Japanese overseas broadcasting: The Manchuria crisis and after (1931-1937)

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Early research

Radio broadcasting in Japan began on 23 March 1925, and in August 1926 the electric laboratory of the Japanese Ministry of Communications picked up its first foreign broadcast from Oakland, California, on 312 metres medium wave.[1] The first short-wave broadcasts were heard in Japan in 1928 when NHK began to pick up early Dutch experimental broadcasts to the Netherlands East Indies (Indonesia).

The first successful Japanese broadcast to the United States was in February 1930, and thereafter Japanese-American exchange broadcasts flowered. On Christmas Day 1930 songs and greetings from San Francisco were broadcast to Japan, and these were returned in a Japanese transmission starting at 12.30 pm on Boxing Day.[2] This type of broadcast was repeated several times during 1931. The development of Japanese-American broadcasting relations, however, changed significantly after 18 September, when Japan invaded Manchuria in search of *Lebensraum.*

The Manchurian Incident

The Manchurian Incident (*Manshū Jiken)* changed the direction of Japanese development in other areas besides broadcasting, and the decisions taken after it determined the direction of Japanese broadcasting for the following 15 years. Radio was considered essential for the effort to create the puppet state of Manchukuo, and NHK staff and transmission equipment were sent to the Kanto Army soon after it had occupied Manchuria. Using the name Kanto Army Special Communications Section, the army established radio exchanges between Tokyo and the capital of Manchuria,

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Hsinking, in order to encourage the Japanese colonisation of Manchuria. Broadcasts from Hsinking defending the Japanese presence in Manchuria were also made to the United States, Europe, the Soviet Union and Shanghai.

In his New Year 1932 speech, the Director of NHK, Iwahara Kenzō, stressed the importance of clear short-wave broadcasts to Manchuria, Korea and Taiwan in binding them to Japan as a single cohesive unit. However, following the declaration of the Stimson Doctrine by the United States on 7 January,[3] and the establishment by the League of Nations of the Lytton Commission to investigate the situation in Manchuria on 14 January, an American journalist, Floyd Gibbons, was permitted to broadcast to the United States on short wave from the Kanto Army headquarters in Manchuria on 21 January. This broadcast was an example of the use of short-wave radio for an entirely different purpose than binding the Japanese colonies more closely. In the course of the broadcast Gibbons said:

> I ate and slept with the Japanese Army for three weeks prior to its triumphal entry into the Kum region, and I respect and admire the rigour of its military discipline and the strength of its sense of righteousness. Having seen the plunder, rape and insatiable atrocities of the rebels, I consider it natural that the Japanese Army should subjugate them.[4]

This led the *New York Times* to describe the report as the first clear war broadcast from Manchuria.[5]

One of the early indications of increasing government control was the issuing of a ban on political criticism by the press. This ban was extended to broadcasting in May 1932, when a journalist for the American magazine *Cosmopolitan*, Frieda Hind, attempted to transmit a report for NBC. The report contained some criticism of the ruling group in Japan and it was seized before transmission. The authorities allowed Hind to make the broadcast a month later, in June, after the offending sections had been altered or removed.[6]

The Manchuria crisis remained the main topic of radio reports in the spring of 1932. The establishment on 1 March of the puppet state of Manchukuo was celebrated by a "Manchurian Night" on Japanese radio, including exchange broadcasts between Tokyo and Hsinking. These broadcasts, and later broadcasts to America and Britain, were highly critical of the Lytton Report. The League of Nations refused to recognize Manchukuo as an independent state and continually appealed to the Japanese to withdraw. This criticism of the Japanese occupation finally resulted in Japan leaving the League on 26 November 1933.

Radio diplomacy

It was decided that as radio was becoming increasingly important to the Japanese in the dissemination of propaganda, priority should be given to tighter government control over broadcasting. In September 1932 an "Information Committee" (*Jōhō I'inkai*) was formed to "guide" the output of radio propaganda. All radio output was scrutinized by this committee, which met weekly as part of the Japanese drive to increase transmissions for abroad. The committee found unsatisfactory the news reports that radio and newspapers received from Reuters, Associated Press and United Press as these agencies, naturally, gave the news from a British or American perspective. The Japanese government therefore formed its own news agency to provide general news from a Japanese perspective, not just for the Japanese press and radio. The news agency responsible for voicing official Japanese opinion was called Dōmei.[7] It started operations on 1 June 1936.

