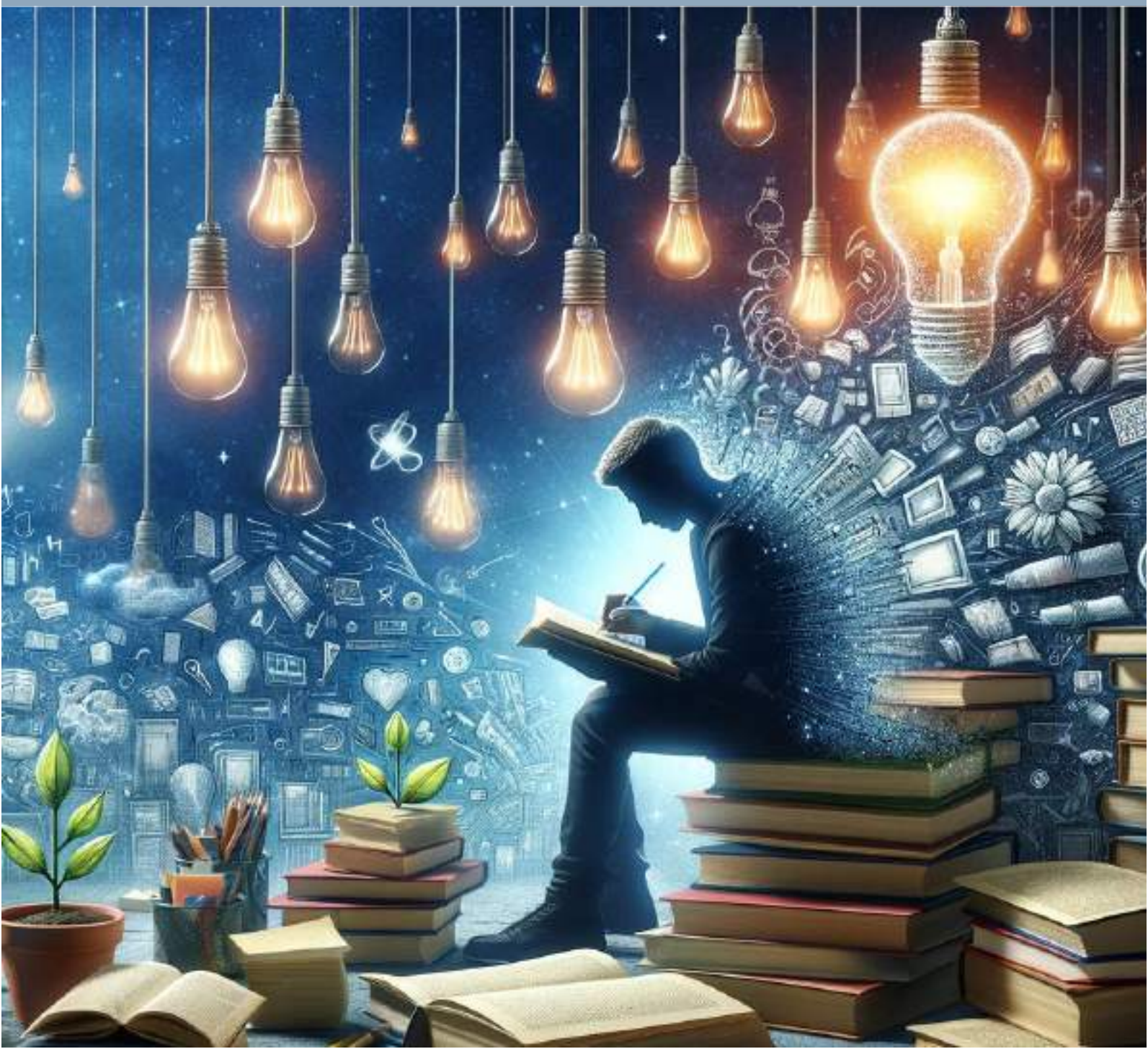


# AN INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

**Dr. Babita Sharma**



# An Introduction to Educational Philosophy



# An Introduction to Educational Philosophy

Dr. Babita Sharma (Assistant Professor)  
M.A. (Hindi, Political Science), M.Ed., Ph.D. (Education),  
Faculty of Education, Tania University, Sri Ganganagar



## An Introduction to Educational Philosophy

Dr. Babita Sharma

© RESERVED

This book contains information obtained from highly regarded resources. Copyright for individual articles remains with the authors as indicated. A wide variety of references are listed. Reasonable efforts have been made to publish reliable data and information, but the author and the publisher cannot assume responsibility for the validity of all materials or for the consequences of their use.

No part of this book may be reprinted, reproduced, transmitted, or utilized in any form by any electronic, mechanical, or other means, now known or hereinafter invented, including photocopying, microfilming and recording, or any information storage or retrieval system, without permission from the publishers.



4378/4-B, Murarilal Street, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002.  
Ph. No: +91-11-23281685, 41043100, Fax: +91-11-23270680  
E-mail: academicuniversitypress@gmail.com

Year of Publication 2024-25

ISBN : 978-93-6284-696-9

Printed and bound by: Global Printing Services, Delhi  
10 9 8 7 6 5 4 3 2 1

# Contents

<i>Preface</i> .....	<i>vii</i>
<b>Chapter 1    Introduction</b> .....	<b>1</b>
<b>Chapter 2    Schools of Philosophy in India</b> .....	<b>22</b>
<b>Chapter 3    Philosophy and Curriculum</b> .....	<b>55</b>
<b>Chapter 4    Delineating the Field of Philosophy of Education</b> .....	<b>70</b>
<b>Chapter 5    Marx's Theory and Educational Philosophy</b> .....	<b>84</b>
<b>Chapter 6    The Role of the Teacher and Learner                   in Educational Philosophy</b> .....	<b>99</b>
<b>Chapter 7    The Significance of Philosophy in Education</b> .....	<b>122</b>



# Preface

"An Introduction to Educational Philosophy" offers a profound exploration into the philosophical underpinnings of the educational realm, elucidating the fundamental principles that shape teaching and learning. It embarks on a journey through the historical and contemporary landscape of educational philosophy, illuminating the diverse array of perspectives that have influenced educational thought and practice over time.

At its core, the book delves into the nature of knowledge and its acquisition, examining questions regarding the essence of learning, the sources of knowledge, and the processes through which individuals come to understand the world around them. Through this lens, readers gain insight into the epistemological foundations of education, grappling with theories of empiricism, rationalism, and constructivism.

Furthermore, "An Introduction to Educational Philosophy" delves into the purpose and aims of education, probing the various philosophical perspectives that inform educational goals and objectives. It explores questions of human nature, societal values, and the cultivation of individual potential, shedding light on the complex interplay between personal development and social transformation within educational contexts.

The text also scrutinizes the role of the teacher and learner in the educational process, investigating theories of pedagogy, authority, and agency. It examines the dynamic relationship between educators and students, considering how philosophical perspectives shape teaching methods, classroom dynamics, and student-teacher interactions.

Moreover, "An Introduction to Educational Philosophy" tackles the ethical dimensions of education, grappling with questions of moral development, social



justice, and the cultivation of virtuous citizenship. It explores the ethical responsibilities of educators, addressing issues of equity, diversity, and inclusion in educational practice.

Additionally, the book offers critical reflections on the relationship between education and society, exploring the ways in which educational institutions both reflect and perpetuate social norms, values, and power dynamics. It considers the role of education in fostering social cohesion, promoting democratic ideals, and challenging systemic inequalities.

Ultimately, "An Introduction to Educational Philosophy" serves as a guide for educators and scholars alike, inviting readers to engage in philosophical inquiry and reflection as they navigate the complexities of the educational landscape. Through its interdisciplinary approach and thought-provoking analyses, the book encourages readers to cultivate a deeper understanding of the philosophical foundations of education and their implications for teaching, learning, and social transformation.

*—Author*

# 1

## Introduction

### MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION

#### MEANING OF PHILOSOPHY

The word *philosophy* literally means *love of wisdom*; It is derived from two Greek words *i.e.*, ‘phileo’ (love) and ‘Sophia’ (wisdom). This tells us something about the nature of philosophy, but not much, because many disciplines seek wisdom. Since times immemorial there have been various pursuits for unfolding the mystery of the universe, birth and death, sorrow and joy. Various ages have produced different thoughts throwing light upon the mystic region. The ultimate truth is yet to be found out. This eternal quest for truth ‘lends the origin of philosophy. A love of wisdom is the essence for any philosophy investigation.

On the standard way of telling the story, humanity’s first systematic enquiries took place within a mythological or religious framework: wisdom ultimately was to be derived from sacred traditions and from individuals thought to possess privileged access to a supernatural realm, whose own access to wisdom, in turn, generally was not questioned. However, starting in the sixth century BCE, there appeared in ancient Greece a series of thinkers whose enquiries were comparatively secular.

Presumably, these thinkers conducted their enquiries through reason and observation, rather than through tradition or revelation. These thinkers were the first philosophers. Although this picture is admittedly simplistic, the basic distinction has stuck: philosophy in its most primeval form is considered nothing less than secular enquiry itself. The subject of philosophical enquiry is the reality

itself. There are different schools of philosophy depending on the answers they seek to the question of reality. It is the search for understanding of man, nature and the universe. There are different branches of philosophy-Epistemology, Metaphysics, *etc.* There are different fields of philosophy such as educational philosophy, social philosophy, political philosophy, economic philosophy, *etc.* There are also different philosophical approaches such as idealism, naturalism, pragmatism, materialism, and so on.

## MEANING OF EDUCATION

Etymologically, the word education is derived from *educare* (Latin) “bring up”, which is related to *educere* “bring out”, “bring forth what is within”, “bring out potential” and *ducere*, “to lead”. Education in the largest sense is any act or experience that has a formative effect on the mind, character or physical ability of an individual.

In its technical sense, education is the process by which society deliberately transmits its accumulated knowledge, skills and values from one generation to another. Webster defines education as the process of educating or teaching (now that’s really useful, isn’t it?) Educate is further defined as “to develop the knowledge, skill, or character of...”

Thus, from these definitions, we might assume that the purpose of education is to develop the knowledge, skill, or character of students. In ancient Greece, Socrates argued that education was about drawing out what was already within the student. (As many of you know, the word education comes from the Latin *educere* meaning “to lead out.”) At the same time, the Sophists, a group of itinerant teachers, promised to give students the necessary knowledge and skills to gain positions with the city-state.

Thus we see that there are different views and understandings of the meaning of the term education.

*In the modern times it has acquired two different shades of meaning namely:*

- An institutional instruction, given to students in school colleges formally; and
- A pedagogical science, studied by the student of education.

The words of Adam education is the dynamic side of philosophy. Philosophy takes into its orbit, all the dimensions of human life. Similarly education also reflects the multifaceted nature of human life. Therefore, education is closely related to various aspects of human life and environment. Hence, the term education has a wide connotation.

It is difficult to define education by single definition. Philosophers and thinkers from Socrates to Dewey in west and a host of Indian philosophers have attempted to define education. However education can be understood as the deliberate and systematic influence exerted by a mature through instruction, and discipline. It means the harmonious development of all the powers of the human being; physical social, intellectual, aesthetic and spiritual. The essential elements in the educative process are a creative mind, a well integrated self, socially useful purposes and

experience related to the interests of the individual, needs and abilities of the individual as a of a social group. In the historical development of man, education has been the right of a privileged few. It is only in recent centuries that education has come to be recognized as a human right. All have equal right to be educated as education has become sine qua non of civilization. Our discussion of the concept of education and the concept of philosophy form the basis of arriving at the definition of philosophy of education.

## **MODES OF PHILOSOPHY**

### **Speculative Philosophy**

Speculative philosophy is a way of thinking systematically about everything that exists. The human mind wishes to see things as a whole. It wishes to understand how all the different things that have been discovered together form some sort of meaningful totality. Speculative philosophy is a search for order and wholeness, applied not to particular items or experiences but to all knowledge and all experience.

### **Prescriptive Philosophy**

Prescriptive philosophy seeks to establish standards for assessing values, judging conduct and appraising art. It examines what we mean by good and bad, right and wrong, beautiful and ugly. The prescriptive philosopher seeks to discover and to recommend principles for deciding what actions and qualities are most worth- while and why they should be so.

### **Analytic Philosophy**

Analytic philosophy focuses on words and meanings. The analytic philosopher examines such notions as 'course', 'mind', 'academic freedom', 'equality of opportunity', *etc.*, in order to assess the different meanings they carry in different contexts. Analytic philosophy tends to be skeptical, continuous and disinclined to build systems of thought.

Philosophy of Education is the application of the knowledge of philosophy to the solution of educational problems, concepts and theories. It examines, for example, concepts as equality, teaching, autonomy, freedom, morality, *etc.*, and considers their relevance to educational practice. It examines the role of aims in education as well as schools of philosophy and how they view education. Educational philosophy seeks to comprehend education in its entirety, interpreting it by means of general concepts that will guide our choice of educational ends and policies.

Educational philosophy is speculative when it seeks to establish theories of the nature of man, society and the world. Its speculative aspect on the one hand, deals with the search for values, knowledge and realities while the prescriptive aspect on the other hand is the effort towards getting the desired goals and recommending same to solve the current problems of education. Educational philosophy is analytic when it clarifies both speculative and prescriptive statements.

## PROBLEMS, ISSUES, AND TASKS

There are a number of basic philosophical problems and tasks that have occupied philosophers of education throughout the history of the subject.

### THE AIMS OF EDUCATION

The most basic problem of philosophy of education is that concerning aims: what are the proper aims and guiding ideals of education? What are the proper criteria for evaluating educational efforts, institutions, practices, and products? Many aims have been proposed by philosophers and other educational theorists; they include the cultivation of curiosity and the disposition to inquire; the fostering of creativity; the production of knowledge and of knowledgeable students; the enhancement of understanding; the promotion of moral thinking, feeling, and action; the enlargement of the imagination; the fostering of growth, development, and self-realization; the fulfillment of potential; the cultivation of “liberally educated” persons; the overcoming of provincialism and close-mindedness; the development of sound judgment; the cultivation of docility and obedience to authority; the fostering of autonomy; the maximization of freedom, happiness, or self-esteem; the development of care, concern, and related attitudes and dispositions; the fostering of feelings of community, social solidarity, citizenship, and civic-mindedness; the production of good citizens; the “civilizing” of students; the protection of students from the deleterious effects of civilization; the development of piety, religious faith, and spiritual fulfillment; the fostering of ideological purity; the cultivation of political awareness and action; the integration or balancing of the needs and interests of the individual student and the larger society; and the fostering of skills and dispositions constitutive of rationality or critical thinking.

All such proposed aims require careful articulation and defense, and all have been subjected to sustained criticism. Both contemporary and historical philosophers of education have devoted themselves, at least in part, to defending a particular conception of the aims of education or to criticizing the conceptions of others. The great range of aims that have been proposed makes vivid the philosopher of education’s need to appeal to other areas of philosophy, to other disciplines (*e.g.*, psychology, anthropology, sociology, and the physical sciences), and to educational practice itself. Given that consideration of education’s proper aims is of fundamental importance for the intelligent guidance of educational activities, it is unfortunate that contemporary discussions of educational policy rarely address the matter.

### CLARIFICATION OF EDUCATIONAL CONCEPTS

A perennial conception of the nature of philosophy is that it is chiefly concerned with the clarification of concepts, such as knowledge, truth, justice, beauty, mind, meaning, and existence. One of the tasks of the philosophy of education, accordingly, has been the elucidation of key educational concepts, including the concept of education itself, as well as related concepts such as

teaching, learning, schooling, child rearing, and indoctrination. Although this clarificatory task has sometimes been pursued overzealously—especially during the period of so-called ordinary language analysis in the 1960s and '70s, when much work in the field seemed to lose sight of the basic normative issues to which these concepts were relevant—it remains the case that work in the philosophy of education, as in other areas of philosophy, must rely at least in part on conceptual clarification. Such analysis seeks not necessarily, or only, to identify the particular meanings of charged or contested concepts but also to identify alternative meanings, render ambiguities explicit, reveal hidden metaphysical, normative, or cultural assumptions, illuminate the consequences of alternative interpretations, explore the semantic connections between related concepts, and elucidate the inferential relationships obtaining among the philosophical claims and theses in which they are embedded.

### **RIGHTS, POWER, AND AUTHORITY**

There are several issues that fall under this heading. What justifies the state in compelling children to attend school—in what does its authority to mandate attendance lie? What is the nature and justification of the authority that teachers exercise over their students? Is the freedom of students rightly curtailed by the state? Is the public school system rightly entitled to the power it exercises in establishing curricula that parents might find objectionable—*e.g.*, science curricula that mandate the teaching of human evolution but not creationism or intelligent design and literature curricula that mandate the teaching of novels dealing with sexual themes? Should parents or their children have the right to opt out of material they think is inappropriate? Should schools encourage students to be reflective and critical generally—as urged by the American philosophers Israel Scheffler and Amy Gutmann, following Socrates and the tradition he established—or should they refrain from encouraging students to subject their own ways of life to critical scrutiny, as the American political scientist William Galston has recommended?

