

*PESGB Seminar Series*

The Education of the Whole Person: An East-West Dialogical Critique

1<sup>st</sup> Meeting

Date: December 10, 2022

Venue:

the Lawton Room on Level 6

UCL Institute of Education

9:30-9:40

Welcome and introduction. . . Naoko Saito

9:40-11:00

Session I

Naoko Saito (Kyoto University) 30 min

“Rethinking the Idea of the Whole Person in Education”

Emma Williams (Warwick University) 30 min

TBA

*Discussion* 20 minutes

Chair: Paul Standish

11:00-11:20

Break

11:20-12:55

Session II

Pip Bennett (IOE UCL) 30 min

“Relational Selves, Whole People, and Education”

Qasir Shah (IOE UCL) 30 min

“Educating The Person: A Confucian Perspective”

Adrian Skilbeck (University of Winchester) 15 min

*Discussion 25 minutes*

Chair: Rebecca Mace

13:00-14:30

Lunch break

14:30-15:10

Session III

Baptiste Cornardeau (Paris 1<sup>st</sup> University) 30 min

“Unsettling Perfection: The Whole Person as an End in View

*Discussion 10 minutes*

Chair: Emma Williams

15:10-15:50

Session IV

Paul Standish (UCL IOE) 30 min

“Postmodernism and the Idea of the Whole Person”

Discussion 10 min

Chair: Qasir Shah

15:50-16:10

Coffee break

16:10-16:40

Session V

Comments

Yoonji Kang (University of Warwick) 15 min

“Re-placing Knowledge in the Education of the Whole Person”

Rebecca Mace (IOE UCL) 15 min

“My Whole Life”

Chair: Alexis Gibbs

16:40-17:10

General discussion

Chair: Naoko Saito

17:10 closing

This project will organize a seminar series on the education of the whole person in a manner that exploits the benefits of East-West dialogue. Against the tide of performativity, objective measurement, explicit accounting and evidence in outcome based education, our aim is to present an alternative vision of education that is in service to holistic growth and healthy perfectionism. Such needs are urgent in view of the worldwide implications of the crisis of the war in Ukraine, COVID-19 and environmental problems – in the situation where each of us needs to reconsider the meaning of the good life. The main research question for the project is: How the idea of the whole be constructively pursued without its being assimilated into assumptions of a complete whole? In response, beyond the existing discourse on the whole person, which tends to fixate and romanticize the idea of the whole, this project will present a philosophical line of thinking in terms of *anti-foundationalist perfectionism* – to be found in the intersection of American transcendentalism, pragmatism, Stanley Cavell, the later Wittgenstein and the “clinical pedagogy” that is associated with the Kyoto School of philosophy (Nishida *et al.*). We shall explore the implications in theory and practice of the idea of the education of grownups, seeking, that is, an alternative vision of lifelong and continuing education.

In this first gathering, we shall take Paul Standish’s article, “Postmodernism and the Education of the Whole Person” (1995), as a starting-point for discussion and criticism. Standish’s criticism of the idea of the whole person in education provides us a helpful lens through which to find a way beyond the limits of the education of the whole person. Showing some sympathy for the idea of the whole person in education as a form of resistance to instrumentalism, and to narrowness, one-sidedness, or false dualisms in the prevailing discourse, Standish nevertheless cautions against concern with the quest for wholeness and completeness in education. He explores a third way beyond modernism and postmodernism along the lines of Stanley Cavell’s Emersonian Moral Perfectionism.

Our speakers will present ideas of the whole person in education beginning with the issues Standish raises. Standish will then respond.