occupation together with the old symbols such as the flag, anthem, and Imperial Rescript.**

**The flag and anthem were made official symbols of Japan in 1999 and schools are ordered to use them. (Not Meiji Gakuin as it is a private school)**

Fair comment? Or overstating  
the case?

***In our next lecture, we will  
take a close look at the  
Japanese education system.***

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