The issue of legitimate authority has been raised recently in the United States in connection with the practice of standardized testing, which some critics believe discriminates against the children of some racial, cultural, religious, or ethnic groups (because the test questions rely, implicitly or explicitly, on various culturally specific cues or assumptions that members of some groups may not understand or accept). In such controversial cases, what power should members of allegedly disadvantaged groups have to protect their children from discrimination or injustice? The answer to this question, as to the others raised above, may depend in part on the status of the particular school as public (state-supported) or private. But it can also be asked whether private schools should enjoy more authority with respect to curricular matters than public schools do, particularly in cases where they receive state subsidies of one form or another.

These questions are primarily matters of ethics and political philosophy, but they also require attention to metaphysics (*e.g.*, how are “groups” to be

individuated and understood?), philosophy of science (*e.g.*, is “intelligent design” a genuinely scientific theory?), psychology (*e.g.*, do IQ tests discriminate against members of certain minority groups?), and other areas of philosophy, social science, and law.

## CRITICAL THINKING

Many educators and educational scholars have championed the educational aim of critical thinking. It is not obvious what critical thinking is, and philosophers of education accordingly have developed accounts of critical thinking that attempt to state what it is and why it is valuable—*i.e.*, why educational systems should aim to cultivate it in students. These accounts generally (though not universally) agree that critical thinkers share at least the following two characteristics:

- They are able to reason well—*i.e.*, to construct and evaluate various reasons that have been or can be offered for or against candidate beliefs, judgments, and actions; and
- They are disposed or inclined to be guided by reasons so evaluated—*i.e.*, actually to believe, judge, and act in accordance with the results of such reasoned evaluations. Beyond this level of agreement lie a range of contentious issues.

One cluster of issues is epistemological in nature. What is it to reason well? What makes a reason, in this sense, good or bad? More generally, what epistemological assumptions underlie (or should underlie) the notion of critical thinking? Does critical thinking presuppose conceptions of truth, knowledge, or justification that are objective and “absolute,” or is it compatible with more “relativistic” accounts emphasizing culture, race, class, gender, or conceptual scheme?

These questions have given rise to other, more specific and hotly contested issues. Is critical thinking relevantly “neutral” with respect to the groups who use it, or is it in fact politically biased, unduly favouring a type of thinking once valued by white European males—the philosophers of the Enlightenment and later eras—while undervaluing or demeaning types of thinking sometimes associated with other groups, such as women, nonwhites, and non-Westerners—*i.e.*, thinking that is collaborative rather than individual, cooperative rather than confrontational, intuitive or emotional rather than linear and impersonal?

Do standard accounts of critical thinking in these ways favour and help to perpetuate the beliefs, values, and practices of dominant groups in society and devalue those of marginalized or oppressed groups? Is reason itself, as some feminist and postmodern philosophers have claimed, a form of hegemony?

Other issues concern whether the skills, abilities, and dispositions that are constitutive of critical thinking are general or subject-specific. In addition, the dispositions of the critical thinker noted above suggest that the ideal of critical thinking can be extended beyond the bounds of the epistemic to the area of moral character, leading to questions regarding the nature of such character and the best means of instilling it.



## TEACHING, LEARNING, AND CURRICULUM

Many problems of educational practice that raise philosophical issues fall under this heading. Which subjects are most worth teaching or learning? What constitutes knowledge of them, and is such knowledge discovered or constructed? Should there be a single, common curriculum for all students, or should different students study different subjects, depending on their needs or interests, as Dewey thought? If the latter, should students be tracked according to ability? Should less-able students be directed to vocational studies? Is there even a legitimate distinction to be drawn between academic and vocational education? More broadly, should students be grouped together—according to age, ability, gender, race, culture, socioeconomic status, or some other characteristic—or should educators seek diversity in the classroom along any or all of these dimensions?

Whatever the curriculum, how should students be taught? Should they be regarded as “blank slates” and expected to absorb information passively, as Locke’s conception of the mind as a *tabula rasa* suggests, or should they rather be understood as active learners, encouraged to engage in self-directed discovery and learning, as Dewey and many psychologists and educators have held? How, more generally, should teaching be conceived and conducted? Should all students be expected to learn the same things from their studies? If not, as many argue, does it make sense to utilize standardized testing to measure educational outcome, attainment, or success? What are the effects of grading and evaluation in general and of high-stakes standardized testing in particular? Some have argued that any sort of grading or evaluation is educationally counterproductive because it inhibits cooperation and undermines any natural motivation to learn. More recently, critics of high-stakes testing have argued that the effects of such testing are largely negative—dilution (“dumbing down”) of the curriculum, teaching to the test, undue pressure on both students and teachers, and distraction from the real purposes of schooling. If these claims are correct, how should the seemingly legitimate demands of parents, administrators, and politicians for accountability from teachers and schools be met? These are complex matters, involving philosophical questions concerning the aims and legitimate means of education and the nature of the human mind, the psychology of learning (and of teaching), the organizational (and political) demands of schooling, and a host of other matters to which social-scientific research is relevant.

Finally, here fall questions concerning the aims of particular curriculum areas. For example, should science education aim at conveying to students merely the content of current theories or rather an understanding of scientific method, a grasp of the tentativeness and fallibility of scientific hypotheses, and an understanding of the criteria by which theories are evaluated? Should science classes focus solely on current theories, or should they include attention to the history, philosophy, and sociology of the subject? Should they seek to impart only beliefs or also skills? Similar questions can be asked of nearly every curriculum area; they are at least partly philosophical and so are routinely addressed by philosophers of education as well as by curriculum theorists and subject-matter specialists.



## EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

A large amount of research in education is published every year; such research drives much educational policy and practice. But educational research raises many philosophical issues. How is it best conducted, and how are its results best interpreted and translated into policy? Should it be modeled on research in the natural sciences? In what ways (if any) does competent research in the social sciences differ from that in the natural sciences? Can educational research aim at objectivity and the production of objective results, or is it inevitably subjective? Should researchers utilize quantitative methods or qualitative ones? How is this distinction best understood? Are both legitimate modes of research, or is the first problematically scientific or positivistic, or the second problematically subjective, impressionistic, or unreliable? These and related issues are largely philosophical, involving philosophy of science (both natural and social) and epistemology, but they clearly involve the social sciences as well.

## FEMINIST, MULTICULTURALIST, AND POSTMODERN CRITICISMS

Feminist, multiculturalist, and postmodern criticisms of education extend far beyond the issue of critical thinking, addressing much more general features of philosophy and educational theory and practice. These three critical movements are neither internally univocal nor unproblematically combinable; what follows is therefore oversimplified.

Feminist philosophers of education often argue for the importance of educational aims typically excluded from the traditional male-oriented set. One feminist aim is that of caring—*i.e.*, the fostering of students' abilities and propensities to care for themselves and others. A more general aim is that of focusing less on the cognitive and more on the emotional, intuitive, and conative development of all students. Relatedly, many feminist philosophers of education call into question the traditional distinction between the public and the private realms, and they argue that education should focus not only on the development of abilities and characteristics typically exercised in the public sphere—*e.g.*, reason, objectivity, and impartiality—but also on abilities and characteristics traditionally consigned to the private sphere of home and family—*e.g.*, emotional connection, compassion, intuition, and sensitivity to the physical and psychological needs of others.

It must be noted that this characterization of feminist philosophy of education papers over some important internal disagreements and debates. For example, while some feminist philosophers of education suggest that girls and boys should master both traditional male and traditional female roles and abilities, others reject these familiar categories, while still others distrust or explicitly reject reason and objectivity themselves as problematically “male.” Debate on these matters is complex and resists brief summary.

Multiculturalist philosophers of education, as the label suggests, emphasize the significance of cultural diversity as it manifests itself in education and its philosophy. Paying particular attention to such diversity, multiculturalists point out the ways in which actual educational aims and practices favour the interests of particular cultural groups at the expense of others. They emphasize differences not only of language, custom, and lifestyle but, more fundamentally, of basic beliefs, values, and worldviews. They argue that education must not privilege the cultures of certain groups but treat all groups with equal seriousness and respect.

What this means in practice, however, is far from clear. Some multiculturalists argue that justice and respect require that each group's traditions, beliefs, and values be regarded as equally legitimate; others hold that it is possible to respect a group while still regarding its beliefs as false or its values as deficient. This debate has important consequences in the particular curricular domain of science education, but the general issue arises in virtually every curriculum domain.

There is also the problem that the conceptions of justice and respect that multiculturalists tend to appeal to are themselves not universally shared but rather taken from particular cultural locations, thus apparently privileging those culturally specific beliefs and values, contrary to the movement's motivating impulse. How best to resolve this problem remains a subject of debate within the multiculturalist camp, with some opting for some form of cultural relativism and others for a mix of multiculturalism and universalism.

Postmodern philosophers and philosophers of education challenge basic aspects of traditional philosophical theorizing by calling into question the possibility of objectivity, the neutrality of reason, the stability of meaning, and the distinction between truth and power. They raise doubts about all general theories—of philosophy, education, or anything else—by suggesting that all such “grand narratives” arise in particular historical circumstances and thus inevitably reflect the worldviews, beliefs, values, and interests of the groups that happen to be dominant in those circumstances.

Like feminists and multiculturalists, postmodernists do not speak with a single voice. Some, emphasizing power and justice, strive to expose illegitimate exercises of dominating power in order to bring about a more-just social arrangement in which the dominated are no longer so. Others, emphasizing the instability of meaning and the defects of grand narratives, call into question the narratives of domination and justice, thereby undermining the justification of political efforts aimed at eliminating the former and enhancing the latter.

These distinct but partially overlapping movements have in common the insistence that education and its philosophy are inevitably political and the impulse to reveal relations of power in educational theory and practice and to develop philosophical accounts of education that take full account of the values and interests of groups that have traditionally been excluded from educational thinking. These movements also often question the very possibility of universal educational ideals and values. As such they in some ways challenge the very

possibility of the philosophy of education and philosophy more generally, at least as these disciplines have traditionally been practiced. Critical responses to these challenges have been many and varied; one of the most notable consists of pointing out the apparent inconsistency involved in claiming that, as a general matter, general accounts of education, justice, and the like are impossible. As elsewhere, the issues here are complex and far from resolved.

## **NORMATIVE EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHIES**

“Normative philosophies or theories of education may make use of the results of [philosophical thought] and of factual inquiries about human beings and the psychology of learning, but in any case they propound views about what education should be, what dispositions it should cultivate, why it ought to cultivate them, how and in whom it should do so, and what forms it should take. In a full-fledged philosophical normative theory of education, besides analysis of the sorts described, there will normally be propositions of the following kinds: 1. Basic normative premises about what is good or right; 2. Basic factual premises about humanity and the world; 3. Conclusions, based on these two kinds of premises, about the dispositions education should foster; 4. Further factual premises about such things as the psychology of learning and methods of teaching; and 5. Further conclusions about such things as the methods that education should use.”

### **PERENNIALISM**

Perennialists believe that one should teach the things that one deems to be of everlasting importance to all people everywhere. They believe that the most important topics develop a person. Since details of fact change constantly, these cannot be the most important. Therefore, one should teach principles, not facts. Since people are human, one should teach first about humans, not machines or techniques. Since people are people first, and workers second if at all, one should teach liberal topics first, not vocational topics. The focus is primarily on teaching reasoning and wisdom rather than facts, the liberal arts rather than vocational training.

### **ALLAN BLOOM**

Bloom, a professor of political science at the University of Chicago, argued for a traditional Great Books-based liberal education in his lengthy essay *The Closing of the American Mind*.

### **PROGRESSIVISM**

Educational progressivism is the belief that education must be based on the principle that humans are social animals who learn best in real-life activities with other people. Progressivists, like proponents of most educational theories, claim to rely on the best available scientific theories of learning. Most progressive educators believe that children learn as if they were scientists, following a process

similar to John Dewey's model of learning: 1) Become aware of the problem. 2) Define the problem. 3) Propose hypotheses to solve it. 4) Evaluate the consequences of the hypotheses from one's past experience. 5) Test the likeliest solution.

## JEAN PIAGET

Jean Piaget was a Swiss developmental psychologist known for his epistemological studies with children. His theory of cognitive development and epistemological view are together called "genetic epistemology". Piaget placed great importance on the education of children. As the Director of the International Bureau of Education, he declared in 1934 that "only education is capable of saving our societies from possible collapse, whether violent, or gradual." Piaget created the International Centre for Genetic Epistemology in Geneva in 1955 and directed it until 1980. According to Ernst von Glasersfeld, Jean Piaget is "the great pioneer of the constructivist theory of knowing."

Jean Piaget described himself as an epistemologist, interested in the process of the qualitative development of knowledge. As he says in the introduction of his book "Genetic Epistemology" (ISBN 978-0-393-00596-7): "*What the genetic epistemology proposes is discovering the roots of the different varieties of knowledge, since its elementary forms, following to the next levels, including also the scientific knowledge.*"

## JEROME BRUNER

Another important contributor to the inquiry method in education is Bruner. His books *The Process of Education* and *Towards a Theory of Instruction* are landmarks in conceptualizing learning and curriculum development.

He argued that any subject can be taught in some intellectually honest form to any child at any stage of development. This notion was an underpinning for his concept of the spiral curriculum which posited the idea that a curriculum should revisit basic ideas, building on them until the student had grasped the full formal concept. He emphasized intuition as a neglected but essential feature of productive thinking.

He felt that interest in the material being learned was the best stimulus for learning rather than external motivation such as grades. Bruner developed the concept of discovery learning which promoted learning as a process of constructing new ideas based on current or past knowledge. Students are encouraged to discover facts and relationships and continually build on what they already know.

## ESSENTIALISM

Educational essentialism is an educational philosophy whose adherents believe that children should learn the traditional basic subjects and that these should be learned thoroughly and rigorously. An essentialist programme normally teaches children progressively, from less complex skills to more complex.

## **WILLIAM CHANDLER BAGLEY**

William Chandler Bagley taught in elementary schools before becoming a professor of education at the University of Illinois, where he served as the Director of the School of Education from 1908 until 1917. He was a professor of education at Teachers College, Columbia, from 1917 to 1940. An opponent of pragmatism and progressive education, Bagley insisted on the value of knowledge for its own sake, not merely as an instrument, and he criticized his colleagues for their failure to emphasize systematic study of academic subjects. Bagley was a proponent of educational essentialism.

## **SOCIAL RECONSTRUCTIONISM AND CRITICAL PEDAGOGY**

Critical pedagogy is an “educational movement, guided by passion and principle, to help students develop consciousness of freedom, recognize authoritarian tendencies, and connect knowledge to power and the ability to take constructive action.” Based in Marxist theory, critical pedagogy draws on radical democracy, anarchism, feminism, and other movements for social justice.

## **MARIA MONTESSORI**

The Montessori method arose from Dr. Maria Montessori’s discovery of what she referred to as “the child’s true normal nature” in 1907, which happened in the process of her experimental observation of young children given freedom in an environment prepared with materials designed for their self-directed learning activity. The method itself aims to duplicate this experimental observation of children to bring about, sustain and support their true natural way of being.

## **WALDORF**

Waldorf education (also known as Steiner or Steiner-Waldorf education) is a humanistic approach to pedagogy based upon the educational philosophy of the Austrian philosopher Rudolf Steiner, the founder of anthroposophy. Learning is interdisciplinary, integrating practical, artistic, and conceptual elements. The approach emphasizes the role of the imagination in learning, developing thinking that includes a creative as well as an analytic component. The educational philosophy’s overarching goals are to provide young people the basis on which to develop into free, morally responsible and integrated individuals, and to help every child fulfill his or her unique destiny, the existence of which anthroposophy posits. Schools and teachers are given considerable freedom to define curricula within collegial structures.

## **RUDOLF STEINER**

Steiner founded a holistic educational impulse on the basis of his spiritual philosophy (anthroposophy). Now known as Steiner or Waldorf education, his pedagogy emphasizes a balanced development of cognitive, affective/artistic, and practical skills (head, heart, and hands). Schools are normally self-

administered by faculty; emphasis is placed upon giving individual teachers the freedom to develop creative methods. Steiner's theory of child development divides education into three discrete developmental stages predating but with close similarities to the stages of development described by Piaget. Early childhood education occurs through imitation; teachers provide practical activities and a healthy environment. Steiner believed that young children should meet only goodness. Elementary education is strongly arts-based, centered on the teacher's creative authority; the elementary school-age child should meet beauty. Secondary education seeks to develop the judgment, intellect, and practical idealism; the adolescent should meet truth.

