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The Decline in the Academic Level of Japanese Children and the Development of Educational Reform

Featuring:

Professor Eiichi Kajita

President, Hyogo University for Teacher Education
Member, the Central Council for Education

Japanese students established a record of academic excellence during the 1970's and '80's that was admired throughout the world. Their success at math and science attracted the attention of other educators interested in mimicking Japan's accomplishments. But as Japan enters the 21st century, its students' academic success seems to be faltering. What challenges is Japan's educational system facing? What is the present situation of Japan's primary and secondary education system? Professor Kajita will discuss these issues and other recent developments in Japan's educational reform, including discussions from the Central Education Council and measures implemented by Japan's Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (MEXT).

Professor Kajita became President of the Hyogo University for Teacher Education last December. He has previously served as Senior Researcher for the National Institute for Education Research, professor at Osaka University and Kyoto University, and President of Notre Dame Women's College. Since February 2001 he has been working as a member of the Central Education Council (he also currently serves as Chairman of the Subdivision on Educational Personnel Training and Vice-chairman of the Subdivision on Educational Curriculum). Professor Kajita advocates the "achievement of securing both academic level and growth," which has greatly influenced MEXT to change the policy from "yutori education" (education with free scope for children's growth) and led to improvement of the academic level.

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The Decline in the Academic Level of Japanese Children and the Development of Educational Reform

by

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Just before I came here, I found this old issue of *TIME Magazine* in my office. This is the November 14th 1977 issue, and the featured topic was “US High Schools in Trouble.” What this magazine describes is that in the 1960s and 70s, on the one hand the academic level of American students had been constantly on the decline, whereas problematic behaviors of students such as absenteeism, teenage pregnancy, violence and vandalism, had been on the rise. When the society becomes richer and becomes more generous, the general trend is that you will relax discipline in the society, and at the same time, people start to enjoy the concept like the less adult, so-called Child-Centered Educational Approach; or instead of teaching the children per se, that gives them an opportunity to learn by themselves rather than us teaching the children; and instead of giving a lot of discipline from an adult point of view, that allows children to make their own decisions. So in the 1970s, this kind of idea had been really embraced in the United States. So as I mentioned earlier, in the 1960s and 70s, the academic level of children had been decreasing whereas the problem in behavior increased. And sort of a buzzword in the educational community in the United States at that time was “Free Education” or “Education with more Freedom,” and “Flexibility of Education,” which embraces the growth and development of individuality. And around the end of the 1970s I often visited the United States and I went to various schools during my trips. And also I visited the government agency and back then, you didn’t have the Department of Education but what you had was the Office of Education. So I went to that office as well. And what I was told by those people that I met was always: No. 1, the decline in academic performance; and No. 2, I was told that annually there were about one million girls who got pregnant but who were still in high school. And another thing I was told by those people was that schools, especially secondary education schools, were very dangerous workplaces, so that they were talking about increasing some special premiums for high-risk workplaces as a part of their wages.

And in the 1970s, near the 1980s, near the end of that decade, both the educational community and citizens and societies started to say, “Back to the basics.” The idea of this “Back to the basics” was to go back to better discipline, the properly structured education which had existed a long time ago in the United States. And with that kind of interest in increase, on the rise, as a backdrop, a national panel to discuss educational reform was created in the United States. And in 1983, their report, called “A Nation at Risk,” was published. So that publication actually marked a major turning

point in US educational history. With that 1983 report, “A Nation at Risk,” as really the turning point, school education, including the primary and the secondary educational institutions, changed dramatically. For example, more emphasis was placed on discipline at school, and also the extreme form of so-called “open education” started to disappear. And another thing was while still keeping priority on learning by children themselves, a few of the people started to pay more attention to the responsibilities of the teacher’s role, meaning teachers would give more appropriate teaching per se. Another thing was that tests and evaluation assessments used to be really disliked, hated by a lot of people. But schools began to revive such tests and also evaluation assessment activities. So toward the later 1980s, the US educational institutions now became places which would focus much more on academic performance, responsibility, and discipline. Those are the major changes in educational practices in the American schools in my view. The reason why I elaborated on the 60s, 70s, and 80s situation in the US educational scene is the fact that some of you are very familiar with such past history. Japanese education has been actually tracing almost precisely that of US educational history. However, there is a time delay of about 15 to 20 years. As you know, in World War II we lost the war, and we lost everything. Everything was destroyed. But eventually, since around the 1970s, the Japanese economy recovered and Japan began to be a richer country again. So, as I mentioned earlier, it was around the 1970s when Japanese society began to enjoy its wealth, and at the same time Japanese society became more lenient and generous toward many things. So eventually it was after one or two generations who grew up in this kind of rich society to embrace a similar kind of educational approach that was enjoyed in the United States 20 years back in the 1970s. So it was in the 1990s when Japan adopted that type of American educational approach. And in the 1990s, Japanese society’s discipline was much more relaxed and people paid less attention to such discipline asserted to the educational upbringing. So it was more like an idealistic-type approach; however at the same time the society at large paid much less attention to discipline in the school as well as in families. So it was something like a two-decade gap between the two countries’ progress. On one hand in the US it was in the 1950s when the American economy really improved. Then it was in the 60s and 70s when such wealth was reflected in the educational community approach or concept. And on the other hand in Japan, it was in the 1970s that the Japanese economy entered high growth. And two decades later in the 90s the Japanese educational community adopted the American-type 70s concept.