From their own isolated position the Japanese leaders observed with interest the rise of Hitler in Germany. In 1933 the Germans, too, withdrew from the League of Nations, and Germany seemed to the Japanese to be a natural ally to be fostered. In November the Central Tokyo Station began exchange broadcasts with Germany. These were usually musical exchanges, such as live broadcasts of concerts, and they proved to be popular in Japan. In contrast, the Japanese government refused to allow the Central Tokyo Station to broadcast over the domestic network an international musical celebration for the opening of the new NBC Radio Centre. However, as Japan did not want to tarnish its international image, the Japanese station was permitted to participate in the celebration by transmitting music to the Rockefeller Centre in New York on 18 November 1933.[8] This was the first indication of a policy, which grew firmer as war approached, whereby German culture received governmental approval and was even encouraged, while that of the "decadent West" (particularly America) was prohibited in Japan.

During this period of increasing overseas broadcasting activity there were several changes in political attitudes towards broadcasting in Japan. In October 1934 the Army Ministry published a pamphlet on its new national defence policy which stated that "a battlefield is the Father of Creation and the Mother of Culture".[9] This dealt principally with the propaganda to be disseminated abroad about the role of Manchuria's role in Japanese policies and Japan's role in improving Manchuria.

The start of regular overseas broadcasting

On 3 March 1935 NHK applied to the government for permission to broadcast a regular overseas service on short wave, setting the aim of the service as "to communicate truly authentic news and all cultural truth to concerned Japanese abroad and to other peoples".[10]

The tenth anniversary of NHK broadcasting fell on 23 March and its director announced the establishment of an overseas service to celebrate the event. Following detailed planning and consultations with representatives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (although there were none with representatives of the Ministry of Communications, which became responsible for radio output) official government permission for the overseas service was given on 4 May.

The initial overseas broadcasts of an hour a day began on 1 June 1935 and were directed to the Pacific coast of America and Hawaii, where there were large Japanese communities. On 21 June the daily transmission to this region was moved to a more convenient time for listeners, 6.00-7.00 pm in Hawaii and 9.00-10.00 pm on the American Pacific coast.

Also on 21 June other transmissions were started, including broadcasts to the eastern United States and South America.[11] A European service was begun on 4 September.

On 12 June 1936 NHK received government permission to expand its overseas broadcasts, particularly to Australia, although the expansion did not go ahead until the new year. A transmission to Java and the Straits Settlements (Singapore and Malaya) was added to the schedules at the beginning of 1937.

Censorship and development of overseas broadcasting

Censorship was an integral part of overseas broadcasting from its beginning, as much of the impetus to start short-wave broadcasting derived from the need to improve Japan's image after the Manchurian Incident. Kitayama Setsurō says that "as our country (Japan) was in a state of isolation following its withdrawal from the League of Nations, the establishment of overseas broadcasting was strongly demanded from all sides, in order to strengthen publicity abroad".[12] Thus the government had a role in scrutinizing broadcast output from a very early stage. Before the licence to broadcast regular overseas programmes was issued on 4 May there were no specific rules for censorship of short-wave broadcasting, although all broadcasts which were to be relayed abroad did pass through the Ministry of Communications for checking.

Official permission to broadcast, issued on 4 May, included clauses relating to government censorship of the broadcasts. All programme outlines were to be passed to the department of communications in the Ministry of Communications for approval seven days prior to transmission, and the contents of scripts not under the direct jurisdiction of the department of communications were then to be resubmitted to the heads of the departments of communications and electrical affairs two days before going on air. In addition, NHK was required to submit a monthly report to the heads of the two departments.[13]

As well as removing and altering offending passages, the censors also added passages to scripts to reinforce traditional values and present the Japanese view of situations if it was considered that the broadcasts did not advocate them with sufficient emphasis. Several broadcasts made by prominent academics were censored at this time. A passage which criticized Mussolini, Hitler, the Soviets, the British, French and Americans was removed from a broadcast entitled "The Japanese spirit and world peace" by a leading professor of Tokyo Imperial University, Shioya Atsushi, on 26 June 1935. Presumably the government was unwilling to offend all the leading nations simultaneously. A broadcast by a leading female academic, Inoue Hideko, entitled "Enquiry into women's issues", was cut from the schedules on 20 September because it advocated women's active involvement in politics and science whilst the government was at the time promoting the traditional role of women in Japanese society.

A programme of goodwill messages and greetings to Japan from the "Fatherland Study Group of the North and South America Japanese School Association", a Japanese language association with branches across the United States and South America, took place on 15 August. Even this was subjected to censorship and suffered the removal of some passages before being broadcast on the Japanese network.

Increasing government control

Japanese broadcasters admired what they saw as the impartiality of the BBC's Empire Service since its establishment in 1932 and had hoped to emulate it in their own short-wave broadcasts. However, the importance of censorship and propaganda to Japanese international broadcasting was incompatible with that kind of broadcasting, and from the start NHK had a completely different task to perform.