## **DEMOCRATIC EDUCATION**

Democratic education is a theory of learning and school governance in which students and staff participate freely and equally in a school democracy. In a democratic school, there is typically shared decision-making among students and staff on matters concerning living, working, and learning together.

### **A. S. NEILL**

Neill founded Summerhill School, the oldest existing democratic school in Suffolk, England in 1921. He wrote a number of books that now define much of contemporary democratic education philosophy. Neill believed that the happiness of the child should be the paramount consideration in decisions about the child's upbringing, and that this happiness grew from a sense of personal freedom. He felt that deprivation of this sense of freedom during childhood, and the consequent unhappiness experienced by the repressed child, was responsible for many of the psychological disorders of adulthood.

## **CLASSICAL EDUCATION**

The Classical education movement advocates a form of education based in the traditions of Western culture, with a particular focus on education as understood and taught in the Middle Ages. The term "classical education" has been used in English for several centuries, with each era modifying the definition and adding its own selection of topics. By the end of the 18th century, in addition to the trivium and quadrivium of the Middle Ages, the definition of a classical education embraced study of literature, poetry, drama, philosophy, history, art, and languages. In the 20th and 21st centuries it is used to refer to a broad-based study of the liberal arts and sciences, as opposed to a practical or pre-professional programme. Classical Education can be described as rigorous and systematic, separating children and their learning into three rigid categories, Grammar, Dialectic, and Rhetoric.

### **CHARLOTTE MASON**

Mason was a British educator who invested her life in improving the quality of children's education. Her ideas led to a method used by some homeschoolers.



Mason's philosophy of education is probably best summarized by the principles given at the beginning of each of her books. Two key mottos taken from those principles are "Education is an atmosphere, a discipline, a life" and "Education is the science of relations." She believed that children were born persons and should be respected as such; they should also be taught the Way of the Will and the Way of Reason. Her motto for students was "I am, I can, I ought, I will." Charlotte Mason believed that children should be introduced to subjects through living books, not through the use of "compendiums, abstracts, or selections." She used abridged books only when the content was deemed inappropriate for children. She preferred that parents or teachers read aloud those texts (such as Plutarch and the Old Testament), making omissions only where necessary.

## UNSCHOOLING

Unschooling is a range of educational philosophies and practices centered on allowing children to learn through their natural life experiences, including child directed play, gameplay, household responsibilities, work experience, and social interaction, rather than through a more traditional school curriculum. Unschooling encourages exploration of activities led by the children themselves, facilitated by the adults. Unschooling differs from conventional schooling principally in the thesis that standard curricula and conventional grading methods, as well as other features of traditional schooling, are counterproductive to the goal of maximizing the education of each child.

## JOHN HOLT

In 1964 Holt published his first book, *How Children Fail*, asserting that the academic failure of schoolchildren was not *despite* the efforts of the schools, but actually *because* of the schools. Not surprisingly, *How Children Fail* ignited a firestorm of controversy. Holt was catapulted into the American national consciousness to the extent that he made appearances on major TV talk shows, wrote book reviews for *Life* magazine, and was a guest on the *To Tell The Truth* TV game show. In his follow-up work, *How Children Learn*, published in 1967, Holt tried to elucidate the learning process of children and why he believed school short circuits that process.

## CONTEMPLATIVE EDUCATION

Contemplative education focuses on bringing spiritual awareness into the pedagogical process. Contemplative approaches may be used in the classroom, especially in tertiary or (often in modified form) in secondary education. Parker Palmer is a recent pioneer in contemplative methods. The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society founded a branch focusing on education, The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education.

Contemplative methods may also be used by teachers in their preparation; Waldorf education was one of the pioneers of the latter approach. In this case, inspiration for enriching the content, format, or teaching methods may be sought

through various practices, such as consciously reviewing the previous day's activities; actively holding the students in consciousness; and contemplating inspiring pedagogical texts. Zigler suggested that only through focusing on their own spiritual development could teachers positively impact the spiritual development of students.

## **EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND PHILOSOPHIES, TRADITIONAL AND MODERN**

"Education" comes from the Latin *ex* (out of) and *ducere* (to lead, to guide); hence, to lead out of ignorance into knowledge, out of inability into competence. The desired knowledge and competence, however, will be shaped by historical circumstance and by cultural and social conditions.

Education reflects the cultural self-understanding of a society and in turn helps both to determine it and to transmit it across countless generations.

In India, with its long history and cultural diversity spanning many languages and religions, a comprehensive account of its educational character would require several volumes. The emphasis here, in this brief discussion, will be philosophical, highlighting the cultural and conceptual contexts of India's various educational systems and the values and ideals they attempt to embody.

It is obvious that such rigorous selectivity results in some lacunae, for example, the long period of Muslim rule stretching from around the tenth to the eighteenth century. Muslim influence on Hindu culture has undoubtedly been considerable, but its impact on general, as opposed to sectarian educational patterns and policies, is less salient.

### **The Traditional Period**

This period, for the purposes of this entry, extends from the early Vedic period to the coming of the British in the eighteenth century. It is dominated in the early period by the influence of classical Hinduism and Buddhism. The roots of the ancient Indian pattern of education may be traced to the earliest Vedic works, the four Vedas collectively known as Samhitâs, the Brâhmanas, the Âranyakas, and the Upanishads. The purport of the hymns and chants that comprise the Vedas was largely to achieve cosmic harmony (*ṛta*) and the human prosperity it was believed to bring. This cosmic order was sought initially through sacrifices offered to the gods. Increasingly, the sacrifice itself came to carry the powers that had formerly been attributed to the gods, and much effort was expended on coming up with the most efficacious sacrificial rituals. Concurrently with this emphasis on the sacrifice, there was a contemplative turn away from ritualism to philosophical reflections about the nature of reality and the place of humans within it.

Now it is knowledge itself that is seen as salvific, and it sets up a pattern of education in which sages reveal the nature of ultimate reality to select students in search of sacred knowledge. That is the etymological connotation of the term "upanishads," signifying a secret or esoteric knowledge that was largely confined



to Brahmins. The rest of society, stratified along class lines, was provided the education appropriate to a particular class—the art of warfare in the case of Kshatriyas and agriculture, commerce, arts, and crafts in the case of Vaishyas. The Shudras who performed menial work were, however, deprived of education. The most detailed account of codes and laws, according to the *caturvarnâshrama* (four varnas) scheme, is provided in the *Manusmriti* written by Manu, the lawmaker whose classification of social strata is said to have mirrored the makings of the world.

Buddhist influence was responsible for expanding the Vedic scheme of education beyond the caste restrictions imposed by the latter. Part of the appeal of Buddhist institutions of learning, both in India and abroad, was their ecumenical, inclusive character. The Buddhist approach includes both monasteries concerned with the training of monks and “universities,” like Nalanda, involved in more secular education and systematic instruction in grammar, medicine, philosophy, and arts and crafts.

Outside the religious framework, kings and princes were educated in the arts and sciences related to government: politics (*danda-nîti*), economics (*vârttâ*), philosophy (*ânvîksiki*), and historical traditions (*itihâa*). Here the authoritative source was Kautilya’s *Artha Shâstra*, often compared to Niccolò Machiavelli’s *The Prince* for its worldly outlook and political scheming.

### **Principles, values, and goals**

Those types of education, though involving different groups, shared at least two characteristics. Religion broadly conceived provided a frame of reference, though to different degrees. Even the Kshatriya prince featured in the *Artha Shâstra* was made to study *trayî* (the Vedas and their commentaries), while for Vedic students education was predominantly religious. Secondly, all ancient Indian education emphasized the role of the teacher, who in the Vedic scheme assumed the mantle of the guru (spiritual preceptor), or the *âcârya* (authoritative teacher), revered and served by his student (*shishya*).

The goal for the Vedic student might be termed “transcendent,” that is, transcending the mundane interests and attractions of life to attain direct experience of Brahman and in the ideal case to reestablish union with it. The institution of *brahmacharya* (chastity) enjoined on the student served many purposes; on the one hand, it pulled him away from the lures of the world, and on the other, conserved and sublimated the vital force (*prâna*) for union with the divine.

The spiritual character of his education was also marked by the *upanayana*, or initiatory rite, which he had to undergo before being formally accepted by his teacher and beginning his instruction.

This solemn ceremony typically took three days, when as expounded in the Atharva Veda, the teacher held the student within him and gave birth to a *dvija*, or twice-born student. The first birth from his parents was physical, but the second birth was spiritual.

The close bond with the guru was cemented by the student living with the teacher so as to imbibe his inner spirit and in that way facilitate the attainment of *vidyâ* or the highest knowledge leading to *mukti* (liberation).

The goal of Buddhist education, by contrast, was less transcendent and “vertical” and more immanent and “horizontal,” in accord with the humanistic character of Buddhism. Within the Buddhist scheme, there were two types of institutions, the monasteries concerned with the training of monks and general universities imparting a more secular education.

The goals of the two institutions varied accordingly. The monks were required to follow Buddhist teachings in a strict manner, begging for their food and keeping to the monastic disciplines, so as to bring about an inner renunciation or emptiness (*sunyatâ*) and to awaken universal compassion.

The students at the universities, on the other hand, while being instructed in the Buddhist teachings were trained to apply them in the world, as, for example, in the field of medicine, as mentioned in a canonical Pali work, *Mahâvagga*.

The goals of princely education were more secular. Mention was made earlier of the *Artha Shâstra*, a work concerned with the imperatives of royal or imperial power. Even though Kautilya describes the work as a species of *râja-nîti*, the ethics of government, there was far more Machiavellianism in it, designed to make the king an absolute monarch and the state he ruled absolutely dominant.

### **The Modern Period**

This period spans the interval between Lord Macaulay’s Minute on Education of February 1835 to modern India, reflecting the tensions between traditions and modernity.

Macaulay’s Minute was introduced to the British company’s education committee planning the course and general direction of education in British India.

On one side were ranged the “Orientalists,” who favoured the support of Arabic and Sanskrit and the knowledge opened up through these languages. On the other side were the “Anglicists,” who championed the cause of learning English and western textbooks. This debate was much more than a quarrel about the desired medium of instruction.

Macaulay with his statement that “a single shelf of a good European library was worth the whole native literature of India and Arabia,” came down firmly on the Anglicist side. His intention was to produce a cadre of Indians who could help the British run the empire by mastering modern Western knowledge. He considered India’s education archaic and moribund. Macaulay’s ideas carried the company and Parliament, and with the introduction of modern English instruction, Indian education was brought into the Western world.

Traditional Hindu culture, largely hierarchical, was averse to change, caste-based, status-oriented, religious in character, and generally accepted authority in the form of scriptures, teachers, or family or community elders. Modern Western culture, by contrast, was on the whole egalitarian, meritocratic, cosmopolitan in

outlook, democratic in spirit, secular, reason-based, and oriented towards change and material advancement. It would be no exaggeration to say that the tensions between tradition and modernity brought into prominence by Macaulay are still unresolved today, with significant repercussions for the course of Indian education.

An example from the field of philosophy might illustrate the point. While there was a vibrant philosophical climate until around the time of the Mughals in the sixteenth century, Indian philosophy in the modern period has by and large languished. This is not at all to say that there have not been outstanding thinkers in this time frame because there certainly have been a few. It is rather to claim that these few have been somewhat isolated figures whose work has not on the whole generated the schools of thought or the vigorous debate between them that characterized earlier periods.

Contemporary Indian philosophers trained largely in a Western idiom are not able to draw creatively on ancient traditions. Part of the problem is linguistic: the ability to plumb the depths of the tradition requires a deep and sophisticated knowledge of Sanskrit and Pali in order to appreciate the subtleties of traditional philosophical argument, and not many contemporary Indian philosophers possess the requisite linguistic and philological skills.

In the limited time at their disposal, young scholars prefer to focus on Western philosophy where the academic prestige lies. On the other hand, there are still great Sanskrit scholars whose mode of expression and style of argument is not the modern one, and so one finds two groups of scholars, the traditional *pandits* and the modern Western-trained philosophers, who ideally should communicate with each other but who unfortunately do not.

As a result, a subject that was once the wellspring and foundation of the culture has today fallen on hard times.

This tension between tradition and modernity has generated two responses. On the one side are revivalists, who want to return to a supposedly pure Hinduism and a purportedly golden age of the past. In a globalized and modern world such a simple return to the past is unviable.

On the other side are those who tend to equate modernization with Westernization and turn their backs on tradition. This inevitably results in rootlessness and alienation. By far the most creative Indian educational thinkers have been those who have attempted both in their thought in general and in their educational philosophy in particular to effect a creative dialogue between past and present. It is instructive to consider two of them, Mahatma Gandhi and Rabindranath Tagore, before examining the actual situation prevailing in Indian education by way of considering the values and goals at play in education today.

### **Principles, Values, and Goals**

Both Gandhi and Tagore were sympathetic to and deeply appreciative of India's philosophical and spiritual traditions, though they drew on different parts of them in crafting their views on education. Gandhi was attracted to the moral and didactic parts of the tradition and to the Bhagavad Gîtâ in particular.

Tagore by contrast was drawn more to the speculative and metaphysical richness of the Vedas and the Upanishads and developed an aesthetic philosophy of *ânandâ* (joy). These temperamental and philosophical differences were reflected in their respective philosophies of education.

While they agreed that education should have a social orientation and be situated in close proximity to nature, and while they also agreed that education should be holistic and integrative, encompassing the head, the heart, and the hands, they disagreed about the main goal of education. For Gandhi the chief purpose of education was moral and social; the focus should be on the building of character within a framework of service to the community.

To that end he insisted that intellectual instruction be imparted through a craft and that manual labour be coordinated with academic pursuits. For Tagore, this was too restrictive a goal: for him the main purpose of education was to develop the creative potential of a student and through that creativity to achieve a unity with nature and with his fellow humans. “Deliverance is not for me in renunciation. I feel the embrace of freedom in a thousand bonds of delight” (*Collected Poems*, p. 34).

Whatever their differences, Tagore and Gandhi were idealistic thinkers seeing the purpose of education as disciplining and elevating the spirit and as the balanced development of intellect, imagination, and will.

Of the two, it was Mahatma Gandhi who had greater influence on actual educational policies. After many years of preparation, he came up with a plan that became known as the Wardha Scheme of Basic National Education, whose salient features were free compulsory education, instruction in one’s mother tongue, handicrafts as an essential instrument of learning, self-supporting education, and training in nonviolence.

The plan was tried for a few years but met with fundamental criticism, namely that it concentrated on primary education to the detriment of secondary and higher education and that it was largely village-based and too decentralized to allow for much operational coherence or development in towns and cities where employment opportunities attracted a swelling population.

After independence and Gandhi’s death, the direction of India’s educational planning was much more pragmatic. The Constitution of India declared India a secular, socialist, and democratic republic, and much of the educational thinking swayed by Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru’s vision of India as a modern developing industrial nation moved in directions quite different from those of Gandhi’s plan.

Five national goals were highlighted to guide the course of education: the promotion of democracy; secularism, given the multireligious character of the country; the elimination of poverty through economic and technological development; the creation of a socialistic pattern of society; and national integration. To that end some of the prominent features of the educational planning of the 1950s and 1960s were universal, compulsory, and free education for children up to the age of fourteen, a stress on the education of illiterate

adults, an emphasis on science and technology, enlarged and equalized opportunities for Dalits and other “backward” sections of the population, and finally an emphasis on vocational training in technical skills.

In general, education was linked closely and directly to the economic growth of the country. As J. P. Naik, member-secretary of India’s Education Commission, in the mid-1960s put it: “The main justification for the larger outlay on educational reconstruction . . . is the hypothesis that education is the most important single factor that leads to economic growth . . . [based on] the development of science and technology” (p. 35).

Modern Indian education is thus seen in terms of economic growth and material advancement rather than the acquisition of timeless spiritual knowledge. In its reliance on science and experimental reason, it calls into question traditional emphasis on authority. In its stress on equality of opportunity, it negates the old caste-based system of privilege. In its valorizing of productivity, it moves firmly in the direction of a meritocratic and egalitarian rather than a hierarchical order.

It is thus no exaggeration to say that India suffers from what the English scientist C. P. Snow once called the problem of two cultures. Snow was referring to the opposition between scientific and humanistic cultures, which to some extent troubles modern India as well. But there is a deeper gulf that is yet to be satisfactorily bridged: the gulf between two different mind-sets and outlooks, the traditional and the modern.