And in the 1990s Japan started to talk about the so-called “Education with *Yutori*” in Japanese. This “Education with *Yutori*” or “*Yutori* Education” actually includes such concepts as Child-Centered Education. Instead of teachers and adults forcing students to study, they were allowed to learn by themselves, under their own initiative. And rather than focusing on discipline, a sort of less severe approach was adopted. For example, some years ago in Japan, all the students from elementary to high school voluntarily greeted other students and teachers when they met them

at school. But in the 1990s people changed attitudes, so if a child felt like greeting, that's okay. But if they didn't feel like it, they didn't do it, but they were not punished. It was permissible. So 1970s' US educational theories were adopted by Japanese schools with a twenty-year time lag, such as the Free School concept for Open Education Approach.

In Japan we have a document called "Course of Study." Educational activities from elementary schools all the way up to high schools in Japan have been in accordance with the "Course of Study." But in 1992 and 2002, the "Course of Study" was revised substantially. For example, the content that had to be taught described in the "Course of Study" was substantially decreased in quantity and the level of sophistication of the content of education was also lowered. At the same time, the number of classes to be taught was decreased. I was told that there were a lot of discussions about these changes in the Ministry of Education back then, and I know that one of the influential officials of the Ministry didn't like the tests and evaluations. So they were discussing getting rid of such tests and evaluations. And actually guidance was given by the central government to the prefectural and local governments and schools to do away with tests and evaluations. So in the 1990s, for example, a nationwide achievement test and also prefectural or local government achievement tests were almost all stopped. So throughout the 90s Japanese students' academic performance level was on a constant decrease year after year, and at the same time, various problem behaviors increased dramatically. For example in the 1990s there was a constant rise in absenteeism or truancy. And near the end of the 1990s, professors of the science and engineering departments of major universities and also executives of high-tech companies really started to point out these serious issues with great voice. Near the end of the 1990s the Science and Technology Agency of the government sponsored a study group at Tokyo University. I was part of that study group, and it was composed of various professors from science and engineering departments. The problem was that from elementary school all the way to high school, students were given the education I just described earlier. And so, when students entered the major universities in Japan (such as the University of Tokyo, Kyoto University, Osaka University, Tohoku University, and so on and so forth, the so-called older "Imperial Universities" before the War), many of whom had been among the best students at their high schools in terms of academic capabilities, because otherwise you couldn't compete successfully against other candidates to enter such major universities in Japan, as they entered these universities, because of their poor academic levels, they couldn't catch up with the teaching at these universities. Back then, I was at the Kyoto University. I was a professor there, so what I had to do was to create some programs to supplement their learning, for students who were in the science or engineering departments or the medical school of our University. So near the end of the 1990s in Japan, too, people started to say, "Back to the Basics." The people talked about the necessity to change Japanese education fundamentally. The people said we should learn from the American experiences 20 years before that time. With this kind of backdrop, in the year of 2000, the so-called

National Commission of Educational Reform was created in Japan. This commission carried out its activities for one year and was an advisory commission to the Prime Minister. And the commission had 15 official meetings with a very unique location: they met at the official residence of the Prime Minister, which is very unusual, and in addition to that, the meetings were attended by the Prime Minister and the Chief Cabinet Secretary, and also the Minister of Education. So that was a very high-level political forum. The commission had 26 members, but lots of them were not from the educational community but rather were top leaders from different communities, different segments of the society.