The value of broadcasting was increasingly recognised after the attempted military coup of 26 February 1936, when the rebels put out their news over the Central Tokyo Station and paralysed the other communications systems. Overseas broadcasting operations continued

almost without change, but NHK was criticized for being too liberal and on 2 May the Cabinet agreed to establish a new body to oversee the media, the Cabinet Information Committee (*Naikaku Jōhō I'inkai*). Between then and 1 July, when the Cabinet Information Committee was formed, two laws were passed which sought to control the media and media personnel, the "Inflammatory Pamphlet Emergency Control Law" (*Fuonbunsho rinji torishimari-hō*), and the "Protection of General Mobilization Secrets Measure" (*Sōdōin himitsu hōkō hōan*). These ensured that the censors could prevent the publication of any articles which could be construed as being to the left of the political spectrum or which could be seen as damaging to the security of Japan or the Japanese government. In addition, newspaper editors and NHK script-writers were warned not to step outside the strict constraints of previously approved plans regarding what was suitable material.

The prelude to war

The unstable situation in China worsened in the summer of 1936 and in August two Japanese journalists were killed in Chengdu. There were other anti-Japanese incidents throughout China, and on 28 September, as the tension and number of incidents mounted, the Cabinet Information Committee published a report on the situation. It condemned the actions of the Chinese in attacking Japanese nationals and issued a policy statement which called for propaganda to promote the Japanese view of events, particularly within China. As NHK's overseas section was in the best position to promote the Japanese point of view abroad it was given the task. The strict radio censorship which began in the autumn of 1936 was the forerunner of the censorship system which became standard in foreign propaganda after the Marco Polo Bridge Incident. As NHK used Dōmei for much of its news information, Dōmei, too, was censored more strongly than previously.

On 27 January 1937 the "News of the Japanese Homeland" to the United States reported the fall of the Japanese Cabinet on the 23rd. On 11 February the new Prime Minister Hayashi, who had formed his Cabinet nine days before, faced NHK's microphones to speak to the overseas audience. His speech emphasized that the "completion of military preparations for national defence (was) necessary for the realization of national policy".[14] The March issue of *Hōsō* magazine[15] said that this was the first time a new Prime Minister had publicized the policies of his Cabinet primarily over the radio.[16] At the end of March the Minister of Culture published a report on the "Truths of national structure" that were to be stressed by the media at home and abroad. These "truths" reiterated that the Emperor was directly descended from the Sun Goddess in an unbroken 2,000-year line.

However, the Hayashi Cabinet, which had retained power despite heavy losses in the April elections, fell on 31 May 1937, and Prince Konoe's first Cabinet took office. In the confusion of the precarious political situation there were no broadcasts from NHK to celebrate the second anniversary of overseas broadcasting on 1 June. In fact, as June progressed, the amount of jazz music given air time in overseas broadcasts was gradually reduced, as Cabinet complaints about the adoption of American culture by the radio and the rejection of Japanese culture became increasingly vociferous.

During the spring and summer of 1937 the political situation in Manchuria became increasingly tense. Japanese and Soviet troops had several skirmishes along the Manchurian-Soviet and Manchurian-Mongolian borders. On 19 June Soviet troops landed on an island in the border river Amur (Heilongjiang) at Kanchasu. NHK was given permission to report on the incident ten days later, and the day after that the first report from the scene was broadcast in Japanese and English in the transmission to the Straits Settlements, Java and Australia. The news was considered too important to wait until the Tuesday French-language news, so reports on the situation in English, German and French were made in the Monday transmission to Europe, although Monday was the German news day. Once NHK had received permission to report on the incident, information about the situation in Kanchasu dominated the news in overseas broadcasting, and 48 reports about it were broadcast between 30 June and 3 July .[17]

On the evening of 7 July, whilst the Japanese were celebrating a national festival, troops in the outskirts of Peking fanned out and seized control of the Marco Polo Bridge. The Marco Polo Bridge Incident ("*7.7. Jiken*") signalled the end of skirmishes in China and the outbreak of full-scale war with the Chinese.

Conclusion

In the ten years after the start of domestic radio broadcasting Japanese interest in international broadcasting grew. However, as the political situation in Japan changed, particularly after the Manchurian Incident in September 1931 and Japan's subsequent withdrawal from the League of Nations in November 1933, the government's vision of the role of international broadcasting also changed.