### **Agencies and Institutions**

Emphasis on technological development and economic growth in post-independence India has almost reversed the traditional and Gandhian emphasis on rural education. India’s major cities have all embraced universities, institutes of science and technology, and centers for advanced studies, many of them highly regarded. These institutions, especially the technical ones, have produced a cadre of engineers and computer scientists who both in terms of quality and quantity are world-renowned.

The success of the Silicon Valley in California, of German software production, and of firms like Infosys and Wipro in India is based to a large extent on the excellence and technical skill of a pool of computer personnel produced by Indian technical institutes.

At the other end of the scale, however, basic education for the poor has been largely stagnant, so that problems of illiteracy and endemic poverty still remain for the most part unsolved. This imbalance has created what India’s preeminent sociologist, the late M. N. Srinivas, called the dual cultures of independent India, the urban middle class and the rural poor.

The country’s professional classes are drawn largely from the former, which comprises chiefly the high and middle castes and the top strata of minority groups. Those living in villages, except for the middle and large landowners and a few successful traders and artisans, constitute the rural poor. In spite of the egalitarian goals that national education set itself soon after independence,

the gap between these two groups has increased precipitously. India's urban middle class and its intellectuals have thus for the most part adopted a modern Western mindset. This creates a reaction on the part of chauvinist and revivalist groups rendered queasy by what they view as deracination, and consequently raises shrill invocations of a "pristine," mythic Hindu past. This is at times a political ploy to win mass allegiance or votes. The deeper Hindu values and ideals championed by Gandhi and Tagore, among others, are largely unheeded. At the other end of the scale, the rural poor, illiterate and uneducated, remain at the mercy of large- and middle-scale landowners in whose economic interests they work,.

These dualities highlight at least four problems that Indian education continues to face: the increasing politicization of Indian schools and universities which compromises freedom of thought and inquiry; the lack of creative integration of tradition and modernity; an increasing religious polarization, especially in the form of Hindu-Muslim tensions, which calls into question the goals of national integration and a secular society invoked by the Constitution; and finally, the daunting inequalities between rich and poor and between higher and lower castes.

# 2

## Schools of Philosophy in India

Nevertheless, for all intents and purposes, perception embodies beliefs, according to the realists. More accurately, a perceptual belief is the result of the operation of perception as a knowledge source. Everything that is nameable is knowable and vice-versa. There is nothing that when we attend to it cannot bear a name, for we can make up new names. We can in principle verbalize the indications of our experience, though many of them are not named since we are indifferent (pebbles perceived along the road). Concept-free perception is the classical Indian realist rendering of our ability to form perceptual concepts by attending to perception's phenomenological side.

In an ideal educational process, a teacher is supposed to be a father figure, a role model. In the Vedic times, the teacher was usually a guru, who was no ordinary person, but a rishi, a seer. Knowledge flourished in him more through his inner vision than through outer experience, though the latter process was considered in no way inferior to the former.

### **SANKHYA**

The term "Sankhya" means "enumeration" and it suggests a methodology of philosophical analysis. On many accounts, Sankhya is the oldest of the systematic schools of Indian philosophy. It is attributed to the legendary sage Kapila of antiquity, though we have no extant work left to us by him. His views are recounted in many *smṛti* texts, such as the *Bh'gavata Puran a* and the *Bhagavad Gita*´, but the Sankhya system appears to stretch back to the end of the Vedic period itself. Key concepts of the Sankhya system appear in the *Upanisads*, suggesting that it is an indigenous Indian philosophical school that



developed congenially in parallel with the Vedic tradition. Its relative antiquity appears to be confirmed by the references to the school in classical Jain writings, which are known for their antiquity. Unlike many of the other systematic schools of Hindu philosophy, the Sankhya system does not explicitly attempt to align itself with the authority of the Vedas.

The oldest systematic writing on Sankhya that we have is Isvarakrs na's *Sankhya Karika* (4th cent. C.E.). In it we have the classic Sankhya ontology and metaphysic set out, along with its theory of agency.

According to the Sankhya system, the cosmos is the result of the mutual contact of two distinct metaphysical categories: *Prakrti* (Nature), and *Purusa* (person). *Prakr ti*, or Nature, is the material principle of the cosmos and is comprised of three *gun as*, or "qualities." These are *sattva*, *rajas*, and *tamas*. *Sattva* is illuminating, buoyant and a source of pleasure; *rajas* is actuating, propelling and a source of pain; *tamas* is still, enveloping and a source of indifference.

*Purusa*, in contrast, has the quality of consciousness. It is the entity that the personal pronoun "I" actually refers to. It is eternally distinct from Nature, but it enters into complex configurations of Nature (biological bodies) in order to experience and to have knowledge. According to the Sankhya tradition, mind, mentality, intellect or *Mahat* (the Great one) is not a part of the *Purusa*, but the result of the complex organization of matter, or the *gun as*. Mentality is the closest thing in Nature to *Purusa*, but it is still a natural entity, rooted in materiality. *Purusa*, in contrast, is a pure witness. It lacks the ability to be an agent. Thus, on the Sankhya account, when it seems as though we as persons are making decisions, we are mistaken: it is actually our natural constitution comprised by the *gunas* that make the decision. The *Purusa* does nothing but lend consciousness to the situation.

The contact of *Prakr ti* and *Purusa*, on the Sankhya account, is not a chance occurrence. Rather, the two principles make contact so that *Purusa* can come to have knowledge of its own nature. A *Purusa* comes to have such knowledge when *sattva*, the illuminating *guna*, assumes a governing position in a bodily constitution. The moment that this knowledge comes about, a *Purusa* becomes liberated. The *Purusa* is no longer bound by the actions and choices of its body's constitution. However, liberation consists in the end of karma tying the *Purusa* to *Prakrti*: it does not coincide with the complete annihilation of past karma, which would consist in the disentangling of a *Purusa* from *Prakrti*. Hence, the *Sankhya Kârîkâ* likens the self-realization of the *Purusa* to a potter's wheel, which continues to spin down, after the potter has ceased putting energy to keep the wheel in motion.

Students of ancient Western philosophy are apt to note that the Sankhya *gunas*, and the dualistic theory of personhood, appear to have echos in Plato (4th cent. B.C.E.). Plato held that the body is the casing of the soul, and that the embodied soul is composed of three characteristics: an earthy quality geared towards menial tasks that is appetitive (corresponding to bronze), a high-spirited



quality geared towards accomplishment and competition (silver), and a reflective or rational portion that is in a position to put in order the constitution of the soul (gold) (*Republic* 3.415, 4.435–42). *Prima facie*, the bronze quality appears to correspond to *tamas*, silver to *rajas*, and *sattva* to gold. Owing to the antiquity of the Sankhya system, it is historically implausible that it was influenced by Platonistic thought. This of course invites the contrary proposal, that Plato was influenced by the Sankhya system. While Indian philosophers had an important impact on the course of ancient Greek philosophy (through Pyrrho of Elis, who traveled to India in the 3rd cent. B.C.E. and was impressed by a type of dialectic nihilism characteristic of some Buddhist philosophies, promoted by gymnosophists—naked wise people—who resemble Jain monks), there is no historical evidence to suggest that Sankhya thought made its way to ancient Greece. This suggests that both Plato (4th cent. B.C.E.), and the Sankhya system (dating back to the 6th cent. B.C.E. in the Vedas) articulate an ancient Indo-European philosophical perspective that predates both Plato and the Sankhya system, *if* the similarities between the two are not purely coincidental.

## PŪRVAMĪMĀSĀ

The Pūrvamīmāṃsā school of Hindu philosophy gains its name from the portion of the Vedas that it is primarily concerned with: the earlier (*pkarva*) inquiry (*Mimamsa*), or the *karma khanda*. In the context of Hinduism, the Pūrvamīmāṃsā school is one of the most orthodox of the Hindu philosophical schools because of its concern to elaborate and defend the contents of the early, ritually oriented part of the Vedas. Like many other schools of Indian philosophy, Pūrvamīmāṃsā takes dharma (“duty” or “ethics”) as its primary focus (*Mimamsa Sutra* I.i.1). Unlike all other schools of Hindu philosophy, Pūrvamīmāṃsā did not take *moksha*, or liberation, as something to extol or elaborate upon. The very topic of liberation is nowhere discussed in the foundational text of this tradition, and is recognized for the first time by the medieval Pūrvamīmāṃsā author Kumārila (7th cent. C.E.) as a real objective worth pursuing in conjunction with dharma.

The school of philosophy known as Pūrvamīmāṃsā has its roots in the *Mimamsa Sutra*, written by Jaimini (1st cent. C.E.). The *Mimamsa Sutra*, like the *Vaishaisika Sutra*, begins with the assertion that its main concern is the elaboration of dharma. The second verse tells us that dharma (or the ethical) is an injunction (*codana*) that has the distinction (*laksana*) of bringing about welfare (*artha*) (*Mimamsa Sutra* I.i.1-2).

The Pūrvamīmāṃsā system is distinguished from other Hindu philosophical schools but for the Vedānta systems—in its view that the Vedas are epistemically foundational. Foundationalism is the view that certain knowledge claims are independently valid (which means that no further justificatory reasons are either possible or necessary to justify these claims), and moreover, that these independently valid knowledge claims are able to serve as justifications for beliefs that are based upon them. Such independently valid knowledge claims

are thought to be justificatory foundations of a system of beliefs. While all Hindu philosophical schools recognize the validity of the Vedas, only the Pûrvamîmâmsâ and Vedânta systems explicitly regard the Vedas as foundational, and being in no need of further justification: "... instruction [in the Vedas] is the means of knowing it (dharma)—infallible regarding all that is imperceptible; it is a valid means of knowledge, as it is independent..." (*Mimamsa Sutra* I.i.5). The justificatory capacity of the Vedas serves to ground the *smṛiti* literature, for it is the sacred tradition based on the Vedas (*Mimamsa Sutra* I.iii.2). If a *smṛiti* text conflicts with the Vedas, the Vedas are to be preferred. When there is no conflict, we are entitled to presume that the Vedas stand as support for the *smṛiti* text (*Mimamsa Sutra* I.iii.3).

Pûrvamîmâmsâ perhaps more than any other school of Indian philosophy made a sizable contribution to Indian debates on the philosophy of language. Some of Pûrvamîmâmsâ's distinctive linguistic theses impact on theological matters. One distinctive thesis of the Pûrvamîmâmsâ tradition is that the relationship between a word and its referent is "inborn" and not mediated by authorial intention (*Mimamsa Sutra* I.i.5). The second view is that words, or verbal units (*śabda*), are eternal existents. This view contrasts sharply with the view taken by the Nyaya philosophers, that words have a temporary existence, and are brought in and out of existence by utterance (*Nyaya Sutra* II.ii.13, cf. *Mimamsa Sutra* I.i.6-11). The commentator Sabara (5th cent. C.E.) explains the Pûrvamîmâmsâ view thus:

...the word is manifested (not produced) by human effort; that is to say, if, before being pronounced, the word was not manifest, it becomes manifested by the effort (or pronouncing). Thus it is found that the fact of words being "seen after effort" is equally compatible with both views.... The Word must be eternal;—why?—because its utterance is for the purpose of another.... If the word ceased to exist as soon as uttered then no one could speak of any thing to others.... Whenever the word "go" (cow) is uttered, there is a notion of all cows simultaneously. From this it follows that the word denotes the Class. And it is not possible to create the relation of the Word to a Class; because in creating the relation, the creator would have to lay down the relation by pointing to the Class; and without actually using the word "go" (which he could not use before he has laid down its relation to its denotation) in what manner could he point to the distinct class denoted by the word "go".... (*Sabara Bhasya* on *Mimamsa Sutra* I.i.12-19, pp. 33–38)

Hence, the only solution to the problem of how words have their meaning, on the Pûrvamîmâmsâ account, is that they have them eternally. If they do not have their meaning eternally and independent of subjective associations between referents and words, communication would be impossible. These strikingly Platonistic positions on the nature of meaning allows the Pûrvamîmâmsâ tradition to argue that the Vedas are an eternally existing, unauthored corpus, and that its validity is beyond reproach: "... if the Veda be eternal its denotation cannot but be eternal; and if it be non-eternal (caused), then it can have no validity...".

Views in the history of Hindu philosophy that contrast with the Pûrvamîmâmsâ view, on the question of the source and nature of the Vedas, is the view implicit in the *Nyaya Sutra*, and stated more clearly by the later syncretic Vaisheshika (and Nyaya) author San kara-Misra (*Vaishaisika Sutra Bhasya*, p.7): the Vedas is the testimony of a particular person (namely God). This is a view that also appears to be echoed in the theistic schools of Vedânta, such as Visistâdvaita, where God is alluded to as the author of the Vedas.

### **Purva Mimamsa**

The first major orthodox philosophical system to develop was Purva Mimamsa. The other one to follow was the Uttar Mimamsa. The orthodox systems accept the authority of the Vedas. Jaimini is credited as the chief proponent of the Mimamsa system. His glorious work is *Mimamsa-Sutra* written around the end of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. *Mimamsa-Sutra* is the largest of all the philosophical Sutras. Divided into 12 chapters, it is a collection of nearly 2500 aphorisms which are extremely difficult to comprehend.

The Sanskrit word ‘mimamsa means a ‘revered thought’. The word is originated from the root ‘man’ which refers to ‘thinking’ or ‘investigating’. The word ‘mimamsa’ suggests “probing and acquiring knowledge” or “critical review and investigation of the Vedas”.

Each of the Vedas is considered to be composed of four parts: The Samhitas, the Brahmanas, the Aranyakas and the Upanishads. The first two parts are generally focused on the rituals and they form the Karma-kanda portion of the Vedas. The later two parts form the Jnana-kanda (concerned with knowledge) portion of the Vedas.

Purva-Mimamsa is based on the earlier (Purva = earlier) parts of the Vedas.

Uttar-Mimamsa is based on the later (Uttar = later) parts of the Vedas.

Purva-Mimamsa is also known as *Karma Mimamsa* since it deals with the Karmic actions of rituals and sacrifices. Uttar-Mimamsa is also known as Brahman Mimamsa since it is concerned with the knowledge of Reality. In popular terms, Purva-Mimamsa is known simply as Mimamsa and Uttar-Mimamsa as Vedanta.

This system out rightly accept the Vedas as the eternal source of ‘revealed truth. Mimamsa system attaches a lot of importance to the Verbal testimony which is essentially the Vedic testimony. Jaimini accepts the ‘Word’ or the ‘Shabda’ as the only means of knowledge. The ‘word’ or the ‘Shabda’ is necessarily the Vedic word, according to Jaimini. This system strongly contends that the Vedas are not authored by an individual. Since they are ‘self-revealed’ or ‘apaurusheya’, they manifest their own validity.

The system is a pluralistic realist. It endorses the reality of the world as well as that of the individual souls. The soul is accepted as an eternal and infinite substance. Consciousness is an accidental attribute of the soul. The soul is distinct from the body, the senses and the mind. The earlier mimamsakas do not give much importance to the deities. Hence they do not endorse God as the creator of the universe. But later mimamsakas show a bent towards theism.

The system supports the law of *karma*. It believes in the Unseen Power or 'apurva'. Apart from accepting the heaven and the hell, the system supports the theory of liberation.

### **Uttar Mimamsa/Vedanta**

Uttar Mimamsa is the Vedanta, one of the most significant of all Indian philosophies.

The word 'Vedanta' usually refers to the Upanishads. The word is a compound of 'Veda' and 'Anta'. It means the ending portion of the Vedas. However, the word 'Vedanta', in a broad sense, covers not only the Upanishads but all the commentaries and interpretations associated with the Upanishads. All these works constitute the Vedanta philosophy.

The great scholar Badarayana (?500-200 B.C) initiated the efforts to simplify the Upanishadic philosophy. Badarayana is also known as Ved Vyasa. Badarayana's work is known as Brahma-Sutra or Vedanta-Sutra. It is also referred to as Uttar-Mimamsa-Sutra. ". Baadaraayan claims that he has not put anything new – all was only the summary of Upanishadic teachings – but the claim does not seem to be totally justified. Complicating the matters further, there have been three Aachaarya, famously known for three systems of metaphysics, are known consecutively as A-Dwait, Vishisht A-Dwait and Dwait, explaining the relationship between man and God.

The Brahma-Sutra has 555 sutras. Most of them are aphoristic and almost unintelligible at first sight. Thus, we have three major schools of Vedanta based on the philosophy of the distinguished trio: Advaita(non-dualism) of Shamkaracharya, Vishishtadvaita (qualified non-dualism) of Ramnujacharya and Dvaita (dualism) of Madhvacharya.