Most of us thought that it was really a must to use this National Commission of Educational Reform as an instrument to create some kind of turnaround in the Japanese educational community. So in that Commission, we created a sub-commission which would be responsible for substantial operations of the Commission, and I was one of the members of that sub-commission. The chairman of that sub-commission was Mr. Jiro Ushio, who was an influential businessman. In the latter half of the Commission's duration, this sub-commission met quite often in a much smaller, less fancy building at the Prime Minister's official residence. We hoped that discussions taking place at the sub-commission level would be eventually endorsed by the formal Commission itself so that they would be reflected in the official report, eventually.

In December of the year 2000, our report came out and the tentative title was, "Seventeen Proposals to Change Education." When we were drafting this report, we had the American report "Nation at Risk" in mind. Our report, published in December of 2000, included such ideas as to transform education to a more responsible education. Also in the United States some years ago, outcome-based schools or competency-based education was advocated. So we embraced such outcome and competency as well in this report. Also we wanted to assess and evaluate students' academic performance, and we wanted the general public to know the results of such evaluation so that all citizens in Japan could revisit education as the common theme. In addition to that, it was also proposed to revise the basic line of education. By the way, this basic line of education is one of those, just like our Japanese constitution, which was drafted by the occupational force of the United States after World War II. Already 60 years had passed since the end of the War, and more than half a century had passed since the end of occupation by the occupational force. So it was proposed to revise the basic line of education as well.

Some of you are much younger than myself, but since I was born quite a long time ago, I clearly still remember the period of occupation under the US forces in Japan. Lots of time has passed since that time, so now in Japan there's a rising sentiment that it will be the Japanese people who will try to create their own order and their own educational system. I do really hope that those of you who are Americans do understand this situation. Probably, this kind of sentiment in Japan, among the Japanese people, is not sort of a mere nationalism in a very narrow sense, but rather, in my view, is

just the natural flow of history in any nation after such a long time has passed since some major events in history. Therefore, I don't want you to misunderstand that the recent trend among the Japanese to try to revisit the constitution of Japan or the basic line of education is just so-called nationalism.

After the December 2000 report was published, in the following month, which was January 2001, the merger between the older Ministry of Education and the Science and Technology Agency took place to form a new ministry, in short, called MEXT, or the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology. This merger had been planned well before that timing. At any rate, it took place in January 2001, and in February of the same year, the previous seven different advisory councils related to Education were merged together to create a powerful Central Council for Education. Under these organizational changes, the new ministry, called MEXT, and the new Central Council for Education joined hands together to address the problems that were seen in the 1990s in the Japanese educational scene, to revitalize Japanese education.

As I said earlier, this new Central Council for Education and also the new ministry, MEXT, joined hands together to, first of all, design and to carry out the ideas of educational reforms. And I have been part of that Central Council for Education in various committees. As I mentioned earlier, I'd like to just touch upon two or three major important points in such an educational reform.

Revision of the "Course of Study" is under way right now, but some of the changes have already been decided upon before now. One of them was the change in positioning of this "Course of Study" from a so-called "standard" to "minimum requirements." This decision was made in December of 2003. The second one I would mention was that before the change, various school educations was given in accordance with the "Course of Study" as a "standard." However, some of the educational content was not prescribed by the "Course of Study," but more like an advanced level or extension level of the educational level was not always described by the "Course of Study." In December of 2003, it was decided that it's up to individual schools and also individual school teachers to add something on top of what is written in the "Course of Study" with their own ingenuity. Another thing was that back in 1992 and also 2002, the "Course of Study" was revised twice, but with those revisions some content of education was cut, decreased, or the level of sophistication was decreased as well. Now, the current trend is to try to revive those once abolished, or decreased level of sophistication of the content. It is scheduled that in October of this year, the outline of such change will be announced, and it's right now under discussion.

The second topic I'd like to touch upon in this area is improvements in the education and training of teachers. Under this title, there are three major things I'd like to tell you.

The first one is the introduction and reinforcement of new training programs. One is intended for new recruits, and the other one is a refresher course for teachers teaching for ten years after new recruitment. Right now in Japan, unless a school teacher was involved in a crime, we have not

revoked their teaching license. Even if their teaching skills are rather poor, it's like a lifetime guaranteed position. But back in June of 2001, upon a strong recommendation by the Central Council for Education, the law was amended, so if a teacher doesn't have proper teaching or leadership skills in the classroom situation, then the teacher would be subject to retraining. Even after retraining if that teacher was found incompetent as a teacher, then the teacher would be told to change his/her profession from school teacher to something else. That's one of the changes.