The BBC-style impartiality to which NHK broadcasters had aspired was sacrificed in favour of the presentation to the international community of the Japanese interpretation of events. Thus, when regular overseas broadcasting began in June 1935, the opening programme was in Japanese and English, and within a year plans were formulated to add French and German broadcasts to the schedules. This was in contrast to the BBC's

overseas broadcasts, which did not include foreign language services until 1938. Censorship increased with the establishment of regular overseas broadcasting. The censor had the technical means to halt a broadcast at any point should it stray from the approved script.

As the world political situation changed, the regular schedules, which consisted of four daily transmissions, which became the most important form of short-wave broadcasting for presenting Japanese official thinking to the world. At the outbreak of the war with China, Japanese short-wave broadcasting was technically comparable with that of the other major world powers and Japan was in a position to participate fully in the world "radio war" which developed over the next eight years.

Notes

1 Kitayama Setsurō, *Rajio Tōkyō: Shinjū Wan e no Michi* (Radio Tokyo: The Road to Pearl Harbour), p. 16.

2 *ibid.*, p. 30.

3 The Stimson Declaration stated that the USA would not recognize any changes in the situation in the Far East brought about by force or which would impair US treaty rights or Chinese administrative integrity. Naturally, this was a criticism of Japanese operations in Manchuria.

4 Kitayama, *op.cit.*, p. 43. Although this broadcast would have been in English, what is quoted here is a direct translation of the Japanese source; I do not know what the actual words spoken were.

5 Kitayama, *op. cit.*, p. 42.

6 Kitayama, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

7 In the past Japanese news had always been handled by Reuters as part of Asia. There had been previous attempts by the Japanese authorities to break the Reuters hold on news in Japan, such as the establishment of the *Kokusai* agency in 1914 and its successor, *Rengō*, formed in 1926 in conjunction with AP, but Reuters maintained a strong influence. Dōmei was formed by merging *Rengō* (the Japan Newspaper Association) and its counterpart for telegraphic messages, *Dentsu*, in 1936, so becoming the first real Japanese news agency. The influence of Reuters had been greatly diminished in a long battle with AP. For a fuller discussion of the formation of Dōmei see Roger W. Purdy, "Nationalism and news: 'Information imperialism' and Japan 1910-36" in the *Journal of American-East Asian Relations*, Vol. 1, No. 3, autumn 1992.

8 Kitayama, *op. cit.*, p. 67.

9 Kitayama, *op. cit.*, p. 95.

10 Kitayama, "Kaigai hōsō shōshi (ichi)" (A brief history of overseas broadcasting, Part one), in Kaigai Hōsō Gurupu (eds.), *NHK Senji Kaigai Hōsō* (NHK's Wartime Overseas Broadcasting), p. 115.

11 Kitayama says that transmissions to Eastern America and South America began on 21 June and were broadcast on Tuesdays and Fridays. However, NHK's *Hōsō Gojū*

Nen-shi claims that this transmission began on 25 June. It is unclear whether this is the date when it was decided to make it a daily service or whether there is some confusion regarding the starting date.

12 Kitayama, "Kaigai hōsō shōshi (ichi)", p. 114.

13 Kitayama, *Rajio Tōkyō: Shinjū Wan e no Michi*, p. 110.

14 Kitayama, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

15 *Hōsō* was NHK's monthly magazine.

16 Kitayama, *op. cit.*, p. 178.

17 Kitayama, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

Vocational education and training in the Republic of Korea: Trends and contrasts

Stephen Creigh-Tyte

Introduction

As the Republic of Korea prepares for membership of the OECD élite "club" of developed industrial nations, an intense debate is under way on the adequacy of the nation's education and training system. Alleged deficiencies include a lack of vocational as opposed to academic orientation, too much emphasis on higher education; a mismatch between the levels of skilled manpower demanded by the market and that produced by the education and training system; and too great an emphasis on "quantity" rather than "quality" of trained manpower, especially that produced by the higher education system.

Korea's vocational education and training (VET) system is often assumed to be very different from those found within the (current) 12 nations of the European Union. Yet some features of the existing Korean system have been deliberately based on European models, and many of Korea's current problems echo those found in Europe and indeed the wider "industrialized" world of OECD which Korea is about to join. While institutional environments differ, this paper will stress the importance of underlying economic factors in explaining the challenges facing national VET systems and the need to use economic incentives to reinforce VET patterns and practices.

International comparisons of VET are fraught with difficulties to an even greater degree than, say, comparisons of unemployment rates. Nevertheless, such comparisons are made and have become increasingly common in the last decade. This reflects the increasing globalization of markets for goods, services and capital, the accumulating evidence that workforce skills and training are a key factor in promoting productivity, and the fact that government policies to enhance national skills bases are one of

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