The Vedanta philosophy is focused on the Jagat (the universe), the Jiva (individual soul) and the Brahman (the Supreme Being). Brahman is the repository of all knowledge and power. Jivas are trapped in the Jagat. Attached to the physical world and driven by passions and desires, they remain chained to ceaseless actions (karma). As a result, they subject themselves to countless births in various forms. Their transmigration from this birth (life) to the next depends on the karma (the quality of action). Moksha or mukti (liberation) is the goal of life. This philosophy, in general, is accepted by all the three schools. Now let us understand the basic difference among the three schools.

Dvaita refers to 'two'. Dvaita school is based on the concept of dualism. Madhvacharya emphasizes the distinction between God and individual soul (Jiva). In addition, the school differentiates God from matter as well as the soul from matter. The school maintains that the God, Jiva and the Jagat are three separate and everlasting entities.

God governs the world and has control over the souls. The souls in its ignorance remains shackled in the world. By devotion and God's mercy, the soul can migrate to the Heaven above. It can obtain Mukti from the cycle of life and death and live with God forever in the Heaven.

Vishishtadvaita literally means “qualified non-dualism”. Ramanujacharya stresses that God alone exists. He says that Brahman is God. He is not formless. The Cosmos and the Jivas form his body. When the Jiva (soul) realises that he is a part of Paramatman (God), the soul is liberated. On liberation, his soul enjoys infinite consciousness and infinite bliss of God. The soul is in communion with God, but it does not share the power of the creation or destruction.

Advaita means “non-dualism”. Brahman is the sole Supreme Reality. Brahman, Jagat and Jiva are not different, separate entities.

Advaita philosophy denies the reality of the truth of name and form as presented by the sense organs, and so it cannot rely upon the knowledge acquired through-senses nor can it make any use of it in support of its contentions, however helpful such knowledge may be in every-day life. Thus according to Samkara, all means of knowledge and all knowledge acquired through them, are unreal from the transcendental standpoint. But one cannot deny their importance in the practical world from the practical standpoint.

In Vedanta, ‘prama’ means the valid knowledge which is uncontradicted. Prama does not include knowledge through memory. It is that knowledge only which has never been attained before. question of the antecedent and subsequent.

## AXIOLOGY

Axiology is the philosophical study of value. It is either the collective term for ethics and aesthetics· philosophical fields that depend crucially on notions of worth, or the foundation for these fields, and thus similar to value theory and meta-ethics. The term was first used by Paul Lapie, in 1902, and Eduard von Hartmann, in 1908.

Axiology studies mainly two kinds of values: ethics and aesthetics. Ethics investigates the concepts of “right” and “good” in individual and social conduct. Aesthetics studies the concepts of “beauty” and “harmony.” Formal axiology, the attempt to lay out principles regarding value with mathematical rigour, is exemplified by Robert S. Hartman’s science of value.

## History

Between the 5th and 6th century BC, it was important in Greece to be knowledgeable if you were to be successful. Philosophers began to recognize that differences existed between the laws and morality of society. Socrates held the belief that knowledge had a vital connection to virtue, making morality and democracy closely intertwined. Socrates’ student, Plato furthered the belief by establishing virtues which should be followed by all. With the fall of the government, values became individual, causing skeptic schools of thought to flourish, ultimately shaping a pagan philosophy that is thought to have influenced and shaped Christianity. During the medieval times, Thomas Aquinas argued for a separation between natural and religious virtues. This concept led philosophers to distinguish between judgments based on fact and judgments based on values, creating division between science and philosophy.

## Issues in Communication Studies

Communication theorists seek to contribute to mutual intelligence about the anatomy and operation of human communication. The axiological issues that are significant for the evolution of communication theory are how researchers should best approach epistemological issues and whether the end for the administered research should be designed to expand knowledge or to change society. For communication theorists, a primary interest is with the philosophical establishment of the research approach. A continuing value debate occurs between scholars who take a post-positivist scientific approach and those who take an interpretivist approach to communication development.

Those who take a scientific approach believe that research should be theoretically driven, aiming to explain and predict empirical phenomena. While social scientific researchers acknowledge their subjective world view, they are able to produce tentative and falsifiable theory rooted in empirical data. Interpretivists agree that it is impossible for research to be completely free of personal values, as research is always biased towards the values of the researcher. According to interpretivists, these biases are sometimes so entrenched in the researcher's culture that they will most likely go unnoticed during research. Since no one can truly be unbiased, interpretivists hold that some groups are more knowledgeable about certain things than other groups due to their positions in society, and they can be considered more qualified to perform research on certain topics as a result.

## NYAYA DARSHAN

The term “nyaya” ( Sanskrit: “Rule” or “Method”) traditionally had the meaning “formal reasoning,” though in later times it also came to be used for reasoning in general, and by extension, the legal reasoning of traditional Indian law courts. Opponents of the Nyaya school of philosophy frequently reduce it to the status of an arm of Hindu philosophy devoted to questions of logic and rhetoric. While reasoning is very important to Nyaya, this school also had important things to say on the topic of epistemology, theology and metaphysics, rendering it a comprehensive and autonomous school of Indian philosophy.

The founder of this school is the sage Gautama (2nd cent. C.E.)—not to be confused with the Buddha, who on many accounts had the name “Gautama” as well. He is also called Akshapada

The metaphysics that pervades the Nyaya texts is both realistic and pluralistic. On the Nyaya view the plurality of reasonably believed things exist and have an identity independently of their contingent relationship with other objects. This applies as much to mundane objects, as it does to the self, and God. The ontological model that appears to pervade Nyaya metaphysical thinking is that of atomism, the view that reality is composed of indecomposable simples (cf. Nyaya-Sûtra IV.2.4.16).

The Nyaya's acceptance of both arguments from analogy and testimony as means of knowledge, allows it to accomplish two theological goals).



Its most famous text is the Nyaya Sutra. The sutras are divided into five chapters, each with two sections., 10 ahnikas and 528 sutras. It accepts 4 pramanas and 16 padarthas. According to Nyaya, *avidya* (nescience) causes *samsara* and *tattva* jnana (gnosis) brings liberation. The work begins with a statement of the subject matter, the purpose, and the relation of the subject matter to the attainment of that purpose. The ultimate purpose is salvation—*i.e.*, complete freedom from pain—and salvation is attained by knowledge of the 16 categories: hence the concern with these categories, which are means of valid knowledge (pramana); objects of valid knowledge (prameya); doubt (samshaya); purpose (prayojana); example (drishtanta); conclusion (siddhanta); the constituents of a syllogism (avayava); argumentation (tarka); ascertainment (nirṇaya); debate (vada); disputations (jalpa); destructive criticism (vitanda); fallacy (hetvabhasa); quibble (chala); refutations (jati); and points of the opponent's defeat (nigrahasthana).

Nyaya is often depicted as primarily concerned with logic, but it is more accurately thought of as being concerned with argumentation.

The words knowledge, *buddhi*, and consciousness are used synonymously. Four means of valid knowledge are admitted: perception, inference, comparison, and verbal testimony. Perception is defined as the knowledge that arises from the contact of the senses with the object, which is nonjudgmental, or unerring or judgmental. Inference is defined as the knowledge that is preceded by perception (of the mark) and classified into three kinds: that from the perception of a cause to its effect; that from perception of the effect to its cause; and that in which knowledge of one thing is derived from the perception of another with which it is commonly seen together. Comparison is defined as the knowledge of a thing through its similarity to another thing previously well-known.

It is called Nyaya because it is constituted of five “laws” – *Pratijna*, *Hetu*, *Udaharana*, *Upanaya*, *Nigamana*. Nyaya includes formal logic and modes of scientific debate. It explains the logical constructs like antecedent and laws of implying. It expounds various modes of scientific debate and methods for debate, like *tarka*, *vitanda*, *chala*, *jalpa* and so on.

Nyaya is greatly concerned with logic and elaborates on the principle of inference based on syllogism, of course logic is only one of the many subjects it deals with. Nyaya preaches that a statement should only be accepted if it passes the test of reason. So according to it, error and ignorance are the causes of pain and suffering. The road to wisdom is to develop the process of logical thinking.

Of the four main topics of the Nyaya-sutras (art of debate, means of valid knowledge, syllogism, and examination of opposed views), there is a long history. There is no direct evidence for the theory that though inference (*anumana*) is of Indian origin, the syllogism (*avayava*) is of Greek origin. Vatsayana, the commentator on the sutras, referred to some logicians who held a theory of a 10-membered syllogism (the Greeks had three). The Vaisheshika-sutras give five propositions as constituting a syllogism but give them different names. Gautama also supports a five-membered syllogism with the following structure:

1. *This hill is fiery (pratijna)*: A statement of that which is to be proved).
2. Because it is smoky (hetu) statement of reason.
3. Whatever is smoky is fiery, as is a kitchen (udaharana) statement of a general rule supported by an example.
4. So is this hill (upanaya:) application of the rule of this case.
5. Therefore, this hill is fiery (nigamana) drawing the conclusion.

## VAISHESHIKA

The Vaisheshika system was founded by the ascetic, Kanad a (1st cent. C.E.). His name translates literally as “atom-eater.” On some accounts Kanada gained this name because of the pronounced ontological atomism of his philosophy, or because he restricted his diet to grains picked from the field. If the Nyaya system can be characterized as being predominantly concerned with matters of argumentation, the Vaisheshika system can be characterized as overwhelmingly concerned with metaphysical questions. Like Nyaya, Vaisheshika in its later stages turned into a syncretic movement, wedded to the Nyaya system. Here the focus will be primarily on the early Vaisheshika system, with the help of some latter day commentaries. Kanada’s *Vaisheshika Sûtra*’s opening verses are both dense and very revealing about the scope of the system. The opening verse states that the topic of the text is the elaboration of dharma (ethics or morality). According to the second verse, dharma is that which results not only in *abhyudaya* but also the Supreme Good (*nihareya*), commonly known as *moksha* (liberation) in Indian philosophy (*Vaisheshika Sûtra* I.1.1-2). The term “*abhyudaya*” designates the values extolled in the early, action portion of the Vedas, such as *artha* (economic prosperity) and *kāma* (sensual pleasure). From the second verse it thus appears that the Vaisheshika system regards morality as providing the way for the remaining *puruṣārthas*. A reading of the obscure third verse provided by the latter day philosopher Shankara-Misra (15th cent. C.E.) states that the validity of the Vedas rests on the fact that it is an explication of dharma. (Misra’s alternative explanation is that the phrase can be read as asserting that the validity of the Vedas derives from the authority of its author, God—this is a syncretistic reading of the *Vaisheshika Sûtra*, influenced by Nyaya philosophy.) (Shankara-Misra’s *Vaisheshika Sûtra Bhasya* I.1.2, p.7).

From the densely worded fourth verse, it appears that the Vaisheshika system regards itself as an explication of dharma. The Vaisheshika system holds that the elaboration or knowledge of the particular expression of dharma (which is the Vaisheshika system) consists of knowledge of six categories: substance (*dravya*), attribute (*guna*), action (karma), genus (*samanya*), particularity (*visesa*), and the relationship of inherence between attributes and their substances (*samavaya*) (*Vaisheshika Sûtra* I.1.4).

The dense fourth verse of the *Vaisheshika Sûtra* gives expression to a thoroughgoing metaphysical realism. On the Vaisheshika account, universals (*smanya*) as well as particularity (*visesa*) are realities, and these have a distinct reality from substances, attributes, actions, and the relation of inherence, which all have their own irreducible reality. The metaphysical import of the fourth verse



potentially obscures the fact that the Vaisheshika system sets itself the task of elaborating dharma. Given the weight that the *Vaishaisika Sûtra* gives to ontological matters, it is inviting to treat its insistence that it seeks to elaborate dharma as quite irrelevant to its overall concern. However, subsequent authors in the Vaisheshika tradition have drawn attention to the significance of dharma to the overall system.

Shankara-Misra suggests that dharma understood in its particular presentation in the Vaisheshika system is a kind of sagely forbearance or withdrawal from the world (Shankara-Misra's *Vaishaisika Sutra Bhasya* I.1.4. p.12). In a similar vein, another commentator, Chandrakânta (19th cent. C.E.), states:

Dharma presents two aspects, that is under the characteristic of *Pravritti* or worldly activity, and the characteristic of *Nivritti* or withdrawal from worldly activity. Of these, Dharma characterized by *Nivritti*, brings forth *tattva-jñāna* or knowledge of truths, by means of removal of sins and other blemishes. (Chandrak'nta p.15.) Thus the view of the commentators appears to be that the Vaisheshika system, which yields "knowledge of truths," "knowledge of the categories," or "knowledge of the essences" (cf. Shankara-Misra, p.5) is a moral virtue of the person who is initiated into the system that is, a "particular dharma" of that person. Hence, in elaborating the nature of reality, the Vaisheshika system seeks to extinguish the ignorance that obstructs the effects of dharma, and it thus also constitutes a moral virtue of the proponent of the Vaisheshika system. This virtue will not only yield the fruits of works, such as *kma* and *artha* (which the Vaisheshika sage will know to appreciate at a distance) but it will also yield the highest good: *moksha*.

### **Vaisheshika Darshan**

Kanada, a learned sage, founded this system. This system is believed to be as old as Jainism and Buddhism. Kanada presented his detailed atomic theory in Vaisheshika-Sutra. Basically, Vaisheshika is a pluralistic realism. It explains the nature of the world with seven categories:

Dravya (substance), guna (quality), karma(action), samanya (universal), vishesha (particular), amavaya(inherence) and abhava (non-existence).

Vaisheshika contends that every effect is a fresh creation or a new beginning. Thus this system refutes the theory of pre-existence of the effect in the cause. Kanada does not discuss much on God. But the later commentators refer to God as the Supreme Soul, perfect and eternal. This system accepts that God (Ishvara) is the efficient cause of the world. The eternal atoms are the material cause of the world.

Vaisheshika recognizes nine ultimate substances: Five material and four non-material substances.

The five material substances are: Earth, water, fire, air and akasha.

The four non-material substances are: space, time, soul and mind.

Earth, water, fire and air are atomic but akasha is non-atomic and infinite.

Space and time are infinite and eternal.

The concept of soul is comparable to that of the self or atman. This system considers that when the soul associates itself to the body, only then it 'acquires'

consciousness. Thus, consciousness is not considered an essential quality of the soul. The mind (*manas*) is accepted as atomic but indivisible and eternal substance. The mind helps to establish the contact of the self to the external world objects.

The soul develops attachment to the body owing to ignorance. The soul identifies itself with the body and mind. The soul is trapped in the bondage of karma, as a consequence of actions resulted from countless desires and passions.

## YOGA

The Yoga tradition shares much with the Sankhya *darsana*. Like the Sankhya philosophy, traces of the Yoga tradition can be found in the *Upanisads*. While the systematic expression of the Yoga philosophy comes to us from Patañjali's *Yoga Sutra*, it comes relatively late in the history of philosophy (at the end of the epic period, roughly 3rd century C.E.), the Yoga philosophy is also expressed in the *Bhagavad Gita*. The Yoga philosophy shares with Sankhya its dualistic cosmology. Like Sankhya, the Yoga philosophy does not attempt to explicitly derive its authority from the Vedas. However, Yoga departs from Sankhya on an important metaphysical and moral point—the nature of agency and from Sankhya in its emphasis on practical means to achieve liberation.

Like the Sankhya tradition, the Yoga *darsana* holds that the cosmos is the result of the interaction of two categories: *Prakṛti* (Nature) and *Puruṣa* (Person). Like the Sankhya tradition, the Yoga tradition is of the opinion that *Prakṛti*, or Nature, is comprised of three *guṇas*, or qualities. These are the same three qualities extolled in the Sankhya system—*tamas*, *rajas*, and *sattva*—though the *Yoga Sutra* refers to many of these by different terms (cf. *Yoga Sutra* II.18). As with the Sankhya system, liberation in the Yoga system is facilitated by the ascendance of *sattva* in a person's mind, which permits enlightenment on the nature of the self.

A relatively important point of cosmological difference is that the Yoga system does not consider the Mind or the Intellect (*Mahat*) to be the greatest creation of Nature. A major difference between the two schools concerns Yoga's picture of how liberation is achieved. On the Sankhya account, liberation comes about by Nature enlightening the *Puruṣa*, for *Puruṣas* are mere spectators (cf. *Sankhya Kārikā* 62). In the contexts of the Yoga *darsana*, the *Puruṣa* is not a mere spectator, but an agent: *Puruṣa* is regarded as the "lord of the mind" (*Yoga Sutra* IV.18); for Yoga it is the effort of the *Puruṣa* that brings about liberation. The empowered account of *Puruṣa* in the Yoga system is supplemented by a detail account of the practical means by which *Puruṣa* can bring about its own liberation.

