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The New Vision of Public Education in China

Book Review: Zhu Yongxin, *New Education Experiment in China*.

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It was in 2015 International Forum on Family Education held by the Chinese Society of Education in Zhongshan in China that I first met Professor Zhu Yongxin who was attending my keynote speech session on the topic of moral education in family settings. With conversation, I was attracted to him by his gentle, scholarly manner and profound knowledge and experiences in Chinese education and the education in general.

China has long been stimulating my academic curiosity, especially in education. Since I was an expert in education both in the academic and administrative field, I thought I was somewhat well acquainted with the educational system, philosophy, curriculum, recent reform, and other changes of many other countries. However, I have to confess that I have absolutely no idea about Chinese education both past and present.

As everyone knows, recently China is rapidly developing in economics and getting powerful in international politics. My curiosity was: What was the role of education in making China work as it is now? What kind of curriculum changes were made since China has accepted market economy system? What kind of educational reform or innovation is China doing, planning and discussing for their near and long-term future?

It was my fortune to find professor Zhu's book, *My Vision on Education* because it helped a lot to resolve such curiosity. His book was so successful in writing a general outline of Chinese education that it could give a good overview picture of it. The book also deals with such various kinds of topics on Chinese education that it could help understand it in detail.

The book is a product of professor Zhu's combination of a variety of experiences as a teacher, professor, researcher and administrator all over his lifetime. While Professor Zhu

seems to be one of the most prolific writers in Chinese educational field, all of his books have a point of sameness which is called a combination of theories and practices. Accordingly, this book is not an exception because it is full of articles of his effort to combine approaches and methods. Everywhere in his book, I could smell the scent of his educational experiment which began in 2002 and involved more than 800 schools in China nationwide.

This book consists of three part, of which each element includes 12–13 chapters respectively. Chapters describe ideal features of the school, teacher, principal, student and parent. In these chapters, what he was trying to stress was ‘changing’ or ‘innovation’. I felt throughout all this book the author seemed like to cry out that all of the on-going attitudes, structures and systems of Chinese education and school should be changed.

On closing professor Zhu’s book, a strategist came into my mind who was a famous hero in the old Chinese novel, Romance of Three Kingdoms. The hero handles and manages all of his troops and resources for victory with knowledge, wisdom and intuition. The hero knew everything about his enemies and his side so well that he could plan successful strategies for success. The hero and Professor Zhu overlapped in silhouette in my eyes. This book must have nursed an ambitious strategy for Chinese educational reform which China should inevitably have to undergo someday shortly.

Education is, in essence, an enterprise of human resource development (HRD). The criterion of success and quality education relies on the effectiveness of HRD nationwide. The target people of HRD is 0.05 billion in Korea, 0.12 billion in Japan, 0.25 billion in the USA and 14 billion in China, for examples. Professor Zhu Yongxin seems to be a strategist of HRD for 14 billion Chinese people: How to raise them, how to develop their potentiality, how to distribute them and how to utilise them. In his book, Professor seems to try to delineate a masterplan of HRD for Chinese people of 14 billion. I wish his vision and strategy were successful with the help of all sectors of Chinese government and institution and course teachers and parents.

References:

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