The second one I'd like to talk about under this heading is the so-called "Creation of Professional Schools." This "Professional Schools" is just a tentative name right now, but we plan to create such schools from April 2007. Even now, school teachers teaching at elementary, middle school, or high school are sometimes those who have Master's degrees or Doctorate degrees. But such learning right now in Japan is more like an academic emphasis, rather than practical or professional skill-based, but by creating graduate-school level professional schools, we'd like to offer more professional skill training as well. This topic is under discussion at the committee of the Central Council for Education and by the way as I said earlier, I'm the chairman of that committee in that Council, so we are now discussing this in depth.

The third one in this topic is the introduction of a teaching license renewal system. And I believe that the State of New York already does this. But in Japan we don't have that yet. This may be implemented from April of 2007, but there will be an official report in October, this month. And again, my committee, under this Council, is discussing this topic as well. We would like to introduce the renewal system for teaching licenses.

Since December of last year, I have been the president of Hyogo University of Teacher Education. But prior to that, for six years, I was the president of a Catholic girl's college called Kyoto Notre Dame Women's College. I guess it could probably be God up there or MEXT on Earth to pick me to become the president of Hyogo University of Teacher Education, but I think the reason why I was chosen to be the president of the Hyogo University of Teacher Education is because of various mounting problems related to teacher training and education.

Just for your information, let me introduce this Hyogo University of Teacher Education. In Japan, we have 11 national education-related universities, "national" meaning that the central government established and sponsors them. But our Hyogo University of Teacher Education is different from most of the other teaching universities, like Osaka Teaching University or Kyoto and so forth, because our University was created 27 years ago under a special, new mission as a new university, because we are one of three universities, including Joetsu and Naruto Universities, of Teacher Education, that offer graduate level courses to school teachers who are already in service, teaching at various schools but who want to have a graduate school education such as a Master's degree course or a Doctorate degree course. So they come to our University, for example, and spend two years if it's a Master's degree course, by having a kind of 'leave' from their existing duty, or if a

teacher wants to go to the Doctorate degree course, you have to have even longer 'leave' from the school at which you teach. There are already such Graduate school level schools for teachers, but the number is, first of all, only three. So the number of candidates they can accept is very limited. So that kind of program will be upgraded as a part of these various reforms. Those three things are the types of activities that have been under way in Japan to upgrade the quality of education in Japan.

Since I don't have a whole lot of time left, let me just quickly cover two more topics. One, in addition to various trends I just described earlier, is another thing under way in Japan, what I call "decentralization of the educational system." Under this, it will still be the national government that will, sort of, prepare funding, but various specific contents of education will be more or less transferred to the individual school or city, town, or village government, or if it's a high school, it'll be the prefectural government to decide most specifics about how to use such funding from the national government. Another important point I'd like to convey to you is the approach toward future educational reform. We would see much more people advocating so-called "evidence-based education" or I might also say this as "outcome-based or competency-based"; they point in the same direction. In other words, what would be the end result of educational activities for children means a lot going forward. Of course it's essential to teach children with great love and care, but despite all that love and care put into education, if the end result will be just spoiled children, that's no good. Therefore, both MEXT the ministry and the Central Council for Education and a lot of other citizens in Japan now say that the educational reform and also the educational policy should be based on evidence, outcome, or competency, to look at how much growth as a human being the children or the students have accomplished in addition to how much academic performance has been improved. In the past one or two years, we have started to see many local governments and also prefectural governments beginning to have their own academic achievement tests, or some kind of survey or research to find out the educational performance results. And also some of them already have begun to announce academic levels of, say, Japanese language by each school in their jurisdiction. At the same time, at the central government level, MEXT has developed a nationwide academic evaluation test. In 2003, they started to do this on a much larger scale, and in the next fiscal year, MEXT plans to have an even larger scale or more thorough nationwide academic achievement test. Up until the year 2000, it was said that the academic level of Japanese students was declining and at the same time various problems of students, such as absenteeism, increased; but from 2002 to 2004, based on the various surveys, we found out that, first of all, the academic performance decline bottomed out and has already started to pick up a little bit. And the absenteeism and truancy seem to have hit the bottom already and we have already begun to see some improvement in that percentage as well. Just like these examples show, we have already witnessed some improvements on many fronts. For example, in the 1990s, people deplored that children stopped reading books. But according to some surveys, more students are interested in reading books, and actually they do read. Or another one

was in the 1990s, when a lot of students stopped greeting each other or teachers at schools, and also lot of schools lacked discipline in their school life, but since 2001, again based on certain various surveys, a lot more schools have a very good record about their students greeting one another or teachers and we've seen a substantial improvement in discipline at school as well.