The *Yoga Sutra* tells us that the point of yoga is to still perturbations of the mind—the main obstacle to liberation (*Yoga Sutra* I.2). The practice of the Yoga philosophy comes to those with energy (*Yoga Sutra* I.21). In order to facilitate the calming of the mind, the Yoga system prescribes several moral and practical means. The core of the practical import of the Yoga philosophy is

what it calls the *Astanga yoga* (not to be confused with a tradition of physical yoga also called *Astanga Yoga*, popular in many yoga centers in recent times). The *Astanga yoga* sets out the eight limbs (*anga*) of the practice of yoga (*Yoga Sutra* II.29).

*The eight limbs include:*

- *Yama*: Abstention from evil-doing, which specifically consists of abstention from harming others, abstention from telling falsehoods (*asatya*), abstention from acquisitiveness (*asteya*), abstention from greed/envy (*aparigraha*); and sexual restraint (*brahmacarya*)
- *Niyamas*: Various observances, which include the cultivation of purity (*sauca*), contentment (*santos*) and austerities (*tapas*)
- *Asana*: Posture
- *Pranâyâma*: Control of breath
- *Pratyahra*: Withdrawal of the mind from sense objects
- *Dharan*: Concentration
- *Dhyana*: Meditation
- *Samadhi*: Absorption [in the self] (*Yoga Sutra* II.29-32)

According to the *Yoga Sutra*, the *yama* rules “are basic rules.... They must be practiced without any reservations as to time, place, purpose, or caste rules” (*Yoga Sutra* II.31). The failure to live a morally pure life constitutes a major obstacle to the practice of Yoga (*Yoga Sutra* II.34). On the plus side, by living the morally pure life, all of one’s needs and desires are fulfilled:

When [one] becomes steadfast in... abstention from harming others, then all living creatures will cease to feel enmity in [one’s] presence. When [one] becomes steadfast in... abstention from falsehood, [one] gets the power of obtaining for [oneself] and others the fruits of good deeds, without [others] having to perform the deeds themselves. When [one] becomes steadfast in... abstention from theft, all wealth comes.... Moreover, one achieves purification of the heart, cheerfulness of mind, the power of concentration, control of the passions and fitness for vision.

The steadfast practice of the *Astanga yoga* results in counteracting past karmas. This culminates in a milestone-liberating event: *dharmameghasam’dhi* (or the absorption in the cloud of virtue). In this penultimate state, the aspirant has all their past sins washed away by a cloud of dharma (virtue, or morality). This leads to the ultimate state of liberation for the yogi, *kaivalya* (*Yoga Sutra* IV.33). “*Kaivalya*” translates as “aloneness.”

Critics of the Yoga system charge that it cannot be accepted on moral grounds for it has as its ultimate goal a state of isolation. On this view, *kaivalya* is understood literally as a state of social isolation. The defender of the *Yoga Sutra* can point out that this reading of “*kaivalya*” takes the final event of liberation in the Yoga system out of context. The penultimate event that paves way for the state of *kaivalya* is a wholly moral event (*dharmameghasam’dhi*) and the path that leads to this morally perfecting event is itself an intrinsically moral endeavor (*Astanga yoga*, and particularly the *yamas*). If the concept of ‘*kaivalya*’ is to

be understood in the context of the Yoga system's preoccupation with morality, it seems that it must be understood as a function of moral perfection. Given the uncommon journey that the yogi takes, it is also natural to conclude that the state of *kaivalya* is the state characterized by having no peers, owing to the radical shift in perspective that the yogi attains through yoga. The yogi, at the point of *kaivalya*, no longer sees things from the perspective of individuals in society, but from the perspective of the *Purusa*. This arguably is the yogi's loneliness.

## NYAYA

The term “*nyaya*” traditionally had the meaning “formal reasoning,” though in later times it also came to be used for reasoning in general, and by extension, the legal reasoning of traditional Indian law courts. Opponents of the Nyaya school of philosophy frequently reduce it to the status of an arm of Hindu philosophy devoted to questions of logic and rhetoric. While reasoning is very important to Nyaya, this school also had important things to say on the topic of epistemology, theology and metaphysics, rendering it a comprehensive and autonomous school of Indian philosophy.

The Nyaya school of Hindu philosophy has had a long and illustrious history. The founder of this school is the sage Gautama (2nd cent. C.E.) not to be confused with the Buddha, who on many accounts had the name “Gautama” as well. Nyaya went through at least two stages in the history of Indian philosophy. At an earlier, purer stage, proponents of Nyaya sought to elaborate a philosophy that was distinct from contrary *darsanas*. At a later stage, some Nyaya and Vaishika authors became increasingly syncretistic and viewed their two schools as sister *darsanas*. As well, at the latter stages of the Nyaya tradition, the philosopher Gan Gesa (14th cent. C.E.) narrowed the focus to the epistemological issues discussed by the earlier authors, while leaving off metaphysical matters and so initiated a new school, which came to be known as Navya Nyaya, or “New” Nyaya. Our focus will be mainly on classical, non-syncretic, Nyaya.

According to the first verse of the *Nyaya-Sutra*, the Nyaya school is concerned with shedding light on sixteen topics: *pramāṇa* (epistemology), *prameya* (ontology), *samsaya* (doubt), *prayojana* (axiology, or “purpose”), *dṛṣṭānta* (paradigm cases that establish a rule), *Siddhānta* (established doctrine), *avayava* (premise of a syllogism), *tarka* (*reductio ad absurdum*), *nirṇaya* (certain beliefs gained through epistemically respectable means), *vāda* (appropriately conducted discussion), *jalpa* (sophistic debates aimed at beating the opponent, and not at establishing the truth), *vitandā* (a debate characterized by one party's disinterest in establishing a positive view, and solely with refutation of the opponent's view), *hetvābhāsa* (persuasive but fallacious arguments), *chala* (unfair attempt to contradict a statement by equivocating its meaning), *jāti* (an unfair reply to an argument based on a false analogy), and *nigrahaśṭhāna* (ground for defeat in a debate) (*Nyaya-Sutra* and *Vātsyāna's Bhasya* I.1.1-20).

With respect to the question of epistemology, the *Nyaya-Sutra* recognizes four avenues of knowledge: these are perception, inference, analogy, and verbal testimony of reliable persons. Perception arises when the senses make contact with the object of perception. Inference comes in three varieties: *pk'rvavat* (*a priori*), *ses avat* (*a posteriori*) and *s'manyatodrsma* (common sense) (*Nyaya-Sutra* I.1.3–7).

The Nyaya's acceptance of both arguments from analogy and testimony as means of knowledge, allows it to accomplish two theological goals. First, it allows Nyaya to claim that the Veda's are valid owing to the reliability of their transmitters (*Nyaya-Sutra* II.1.68). Secondly, the acceptance of arguments from analogy allows the Nyaya philosophers to forward a natural theology based on analogical reasoning. Specifically, the Nyaya tradition is famous for the argument that God's existence can be known for (a) all created things resemble artifacts, and (b) just as every artifact has a creator, so too must all of creation have a creator (Udayanâcârya and Haridâsa Nyâyâlam kêra I.3-4).

The metaphysics that pervades the Nyaya texts is both realistic and pluralistic. On the Nyaya view the plurality of reasonably believed things exist and have an identity independently of their contingent relationship with other objects. This applies as much to mundane objects, as it does to the self, and God. The ontological model that appears to pervade Nyaya metaphysical thinking is that of atomism, the view that reality is composed of indecomposable simples (cf. *Nyaya-Sutra* IV.2.4.16).

Nyaya's treatment of logical and rhetorical issues, particularly in the *Nyaya Sutra*, consists in an extended inventory acceptable and unacceptable argumentation. Nyaya is often depicted as primarily concerned with logic, but it is more accurately thought of as being concerned with argumentation.

## **SIGNIFICANCE OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHIES IN THE HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY**

In relation to Western philosophical thought, Indian philosophy offers both surprising points of affinity and illuminating differences. The differences highlight certain fundamentally new questions that the Indian philosophers asked. The similarities reveal that, even when philosophers in India and the West were grappling with the same problems and sometimes even suggesting similar theories, Indian thinkers were advancing novel formulations and argumentations. Problems that the Indian philosophers raised for consideration, but that their Western counterparts never did, include such matters as the origin (*utpatti*) and apprehension (*jñapti*) of truth (*pramāṇya*).

Problems that the Indian philosophers for the most part ignored but that helped shape Western philosophy include the question of whether knowledge arises from experience or from reason and distinctions such as that between analytic and synthetic judgments or between contingent and necessary truths. Indian thought, therefore, provides the historian of Western philosophy with a point of view that may supplement that gained from Western thought. A study

of Indian thought, then, reveals certain inadequacies of Western philosophical thought and makes clear that some concepts and distinctions may not be as inevitable as they may otherwise seem. In a similar manner, knowledge of Western thought gained by Indian philosophers has also been advantageous to them.

Vedic hymns, Hindu scriptures dating from the 2nd millennium BCE, are the oldest extant record from India of the process by which the human mind makes its gods and of the deep psychological processes of mythmaking leading to profound cosmological concepts. The Upanishads (speculative philosophical texts) contain one of the first conceptions of a universal, all-pervading, spiritual reality leading to a radical monism (absolute nondualism, or the essential unity of matter and spirit). The Upanishads also contain early speculations by Indian philosophers about nature, life, mind, and the human body, not to speak of ethics and social philosophy. The classical, or orthodox, systems (*darshanas*) debate, sometimes with penetrating insight and often with a degree of repetition that can become tiresome to some, such matters as the status of the finite individual; the distinction as well as the relation between the body, mind, and the self; the nature of knowledge and the types of valid knowledge; the nature and origin of truth; the types of entities that may be said to exist; the relation of realism to idealism; the problem of whether universals or relations are basic; and the very important problem of *moksha*, or liberation (literally “release”)—its nature and the paths leading up to it.

## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF INDIAN PHILOSOPHY

### Common concerns

The various Indian philosophies contain such a diversity of views, theories, and systems that it is almost impossible to single out characteristics that are common to all of them. Acceptance of the authority of the Vedas characterizes all the orthodox (*astika*) systems—but not the unorthodox (*nastika*) systems, such as Charvaka (radical materialism), Buddhism, and Jainism. Moreover, even when philosophers professed allegiance to the Vedas, their allegiance did little to fetter the freedom of their speculative ventures. On the contrary, the acceptance of the authority of the Vedas was a convenient way for a philosopher’s views to become acceptable to the orthodox, even if a thinker introduced a wholly new idea. Thus, the Vedas could be cited to corroborate a wide diversity of views; they were used by the Vaisheshika thinkers (*i.e.*, those who believe in ultimate particulars, both individual souls and atoms) as much as by the Advaita (monist) Vedanta philosophers.

In most Indian philosophical systems, the acceptance of the ideal of *moksha*, like allegiance to the authority of the scriptures, was only remotely connected with the systematic doctrines that were being propounded. Many epistemological, logical, and even metaphysical doctrines were debated and decided on purely rational grounds that did not directly bear upon the ideal of



*moksha*. Only the Vedanta (“end of the Vedas”) philosophy and the Samkhya (a system that accepts a real matter and a plurality of the individual souls) philosophy may be said to have a close relationship to the ideal of *moksha*. The logical systems—Nyaya, Vaisheshika, and Purva-Mimamsa—are only very remotely related. Also, both the philosophies and other scientific treatises, including even the *Kama-sutra* (“Aphorisms on Love”) and the *Artha-shastra* (“The Science of Material Gain”), recognized the same ideal and professed their efficacy for achieving it.

When Indian philosophers speak of intuitive knowledge, they are concerned with making room for it and demonstrating its possibility, with the help of logic—and there, as far as they are concerned, the task of philosophy ends. Indian philosophers do not seek to justify religious faith; philosophic wisdom itself is accorded the dignity of religious truth. Theory is not subordinated to practice, but theory itself, as theory, is regarded as being supremely worthy and efficacious.

Three basic concepts form the cornerstone of Indian philosophical thought: the self or soul (*atman*), works (karma), and liberation (*moksha*). Leaving the Charvakas aside, all Indian philosophies concern themselves with these three concepts and their interrelations, though this is not to say that they accept the objective validity of these concepts in precisely the same manner. Of these, the concept of karma, signifying moral efficacy of human actions, seems to be the most typically Indian. The concept of *atman*, not altogether absent in Western thought, corresponds in a certain sense to the Western concept of a transcendental or absolute spirit self—important differences notwithstanding. The concept of *moksha* as the concept of the highest ideal has likewise been one of the concerns of Western thought, especially during the Christian era, though it probably has never been as important as for the Hindu mind. Most Indian philosophies assume that *moksha* is possible, and the “impossibility of *moksha*” (*anirmoksha*) is regarded as a material fallacy likely to vitiate a philosophical theory.

In addition to karma, the lack of two other concerns further differentiates Indian philosophical thought from Western thought in general. Since the time of the Greeks, Western thought has been concerned with mathematics and, in the Christian era, with history. Neither mathematics nor history has ever raised philosophical problems for the Indian. In the lists of *pramanas*, or ways of knowing accepted by the different schools, there is none that includes mathematical knowledge or historical knowledge. Possibly connected with their indifference towards mathematics is the significant fact that Indian philosophers have not developed formal logic. The theory of the syllogism (a valid deductive argument having two premises and a conclusion) is, however, developed, and much sophistication has been achieved in logical theory. Indian logic offers an instructive example of a logic of cognitions (*jnanani*) rather than of abstract propositions—a logic not sundered and kept isolated from psychology and epistemology, because it is meant to be the logic of actual human striving to know what is true of the world.



### Forms of argument and presentation

There is, in relation to Western thought, a striking difference in the manner in which Indian philosophical thinking is presented as well as in the mode in which it historically develops. Out of the presystematic age of the Vedic hymns and the Upanishads and many diverse philosophical ideas current in the pre-Buddhistic era, there emerged with the rise of the age of the sutras (aphoristic summaries of the main points of a system) a neat classification of systems (*darshanas*), a classification that was never to be contradicted and to which no further systems are added. No new school was founded, no new *darshana* came into existence. But this conformism, like conformism to the Vedas, did not check the rise of independent thinking, new innovations, or original insights. There is, apparently, an underlying assumption in the Indian tradition that no individual can claim to have seen the truth for the first time and, therefore, that an individual can only explicate, state, and defend in a new form a truth that has been seen, stated, and defended by countless others before him—hence the tradition of expounding one's thoughts by affiliating oneself to one of the *darshanas*.

If one is to be counted as a great master (*acharya*), one has to write a commentary (*bhashya*) on the sutras of the *darshana* concerned, or one must comment on one of the *bhashyas* and write a *tika* (subcommentary). The usual order is sutra–*bhashya*–*varttika* (collection of critical notes)–*tika*. At any stage a person may introduce a new and original point of view, but at no stage can one claim originality for oneself. Not even authors of sutras could do that, for they were only systematizing the thoughts and insights of countless predecessors. The development of Indian philosophical thought has thus been able to combine, in an almost unique manner, conformity to tradition and adventure in thinking.

## SIX SCHOOLS OF VEDIC PHILOSOPHY

The Sanatana Dharma literature is so extensive that it is hard even for a Vedic genius to comprehend and remember the theme of all of entire literature related to *Sanatana Dharma*. So for the systematic process of understanding, the deep rooted philosophy of *Santaana Dharma*, the Great Sages wrote Darshan Shastras – defining six schools of Vedic Philosophy in the forms of *Sutras*.

These *Shad-Darshans* are the six instruments of true teaching or the six demonstrations of Truth. Each of these schools of philosophies differs in one way or the other in terms of its concepts, phenomena, laws and beliefs. Each philosophy has developed, systematized and correlated the various parts of the Vedas in its own way. Each system has its Sutrakara, *i.e.*, the one great Rishi who systematized the doctrines of the school. It is important to know that the founders of each school of philosophy are sages of the highest order that have devoted their lives for the study and propagation of specify philosophy. Each system of is called a Darshana, thus the *Sanskrit* word '*Shad-Darshan*' refers to '*the six systems of philosophy*'.

*All six schools of Vedic philosophy aim to describe following three key features:*

- Nature of External World and its Relationship with Individual Soul
- Relationship of World of Appearances to Ultimate Reality
- Describing the Goal of Life and Means by which one can attain the Goal

Briefly outline of *Shad-Darshan* is given below:

### **Nyaya - by Sage Gautam**

Logical Quest of Supreme, Phases of Creation, Science of Logical Reasoning: It is a logical quest for God, the absolute Divinity. It tells that the material power “Maya”, with the help of God, becomes the universe. *Nyaya Darshan* is based on establishing the fact that only the Divinity (God) is desirable, knowable and attainable, and not this world. *Nyaya* philosophy is primarily concerned with the correct knowledge to be acquire in the human life and the means of receiving this knowledge.

### **Vaishesika – by Sage Kanad**

Science of Logic, Futility of Maya, Vedic Atomic Theory: Its aim is to receive happiness in this life (by renouncing worldly desires) and finally to receive the ultimate liberation (through the attachment of the true knowledge of the Divine).

