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I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity to learn about peace education in Hiroshima through the PELSTE programme. I have been able to reflect on the inherent tensions of peace education, its potential to uphold well-being and justice, and perhaps more directly, the empathy and resilience of teachers involved in this work. Each of our experiences inevitably shape how we relate to the learning process, so I come to this material as a teacher, as someone who works with conflict-affected students and refugees, and as someone who researches the relationship between education and conflict. While watching the videos, I related it to how peace education could be beneficial for those who have experienced conflict, displacement, or structural violence. I would argue for a shift from peace education for protection and reconstruction to peace education for social transformation.

I was deeply moved by the three generations of Hiroshima educators, beginning with Mr. Morishita. As a survivor (hibakusha) himself, Mr. Morishita was placed in the challenging circumstance of harnessing personal lived experiences in his role as an educator. His empathy for his students was evident, in understanding the remoteness of the A-bomb for young people, and finding ways to have them respond to the learning material. For this '1st generation', peace education appeared to be a product of and, indeed, responsive to that moment in time. It illustrates the maintenance of public consciousness and remembrance of catastrophic events as a facet of peace education – one that remains in many countries in both curricular and public manners. For me it elicited the question – *how do we reconcile historical memory with contemporary injustices?*

The 2nd generation educator, Mr. Taga, seems to respond to that question, demonstrating a critical engagement with the notion of peace education. His curriculum investigated forms of structural violence, including colonialism and use of coercive power, discrimination against those of particular castes and abilities, and the realities of gender inequality. What I learned from him was that peace education should not be afraid to shine the light of inquiry inwards and outwards, questioning each of our contributions to local manifestations of structural violence, and how these connect with global realities. He notes 'feeling emotions as learning' which encapsulates the discomfort that can be associated with studying peace education. In fact, thoughtful scaffolding of the curriculum can help to mitigate any secondary trauma that may emerge from studying these topics. Much of his approach seemed to be rooted in the consciousness-raising of students, to recognize when themselves or others in society were being systemically disenfranchised. I appreciate this approach of Mr. Taga, as it has the potential to equip young people with the capacity needed to disrupt the cycle of structural violence – another important practice of peace education.

Finally, the 3rd generation educator, Shotaro Nomoto, highlighted the importance of connecting theory and praxis. Beyond critical and reflective content, he asks us to consider whose voices are being included in the classroom. Beyond students themselves, this can be extended to the notion of epistemic injustice, or the exclusion of marginalized knowledge from our curriculum and pedagogy. We must deconstruct our conceptions of valid and valuable knowledge, in order to move towards truly transformative education. Mr. Nomoto notes how pedagogical practices ought to be rooted in justice and equity, otherwise we are not practicing peace education. He asserted that students should be guided with the information required to form their opinion, rather than being told which opinion to hold – in other words, peace education ought to encourage critical thinking and reflection.

The student projects tied together these various elements of peace education, demonstrating their sophisticated ability to investigate frameworks of peace and violence, apply them to various global phenomena, collaborate cohesively with others, and engage in reflection of their own roles within the fostering of peace. It was a joy to observe. Each of the peace educator interviews pointed to the importance of sustained collaboration as an ideal process for developing peace education curricula. What struck me most about these three videos is how each generation built upon the effort and interrogations of the former, therefore enhancing the nuanced conceptualization and practice of peace education in Hiroshima. It felt as though each generation was in direct dialogue with one another, and it is incredible to be here in continuation of that conversation.

To that end, there are considerations offered in the learnings of peace education, that intersect with what I've observed in education for refugees or those impacted by conflict. I'd like to move to discussing those areas of connection with the hopes of adding to this dialogue.

Bar-Tal (2002) rightly asserts that "peace objectives often contain a direct challenge to the present state of society" (p.28) which can represent a tension to formal education as a nation-building project. For students impacted by conflict, they have expressed a breaking of trust with their state, their perpetrator, and the institutions which failed them; including education. In this way, peace education should consider rebuilding relationships and trust as an important aspect of the work, particularly for those that have been marginalized. Though education is lauded as a great equalizer, which I still believe is possible, it is important to recognize the fraught relationships people have with formal schooling in its contributions to cultural genocide, erosion of languages, and other forms of systematic exclusion. There should be an organic nature to peace education; not externally enforced, but rooted in the desires and experiences of the people in that community

As much as education can be manipulated as a political tool, we also cannot depoliticize peace education. We have seen narratives of forced migrants as victims, without mention of the actors which displaced them. We must confront the underlying drivers and reproducers of structural violence and conflict, in order to engage in transformative peace education. Furthermore, we should avoid decontextualizing the pain, suffering, and emotions of people who have experienced violence. A consistent theme across the peace educator interviews was that of harnessing survivor experiences as a learning tool. This can be an incredibly powerful method, but we must be cautious of placing the burden of education on the survivors themselves. Mr. Nomoto mentioned the challenge of being an educator without the direct lived experience – so how can we include these necessary perspectives without using survivors too much for storytelling? I have observed a similar dynamic with refugee students, as their stories must be distilled in a way that is palatable to the audience, and it can sometimes result in a reliving of traumatic experiences.

Finally, I reflect on how peace education could be liberated by disrupting a number of binaries within which it operates. It can avoid functioning on a victim-perpetrator model and consider the heterogeneous actors and dynamics that contribute to conflict. It need not oscillate between the local and universal as separate elements, but rather as interrelated factors that influence one another as a result of broader political, economic, and social factors. Peace education is effective as formal and curricular, but can simultaneously engage in informal community-based methods and in co-curricular experiences, such as the field trips mentioned by the Hiroshima peace educators.

It has been a privilege to learn from the three generations of Hiroshima educators, the students, faculty of EVRI, my fellow panelists, and each of you. I look forward to continued discussion. Thank you.