I'd like to stop talking now, but please remember, what I just explained to you only is the outline of the situation in Japan and I'd like to now switch to a Q and A session. You can ask me any questions or if you want me to elaborate on certain things I already explained to you, that's fine as well. Or if you have some related topics that I didn't necessarily cover, that's acceptable as well.

Moderator: Thank you so much, Kajita sensei. So, if you have any microphones...

Questioner A : What is happening in the teaching of Mathematics?

Kajita : Well, in the 1990s, it was pointed out that the decline in Math capability of primary and secondary school children in Japan was very visible. For example, in the old days, we learned multiplication by memorizing, like "nine times nine equals eighty-one," and there was a special Japanese way to memorize it very easily. Like "two times two equals four, two times three equals six." But some years ago, most of the schools stopped forcing students to memorize multiplication in the traditional way, because they thought it's like forcing them to learn rather than their voluntarily wanting to, or being eager to learn. After that, the math level of Japanese students declined a lot, but in 2001, again the tide changed, so a lot of schools now want to go back to the older way of memorizing multiplication. So, hopefully, their math capability will improve in the future. That's one of the answers I'd like to give you. Another thing I'd like to mention is that, due to the revisions of the "Course of Study" in 1992 and 2002, a lot of the math curriculum was eliminated or decreased, like volume, quantity. So now there are new tendencies to try to revive such eliminated ones in the curriculum. We don't know if we'll be successful or not, but that's the second point in my answer to your question.

Questioner B : Thank you very much for your lecture, my name is Takenaka, and I will ask a question in Japanese. Here Dr. Kajita said that in the 1970s the American education level was in decline, however in 1983 the "Nation at Risk" report was published and since that time, American education quality has been improving. But looking at the current status of American education, it's hard for me to think that it has improved that much. For example, in the recent worldwide academic level test, for example, among the three major subjects, the US result was near the bottom among the developed countries. And yes, it's true that the Japanese status in the international comparison decreased, but Japan used to be at the top and went down to third and fourth places. So, Dr. Kajita may not be an American education expert, but would you just comment on the comparison of the quality of education dependent countries?

Kajita : Let me just respond with three aspects which come to mind immediately. The first one: the

academic level of American students back in the 1970s was just incredibly low or poor even from the current point of view. Back then, there was an expression, "Functional Illiteracy." For example, back then the high school dropout rate was 25%, which is almost the same as today in the United States, so those who finished high school in the States, meaning 75% of the students who completed high school, of those "survivors," one-half of them were said to have "Functional Illiteracy." In the 70s, there were various nationwide surveys on this in the States; for example, a measure was that you will be shown a copy of a traffic ticket, and one-half of the respondents couldn't understand what was written on that traffic ticket. This is not simple "Literacy/Illiteracy" but rather practical functionality. That's why they called it, "Functional Illiteracy." But the current situation is dramatically improved since that time, according to some statistics, and this is one of the things I wanted to point out. The second one is that there's one data source that has been consistently influencing American educational trends since the 60s and all the way through the 90s and today, and that is SAT scores, SAT meaning the Scholastic Aptitude Test. And of course you can interpret if that's a good measure to look at the situation or not, but setting that aside, the SAT scores from the 1960s through 1983 declined, whereas since 1983 they have been improving, or increasing. And the IAOE or OECD have had various surveys over the years and what they usually say is the average. If you compare the average between the American students and the Japanese students, the American average is a bit lower than the Japanese. However, if you divide the results into five portions, you can notice that there are two extremes: an incredibly good top area and an incredibly bad area among the American students, whereas Japanese students' results tend to concentrate on the average in that distribution of the results. So international comparison is usually based on the average so you could tend to focus on the poor performance of Americans, but there are, on the other hand as I said, excellently performing American students as well. If you look at inner city students' academic capabilities, and look at that from Japanese standards, there's an incredible gap among inner-city students. So what I just said earlier is I still think correct and valid. I don't mean to say that American education doesn't have any problems to solve today. But rather, all the countries in the world are working very hard to improve their education because today's educational level will be reflected in its society's and economy's performance ten years down the road or 20 years down the road. I'm not an expert to dig into all the publications and look at all the analyses, however, another thing I want to point out is that Germany, although I didn't say anything about Germany earlier today, does have a lot of problems in their education and they're working very hard to improve their education as well. I'm not trying to say that Japan is better than the US or vice versa, but I just wanted to say today as my main message that when a society becomes richer, then it tends to have its academic performance sweeping down whereas the problem of behavior of youth will increase. All the citizens in society have to get together to, sort of, reverse the trend. So in that sense, the US has improved its education ahead of Japan, but we are trying hard in Japan to reverse the trend as well. I

don't mean to say that neither country doesn't have any problems here.