According to this school of philosophy, there is no creation or annihilation but rather an orderly and morally systematized composition and decomposition of matter. Atoms (not we studied in our elementary science) are the smallest particle exists in the universe and are eternal in nature.

### **Sankhya - by Sage Kapil**

Eliminate Physical and Mental Pains for receiving liberations, Nontheistic Dualism: The dualistic philosophy of *Purusa* and *Prakrti*; according to many followers of *Sankhya* philosophy, there is no such God exists.

For them *Purusa* is sufficient to inspire the unconscious *Prakrti* to manifest herself in the form of universe. However, a section of *Sankhya* philosophers believed about the existence of *Supreme Being* who guides *Prakrti* independently accordingly to His will.

The extent of mayic creation and Divinity beyond that; it tells that the entire mayic creation is worth discarding and only the Divinity is to be attained because that is the only source of Bliss.

### **Yoga - by Sage Patanjali**

Practice of Meditation and Samadhi for Renunciation, Self Discipline for Self Realization: Explain the practical process of heart purification which may qualify the individual to experience the absolute Divine. The word *Yoga* is derived from the Sanskrit root *yug*, which meant “TO UNITE”. The *yoga* system

provides a methodology for linking up individual consciousness with the *Supreme Being*. Various schools of *yoga* systems are: *Bhakti Yoga*, *Jnana Yoga*, *Karma yoga*, *Ashtanga Yoga* (practical application of *Sankhya* Philosophy), etc.

### **Karma Mimamsa - by Sage Jaimini**

Poorv Mimamsa explaining the Vedas are eternal and Divine; Elevation Through the Performance of Duty: The word *Mimamsa* means to analyze and understand thoroughly.

The main goal of the *Karma-Mimamsa* philosophy is to provide a practical methodology for the utilization of the Vedic religion (dharma) for the satisfaction of the urges for wealth (artha) and sensual pleasure (kama). It examines the teachings of the Vedas in the light of karma rituals. The *Karma-Mimamsa* system is called *Poorva-Mimamsa*, which means the earlier study of the Vedas. *Karma-Mimamsa* is to be taken up by householders.

### **Vedanta - by Sage VedVyas**

Uttar Mimamsa (Brahma Sutra) explaining the divine nature of Soul, Maya and Creation; Conclusion of Vedic Revelation: It reveals this secret that God is absolute Divinity and absolute Bliss, and He is Gracious. So desire, fully remember Him and with His Grace experience His absolute Blissfulness forever. *Vedanta* examines the Vedas teachings in the light of transcendental knowledge. *Vedanta* is called *Uttara-Mimamsa*, which means the later study of the Vedas. *Vedanta* is reserved for those who have graduated from household life and taken up the renounced order (sannyasa).

## **COMMON FEATURES OF THE DARSHAN SHASTRAS**

The six Darshan Shastras are divided in the groups of two each based on their closely related texts, such as *Nyaya* and *Vaisheshika* are closely allied to each other. The next two *Sankhya* and *Yoga* are closed to each other, and finally the *Poorva Mimamsa* and *Uttar Mimamsa* are allied to each other.

The *Sages* drew their arguments from the same Divine Source, the *Vedic Shashtra*, so all Darshan Shastras share many of the same basic principles. For instance:

- The individual self is spiritual being, of the nature of eternal consciousness
- The individual self acquires physical bodies due to reincarnation under the Law of Karmaic Action.
- The individual self, suffers because of its contact with matter, worldly external bodies.
- The individual self who follows to any one of the six systems, observes the same Sadhana, as the followers of other system. Sadhana consists of the basic practices of purification and self-control.
- The goal of each philosophy is to end of suffering.

## DARSHAN SHASTRAS AND OTHER SANATANA DHARMA SCRIPTURES

Darshan Shastras are schools of philosophy based on the Vedas. The *Agamas* are theological. Darshan Shastras literature is philosophical. The Darshan Shastras are meant for the scholars who are blessed with good understanding, power of reasoning and subtle intellect. The *Itihasas*, *Puranas* and *Agamas* are meant for the masses. The Darshan Shastras appeal to the intellect, while the *Itihasas*, *Puranas*, etc., appeal to the heart.

*A Sutra is a shortest form of text, with the least possible number of letters, without any ambiguity or doubtful assertion, containing the very essence, embracing all meanings, and absolutely faultless in nature.*

## SIX ANCIENT INDIAN PHILOSOPHIES

Philosophy in Indian Context is referred to as which means vision or insight into reality. There are two Branches of Indian Philosophy The or the orthodox branch and or unorthodox branch. Orthodox philosophies are so-called as they accept Veda's authority. The unorthodox branch of philosophies like Buddhism, Jainism, Charvaka, etc does not accept the authority of Vedas.

### The Shad Darshan

Philosophy	Originator Sage
1. Purva Mimansa	Jamini
2. Uttara Mimansa	Badarayana or Vedanta/Shankara
3. Nyaya	Gautama
4. Vaisheshika	Kanada
5. Sankhya	Kapila
6. Yoga	Patanjali

*Hinduism identifies six Pramânas as reliable means to accurate knowledge and to truths: Pratyaksha (perception), Anumana (inference), Upamana (comparison and analogy), Arthapatti (postulation, the derivation from circumstances), Anupalabdhi (non-perception, negative/cognitive proof) and Shabda (word, the testimony of past or present reliable experts). Let's discuss these philosophies in brief.*

### Purva Mimansa

The word Mimansa means to investigate thoroughly. This is a philosophy for rationally justifying the performance of rituals. Its the principle of Apoorva maintains and assures the fruits of rituals performed. The highest goal of man is to attain heaven, a state that transcends the earthly life. This school considers Vedas as the highest authority and even relegates God to a position of non-importance. This is called Poorva Mimansa as it deals with earlier parts of Vedas. The main goal of Mimansa's philosophy is to insist on a life of rituals as justified by Vedas. These rituals are capable of leading man to the highest goal.

### **Uttar Mimansa or Vedanta**

Vedantic Philosophy does not have a specific founder as such, different teachers developed different schools of thought. Three main schools being Advaita, Visishtadvaita, and Dvaita.

Adi Shankaracharya is the propagator of the Advaita system, Ramanujacharya is the architect of the Visishtadvaita system while Madhavacharya is head of Dvaita system of Vedanta philosophy. It is important to note that all 3 teachers accepted the authority of Vedas but their interpretations of Brahma Sutra were different. Some of the key teachings of Vedanta are as under.

### **Brahman and Atman**

Atman refers to the individual soul or consciousness and Brahman as universal consciousness. Brahman is the source of all manifested world and Atman is the inner self of man. The Upanishads reached the peak of human thinking when they asserted that Atman and Brahman are essentially the same. Brahman as universal consciousness pervades everything. The essential qualities of Brahman are “Sat Chit Ananda” meaning eternal bliss & consciousness. This is also the basic nature of man which he is not able to see due to ignorance or illusion.

Upanishads taught that Reality is one and it is Brahman with attributes of Sat Chit Ananda. Everything else is unreal. According to idealism, there is nothing in the universe which, is not pure consciousness.

### **Maya and Avidya**

Maya (illusion) is the inscrutable power of Brahman through which the world of name and forms comes into being. It is Maya which makes the one Brahman appear as many. On part of human beings, it is Avidya (ignorance) which does not allow us to see the reality of one and instead, we see the world of names and forms. Therefore, Maya and Avidya are considered two sides of the same coin.

### **Bhutas or Fundamental Elements**

The Upanishads recognize five fundamental elements Earth, Water, Fire, Air, and Ether. These are gross elements. This classification is connected with the fivefold character of sensory organs whose features are Odor, Flavour, Form, touch, and Sound respectively. These are subtle elements. Out of subtle are made the gross ones.

### **Panch Koshas**

This theory finds expression in Taithiriya Upanishad. The human personality is made up of five layers or sheaths which cover the reality of the human being.

These five layers from the grossest to the subtlest are 1. Annamaya kosha (food Body) 2. Pranamaya Kosha (Energy Body) 3. Manomaya Kosha (Mental Body) 4. Vijnanmaya Kosha (Intellect Body) 5. Anandmaya Kosha (Bliss Body). Personality or Spiritual development takes place on the path of moving inwards along the Koshas.

### **Para and Apra Vidya**

All knowledge is classified into two types 1. Higher (para vidya) 2. Lower (apara vidya), which are knowledge of Brahman (transcendental knowledge) and Empirical knowledge respectively. There is no conflict between the two.

### **Samsara**

The constant stream of births and deaths until Moksha is attained is known as Samsara or transmigration. The law that governs the type of birth Jiva gets every time it dies is known as the law of Karma.

### **Self Realization**

Miseries and sufferings of humans are due to Avidya or ignorance about the true nature of Reality. They can be removed only through the right knowledge. Training for the right knowledge is 3 fold.

### ***Shravana***

Listening stands for the study of Upanishads under a proper Guru. Personal contact with the living embodiment is of great help.

### ***Manana***

Constant contemplation upon the knowledge gained from guru to derive intellectual conviction.

### **Nyaya**

Nyaya Darshan is concerned with rules of logic. Nyaya literally means “rules”, “method” or “judgment”. This school’s most significant contributions to Indian philosophy was the systematic development of the theory of logic, methodology, and its treatises on epistemology. Nyaya school’s epistemology accepts four Pramanas as reliable means of gaining knowledge – Pratyakc a (perception), Anumâna (inference), Upamâna (comparison and analogy) and Sabda (word, the testimony of past or present reliable experts). It holds that human suffering results from mistakes/defects produced by activity under wrong knowledge. Moksha is gained through the right knowledge. This premise led Nyaya to concern itself with epistemology, which is the reliable means to gain correct knowledge and to remove wrong notions. False knowledge is not merely ignorance for the Naiyyayikas, it includes delusion. Correct knowledge is discovering and overcoming delusions and understanding the true nature of soul, self, and reality.

Naiyyayika scholars approached philosophy as a form of direct realism, stating that anything that really exists is in principle humanly knowable. To them, correct knowledge and understanding is different from simple, reflexive cognition; it requires Anuvyavasaya (cross-examination of cognition, reflective cognition of what one thinks one knows)

## Vaisesika

The Vaisesika philosophy follows the Nyaya system very closely, the two are often considered as twin philosophies. This system recognizes the 7 Padarthas or categories which are substance, quality, action, generality, particularity, the relation of inference, and nonexistence. Vaisesika system is known for its atomic theory of evolution and its handling of particulars. Vaisesika goal of life is to become free from Karma by renouncing worldly desires and attain liberation by true knowledge.

## Sankhya

Sankhya means the right knowledge or numbers or categories. There are 25 categories or principals in Sankhya. Sankhya is considered uncompromising dualism, atheistic realism, and spiritual pluralism. Its two metaphysical principals are Purusha and Prakriti.

Purusha is the principle of pure consciousness and Prakriti is the principle of the matter. Both are eternal and independent of each other. The whole universe is born out of primordial matter or Prakriti. Sankhya believes in the creation of the universe as a result of the union of Purusha and Prakriti.

Prakriti is comprised of three Gunas - Sattva, Rajas & Tamas. Since Prakriti is the material cause of all beings, everything is made up of Prakriti, hence everything is governed by these 3 Gunas. Sankhya accepts only 3 Pramanas as valid means of acquiring knowledge.

These are Pratyaksha ( direct perception ), Anumana ( inference ) & Shabda ( verbal testimony ). Sankhya propounds Kaivalya or Liberation from the cycle of birth and death and rebirth as the goal of human life. This liberation results in the freedom of man from all miseries and sufferings of human life. pain or suffering comes from three sources 1. Adhyatmic (from own body and mind) 2. Adhibhautic ( from the world ) 3. Adhidaivik (from the supernatural world). Right knowledge which distinguishes our real self (Purusha) from our unreal self (Prakriti) is the remedy for all our sufferings and pains. What Sankhya Philosophy propounds Yoga practices realize. Yoga is considered a practical Sankhya.

## COMMON PRESUPPOSITIONS OF CLASSICAL INDIAN SCHOOLS

Commonalities in the classical Indian approaches to knowledge and justification frame the arguments and refined positions of the major schools. Central is a focus on occurrent knowledge coupled with a theory of “mental dispositions” called *samskâra*. Epistemic evaluation of memory, and indeed of all standing belief, is seen to depend upon the epistemic status of the occurrent cognition or awareness or awarenesses that formed the memory, *i.e.*, the mental disposition, in the first place. Occurrent knowledge in turn must have a knowledge source, *pramâna*.



## Knowledge and Knowledge Sources

A common failure of translators rendering the technical terms of the Indian epistemological schools into the technical terms, or even not so technical, of English and analytic philosophy, is ignorance of the latter. For example, several words, the most common of which is ‘*jñāna*’, are standardly rendered with the word ‘knowledge’ in English (*e.g.*, Bhatt 1989). However, proper Sanskrit usage allows “false” *jñāna*, whereas there is no false knowledge as the words are used in (analytic) English. There is a deeper lesson here than that translators should study Western philosophy, the lesson, namely, that although there may be false *jñāna*—let us say “cognition”: there are true and false cognition—it is commonly assumed in everyday speech as well as by the Indian epistemologists (with few exceptions, notably, the second-century Buddhist Nāgārjuna and certain followers including Śrīharsa, the eleventh-century Advaitin) that cognition is ordinarily by nature true or veridical. It is error and falsity that are the deviations from the normal and natural. That is to say, cognition is regarded as knowledge as a kind of conversational default—and so to translate ‘*jñāna*’ as “knowledge” turns out not to be so bad after all. When the eighth-century Advaitin Sankara says that from the perspective of spiritual knowledge (*vidyā*) the knowledge we recognize in everyday speech turns out to be illusory, *mithyā-jñāna*, “false knowledge,” this is supposed to be felt as almost a contradiction in terms (*Brahma-sūtra Commentary*, preamble).

Now it is argued by practically everyone (save the anti-epistemology group headed by Nāgārjuna) that at least everyday knowledge is proved by our unhesitating action (*niskampa-pravṛtti*) to get what we want and avoid what we want to avoid. We would not so act if we had doubt, guided as we are by our knowledge. Belief, which cognition embeds, is tied to action, and action, in turn, blunts the force of skepticism, it is pointed out in several of the classical schools. Buddhist Yogācāra as well as Mīmāṃsā and (most) Vedānta view knowledge as inherently known to be true. Even Nyaya, a school championing a view of knowledge as unselfconscious of itself as true, subscribes to the epistemological principle of “Innocent until reasonably challenged” (a slight weakening of the “Innocent until proven guilty,” as pointed out, *e.g.*, by Matilal 1986, 314: “Verbal reports ... are innocent until proven guilty”). Surprisingly (given the rancor in some exchanges across school), the sixth-century Nyaya philosopher Uddyotakara, who is famous for his attacks on Yogācāra positions, takes a similarly charitable attitude to be a rule applying to other philosophies: “For it is a rule with systems (of philosophy) that a position of another that is not expressly disproved is (to be regarded as) in conformity (with one’s own)” (under *Nyaya-sūtra* 1.1.4: 125).

Knowledge is cognition that has been produced in the right way. Cognitions are moments of consciousness, not species of belief, but we may say that cognitions form beliefs in forming dispositions and that veridical cognitions form true beliefs. A knowledge episode—to speak in the Indian manner—is a cognition generated in the right fashion. Whether this be because it is (as say

the realists, Mîmâmsâ, Nyaya, Vaisesika) that it has the right origins in fact, or whether it is because it guides successful action in helping us get our desires satisfied (as say Yogâcâra idealists and pragmatists), knowledge is cognition that arises in the right way.

There are different theories of truth, but everyone sees knowledge as not only indicating the truth but arising from it. Knowledge episodes form non-occurrent knowledge (it is assumed, we may say), and so an examination of what is crucial to the arising of a knowledge episode is crucial to the evaluations of epistemology. Knowledge cannot arise by accident. A lucky guess, though true or veridical, would not count as knowledge because it would not be generated in the right fashion, would not have the right pedigree or etiology. The central notion throughout classical Indian epistemology is the “knowledge source,” *pramâna*, which is a process of veridical-cognition generation.