Moderator : Now it is 2 pm and I'm sorry but I want to take one more, one last question.

Questioner C : Japan had a long recession period, and in that, I often heard that the Japanese children had a hard time finding their dreams in the future or they don't have good role models, they don't have any companies that they're eager to get jobs at. So in that kind of situation I'm interested in knowing how you can motivate children so that the education quality will be improved.

Kajita : I think that today's Japan is the period that is the easiest for all citizens to live in the Japanese history, because Japanese society is much richer than before. But, for example, since the Japanese society has become richer than before, people tend to complain about a lot of things they think they lack. If you look at Japanese history in the Meiji era, the Taisho era, or the pre-War Showa era, can you imagine that just average citizens in Japan were able to have great dreams? Probably it was very difficult for them to have such big dreams back then, because life was tough and only a handful of people in the society had the privilege of having such big dreams back then. But now it's different. Anyone who desires to achieve a dream as a reality can do that. But because of that, people say, this is a difficult time to dream about, or that conditions are such that people can't dream. If a person in today's Japan cannot have a great dream, that's his or her fault, but at the same time, since I'm involved in the educational community, we, among educators, would say how to change motivation and so forth. What we often say is that for any human being, it's important to live in two types of worlds: one, "our" world; the other, "my" world. And let me elaborate on these two types of worlds. Whether you can have your dream or not, as a person you have to live in "our" world. As a citizen and as a professional or as a worker, you have certain roles to play; you have certain responsibilities to fulfill. So you are not supposed to depend on others totally for your existence in living in "our" world. You have to make your own living, you have to, or actually your parents and teachers and the citizens, have to teach you as a young child to be able to learn how to live in "our" world after you grow up and start to work. Some people in Japan are said to be "parasites," just totally dependent on somebody else even after they grow up, but that's no good. So we have to teach our kids how to acquire skills, guts, energy and courage to live in "our" world as a social existence. The second one is how to live in "my" world. We, as human beings, are born naked, live naked, so to speak, and die naked. Our existence is very short in Universal history. But within the limited life span, we are involved in "our" world, the social life. At the same time, before that time period and after that time period, we were young children, and we will retire and not be professional anymore. But we're given this precious life from our own parents so we'd like to let all the people feel like they are so glad to be born and live a full life. When people are so very young, we want them to feel like their life will be a full life and that they're excited about many things to come, many events and experiences. We have only one precious life and that is why—why don't we just embrace it and cherish it to the full extent? So it's up to adults, like school teachers and parents and citizens, to help youngsters to feel

that way. Just a mere older age learner does not make you a full-fledged mature adult. And so in some respects there are certain responsibilities of teachers and parents and other citizens as well. In the old days we often said, when we are alive we are sort of intoxicated so we don't know what's going on and by the time we realize it we're dead in a dream world. Anyway, people would have different motivations, like somebody wants to just pursue the highest possible rank and status and privilege in the society, and some others would merely seek money. That's okay as long as you would have a full life in "our" world, but most importantly, we have to have vitality to have a full life in "my" own world. We also said in the past that when we are up and awake we live on one-half of a *tatami* mat but when we lay down, we'll have another half of a *tatami* mat; when you drop dead you can look at it as one full *tatami* mat. Our Japanese traditions, like the tea ceremony and flower arranging or Buddhism or Catholicism or Christianity, whichever your religion is, have been leaving us with a lot of wisdom about our living. Whether we're successful in having bad luck or more dreams or not, the very important thing is that teachers and parents should give some kind of hint to youngsters as to what their dream is actually going to be comprised of.

Thank you.

Moderator : Thank you so much, Professor Kajita, for your very impressive and informative lecture. I hope this lecture will help you to live in "your" world and "our" world. Thank you so much. Please give a big hand to Professor Kajita.

Applause!

And also thanks to the interpreter.

Applause!