Now the word ‘*pramâna*’ (“knowledge source”) along with the words used for individual knowledge sources, for perception and so on, are commonly used such that the truth of the resultant cognition is implied. This runs counter to English usage, along with broad philosophic supposition, which is different with the words ‘perception’ and company. For no knowledge source ever generates a false belief. Yogâcâra Buddhists—who subscribe to the metaphysical view known as momentariness, which is a presentism (only things existing right now are real)—claim that there is no difference between source and result, process of knowledge and effect, *pramâna* and *pramâ*. Thus there can be no wedge driven between cause and effect such that there could possibly be knowledge by accident. The Vedic schools (Mîmâmsâ, Vedânta, Nyaya, Vaisesika, Sâmkhya, Yoga) do distinguish knowledge as result and knowledge-producing process but also see the concepts as wedded in that, as indicated, no genuine knowledge source ever produces a false belief. Only pseudo-sources do. That is to say, no non-veridical cognition is knowledge-source-generated. A knowledge source is then not merely a reliable doxastic practice. Being merely reliable does not fit the bill. The concept of a knowledge source has a truth logic, like ‘knowledge’ in English; it is factive. Maybe we should say perception\*, inference\*, testimony\* to render the classical Indian ideas. False testimony, for example, does not count as a knowledge-generator; the Sanskrit word for testimony is used only for what would be termed in English “epistemically successful testimony,” *i.e.*, with a hearer having knowledge in virtue of a speaker telling the truth. A non-veridical perception is not really a perception at all but a “pseudo-perception” (*pratyakca-âbhâsa*), “apparent perception,” a perception imitator. You don’t really *see* an illusory snake; you only think you see one.

### The Touchstone of Everyday Speech

Everyday patterns of speech (*vyavahâra*) are taken as a starting point for theorizing in epistemology as in other areas of philosophy. So, for example, perception and inference—more exotic candidate sources, too—are defended as veritable knowledge-generators by the observation that people commonly

regard them in that way. People cite a belief's pedigree in questions of justification. Note that even in English we do commonly recognize perception and some of the others as certification. Thus this seems to be a common human practice, not restricted to classical Indian civilization, for sometimes we say, for instance, "S is indeed over there, since I see him," and "You couldn't really have perceived S because condition Y does not hold" ("You can't see anyone from this distance"). Habits of speech are reinforced by success in action, classical theorists recognize in accepting the presumptive authority of common opinion. But "a knowledge source" may be thought of as a technical term, one that entails factivity, as we have seen, as a matter of definition. Similarly with justification (*prâmānya*), the having of which, if veritable (or objective), as opposed to the apparent (*ābhāsa*), means that the justified cognition is true.

### Knowledge and World-Transcendence

There is much controversy over the religious goal of life among the several schools, both among schools accepting Vedic culture (liberation vs. heaven, individual dissolution into the Absolute Brahman, blissful yogic "isolation," *kaivalya*, enjoyment of God's presence) and among outsider schools (Buddhist *nirvāna* or becoming a *bodhi-sattva* or a Jaina *arhat* as well as Cārvāka's entire rejection of soteriology). But from a distance, we can see common conceptions linking at least many of the Indian views. One is to draw a distinction between everyday and spiritual knowledge and to theorize about their relationship. A prominent position is that thinking about the world is an obstacle to spiritual enlightenment. Another is that proper understanding of the world helps one disengage and to know oneself as separate from material things, and so is an aid to transcendence. The most distinctive form of skepticism in classical Indian thought is that so-called worldly knowledge is not knowledge at all but is a perversion or deformation of consciousness. Who seems a philosophical skeptic is really a saint helping us achieve our truly greatest good of world-transcendence by helping us see the paradoxes and other failures of theory.

### Skepticism

With an eye to the alleged power of inference to prove the existence of God or personal survival, the Cārvāka materialist school recognizes perception as a knowledge source but not inference nor any other candidate. Inference depends upon generalizations which outstrip perceptual evidence, everything F as a G. No one can know that, Cārvāka claims. Testimony is also no good since it presupposes that any speaker would tell the truth and thus is subject to the same criticism of lack of evidence. And so on through the other candidates (Mādhava, *Sarva-darshana-samgraha*). The standard response is pragmatic. We could not act as we do if we could not rely on inference (*etc.*) albeit inference does depend on generalization that (often, not invariably) outstrips experience. The skeptic himself relies on such generalizations when he opens his mouth to voice his skepticism, by using words with repeatable meanings.

The Cârvăka argument identifying the problem of induction is turned by both Buddhist and Nyaya philosophers into an argument for fallibilism about inference. What we take to be the result of a genuine inference may turn out to hinge on a fallacy, a *hetv-âbhâsa*, an apparent but misleading “reason” or sign. But to accept that sometimes we reason in ways that mimic but fail to instantiate right forms is not to be a skeptic. Indeed, the very concept of a fallacy (*hetv-âbhâsa*) presupposes that of the veritable reason or sign (*hetu*), a veritable prover making us have new knowledge.

A different kind of skepticism is broader in scope, not restricted to inference or other candidate sources. It appears both in Buddhism and Advaita Vedânta, but let us rehearse only the Buddhist version. By discerning absurdities that arise in viewing anything as having an independent existence, one realizes, as Nâgârjuna says, that everything is *niḥsvabhâva*, “without a reality of its own.” Applying this to oneself, one comes to see the truth of the Buddha’s teaching of *anâtman*, “no-self,” which is viewed as a decisive step towards the *summum bonum* of enlightenment and perfection. In particular, Nâgârjuna identifies a problem of a justification regress in the *pramâna* programme (*Vigraha-vyavârtinî*, v. 33), which assumes that process and result can be separated, along with various conundra or paradoxes concerning relations (such as the so-called Bradley problem). The *Nyaya-sûtra* argues that the Nâgârjunian type of skepticism is self-defeating (4.2.26-36), but many of the problems identified by the Buddhist (and his intellectual inheritors such as Sârīharsa) occupy the reflections of philosophers for centuries, Buddhist as well as Nyaya and Mîmâmsâ among Vedic schools in particular.

### Knowing that you know

One of the philosophic problems that Nâgârjuna raised for epistemology has to do with an alleged regress of justification on the assumption that a *pramâna* is required in order to know and that to identify the source of a bit of knowledge is to certify the proposition embedded. Nâgârjuna claims that this is absurd in that it would require an infinite series of *pramâna*, of identification of a more fundamental *pramâna* for every *pramâna* relied on.

Mîmâmsâ and Vedânta philosophers argue that such a threat of regress shows that knowledge is self-certifying, *svataḥ prâmânya*. Vedântins connect the Upanishadic teaching of a truest or deepest self (*âtman*) as having “self-illuminating awareness” (*sva-prakâśa*) with a Mîmâmsâ epistemological theory of self-certification: at least in the case of spiritual knowledge (*vidyâ*) awareness is self-aware. From this it follows that only awareness is right concerning all questions about awareness, since only awareness itself has, so to say, access to itself. Awareness itself is the only consideration relevant to any question about awareness itself, its existence or its nature.

Mîmâmsâ defends Vedic truth by claiming that knowledge of it wears its certification on its sleeve like everyday knowledge where the initial credibility of an occurrent cognition seems practically absolute. According to Prâbhākara

Mīmāṃsā (from the late seventh century), no cognition that in itself purports to be veridical is indeed non-veridical; no cognition is absolutely wrong but at worst a confusion. The same causal nexus that produces a veridical cognition produces knowledge of its veridicality. According to Bhāṃsa Mīmāṃsā (deriving from Kumārila, Prabhākara's teacher), veridicality is known through the process of inference whereby a cognition itself would be known as having occurred. A cognition, which is an act, produces a feature in the object it cognizes, a "cognizedness," and then from apprehension of this feature both the original cognition and its veridicality are known. Certification is thus intrinsic to a cognition's being known, that is, with cognitions that are veridical. With respect to knowledge of non-veridicality, extrinsic certification is necessary.

Nyaya takes an extrinsic view of certification (*paratah prāmānya*)—it denies that *Kp* entails *KKp*; to know that you know requires apperceptive certification—and so seems vulnerable to the regress charge. The solution involves the notion of "apperception" (*anuvyavasāya*), which is a second-level cognition that has another cognition as its object without itself being self-aware. Certification, psychologically considered, involves apperception, a seeing that a challenged, target cognition is false or true.

Vātsyāyana (fourth century, whose *Nyaya-sūtra* commentary is the oldest extant) expressly rebuts the regress charge (we do sometimes certify our claims without having to certify the certifiers) under *Nyaya-sūtra* 2.1.20 (448-49, translation mine):

If comprehension of perception or another (knowledge source) landed us in infinite regress, then everyday action and discourse would not go on through comprehension of self-consciously known objects and their known causes. (However) everyday action and discourse do proceed for someone comprehending self-consciously known objects and their known causes: when (self-consciously) I grasp by perception an object or I grasp one by inference or I grasp one by analogy or I grasp one by tradition or testimony (the four knowledge sources according to Nyaya), the (apperceptive) cognition that occurs goes like this: "My knowledge is perceptual" or "My knowledge is inferential" or "My knowledge is from analogy" or "My knowledge is testimonial."

And motivation to seek righteousness (*dharma*), wealth, pleasure, or liberation proceeds through these comprehensions (whereas if there is doubt, no such goal-directed activity would occur), as likewise motivation to reject their opposites. Everyday discourse and action would cease (to be possible for such a subject) if what is alleged were indeed to hold (justificational regress).

Nyāya's strategy is then (1) to charge the objector with making a "pragmatic contradiction," (2) to take veridicality as cognitive default, and (3) to certify cognitions by source identification as well as by inference from the success or failure of the activity that they provoke and guide. We assume without checking that our cognition is veridical, but sometimes we need to check. Note that the practical pursuits that Vātsyāyana mentions as guided by second-order, reflective knowledge are: "righteousness (*dharma*), wealth, pleasure, [and] liberation."



## Perception

All the classical schools that advance epistemologies accept perception as a knowledge source although there is much disagreement about its nature, objects, and limitations. Are the objects of perception internal to consciousness or external? Are they restricted to individuals, *e.g.*, a particular cow, or are universals, *e.g.*, cowhood, also perceived? How about relations? Absences or negative facts (Devadatta's not being at home)? Parts or wholes? Both? A self, awareness itself? There are issues about perceptual media such as light and ether, *ākāśa*, the purported medium of sound, and about what is perceptible yogically (God, the *īśvara*, the *ātman* or self, *puruṣa*). What are the environmental conditions that govern perception, and how do these connect with the different sensory modalities? Are there internal conditions on perception (such as attention or focus, viewed by some as a voluntary act)? Is a recognition, *e.g.*, "This is that Devadatta I saw yesterday," perceptual? And does it prove the endurance of things over time including the perceiving subject? Do we perceive only fleeting qualities (*dharma*), as Buddhists tend to say, or qualifiers as qualifying qualificanda (a lotus as qualified by being-blue), as say realist Nyaya and Mīmāṃsā? Does all perception involve a sensory connection with an object that is responsible for providing its content or intentionality (*nirākāra-vāda*, Nyaya), or is the content of perception internal to itself (*sākāra-vāda*, Yogācāra)? How do we differentiate veritable perception, which is defined as veridical, and pseudo-perception (illusion), which is non-veridical? How is illusion to be explained? These are some of the outstanding issues and questions that occupy the schools in all periods of their literatures.

Yogācāra subjectivism views perception as "concept-free," whereas the holist grammarian Bhartrhari of the third century finds it all to be clothed in language. Mīmāṃsā and Nyaya realists emphasize the "concept-laden" nature of at least the type of perception that is epistemically foundational for observation statements containing basic sensory predicates. To be sure, Mīmāṃsā and later Nyaya also admit concept-free perception. Kumārila Bhaṃma mentions the cognition of an infant as an example. Phenomenologically humans would seem to have much in common with infants and animals considering this type of perception. But according to the great Mīmāṃsaka, perception does not so much divide into types as form a process with the concept-free as the first stage. Awareness of the object is only quasi-propositional in the first moment, and at the second has its content filled out to become the means whereby an individual is ascertained to have a certain character, to be a certain kind of substance or to possess a universal or an action, *etc.* (verse 120, p. 96). The object perceived, the lotus (or whatever), is known in the first stage as an individual whole, both in its individuality and as having a character. But the character, the thing's being blue as opposed to red, and its being here right now, are not known without the mediation of concepts which are supplied internally. Seeing is ultimately "seeing as" and is "shot through with words," to use the expression of Bhartrhari. However, the mind or self does not, according to the realists, have any innate ideas (unlike then Yogācāra, which

postulates a collective “storehouse consciousness,” *ālaya-vijñāna*). Concepts are the records of previous experiences. Yogâsâra holds that all predication, including the sensory, depends on ideas of unreal generality. All predication involves repeatable general terms. Thus the realists’ “propositional content” is suspicious just because this is not raw perception which alone is capable of presenting the truly real, the *sva-lakṣaṇa*, “that which is its own mark,” the unique or particular.

Classical Indian realists hold that perception is none the worse for being concept-laden in that concepts are features of the world as impressed upon the mind or self. Perception founds true beliefs, and the repeatable predicates and concepts (cowhood) perceptually acquired and re-presented and employed in verbalizations pick out constituents of real objects, things that do re-occur (there are lots of cows in the world).

For late Nyaya philosophers, concept-laden perception comes so to dwarf in importance the indeterminate, concept-free variety that the latter becomes problematic. Perception in its epistemological role is concept-laden. Otherwise, it could not be certificational. Perception as a knowledge source is a doxastic, belief-generating process. Beliefs (or anyhow perceptual cognitions and their verbalizations) are dependent on concepts (to believe or say that there is a pot on the floor, one must possess the concepts of “pot” and “floor”).

The Yogâcâra Buddhists’ best argument for their subjectivism—which one suspects derives more fundamentally from a commitment to the possibility of a universal *nirvâṇa* experience, although this is not said—is perceptual illusion. Illusion proves that a perception’s object is not a feature of the world but is contributed somehow from the side of the subject. A rope can be perceived as a snake, with no difference, from the perspective of the perceiver, between the illusion and a veridical snake perception. Similarly, dreams are the “perceptions” of a dreamer but do not touch reality. (Our world is a dream, say Buddhists, and we should try to become *buddha*, “Awakened.”)

One way to resist the pull of the illusion argument belongs to Prâbhākara Mîmâṃsâ which insists that not only is perception invariably veridical but also cognition in general, *jñâna*. Nyaya philosophers hold in contrast that illusion is a false cognition. Rich debate occurs over Nyâya’s “misplacement” view of illusion and a Prâbhākara “no-illusion” or “omission” theory (illusion is a failure to cognize of a certain sort, an absence of cognition, for example, an absence of cognition of the difference between a remembering of silver and a perceiving of mother-of-pearl when holding in hand a piece of shell S exclaims, “Silver!”). Here Nyaya agrees with the subjectivists: sometimes a person S apparently perceives *a* to be F—has an apparently perceptual cognition embedding *Fa*—when *a* is not in fact F, while S cannot discern from her own first-person perspective that the cognition is non-veridical. Nevertheless, the predication content, according to Nyaya as also Mîmâṃsâ, the presentation or indication of F-hood, originates in things’ really being F, through previous veridical experience of F-hood.

Here we touch the heart of classical Indian realism. Snakehood is available to become illusory predication content through previous veridical experience



of snakes. It gets fused into a current perception by means of a foul-up in the normal causal process through the arousing of a snakehood memory-disposition (*samskâra*) formed by previous experience.

The content or intentionality (*vicayatâ*, “objecthood”) of an illusion is to be explained causally as generated by real features of real things just as is genuine perception though they are distinct cognitive types. Illusion involves the projection into current (determinate) cognition (which would be pseudo-perception) of predication content preserved in memory. Sometimes the fusion of an element preserved in memory is cross-sensory, tasting sourness, for instance, when perceiving a lemon by sight or smelling a piece of sandalwood which is seen at too far a distance for actual olfactory stimulation.

These are cases of veridical perception with an obvious admixture or tinge of memory. Illusion, according to Nyaya, is to be analyzed similarly, but unlike veridical cases of projection illusion involves taking something to be what it is not, a seeing or perceiving it through a “misplaced” qualifier. This means that concept-laden perception is necessarily combinational—a position taken by Gautama himself, the “sûtra-maker,” and much elaborated by Vâtsyâyana and the other commentators in text apparently aimed at an early form of Buddhist subjectivism (*Nyaya-sûtra* 4.2.26-36). The upshot of these sûtras is that, first, the concept of illusion is parasitic on that of veridical experience (not all coins can be counterfeit), and, second, that illusion shows a combinational (propositional) structure: this is a something or other. According to Nyaya, perceptual illusion is right in part, that there is something there, but wrong about what it is.

To fill out the realist account in late Nyaya, thought-laden perception, determinate perception, gets its content not only from the object in connection with the sense organ but also from the classificational power of the mind (or self). With the perceptual cognition, “That’s a pot,” for instance, the pot as an individual in connection with a sensory faculty is responsible for the awareness of a property-bearer, for what is called the qualificandum portion of the perception, without admixture of memory.

But the sensory connection is not by itself responsible for the qualifier portion, the pothood, that is to say, the thing’s classification as a pot. A qualificandum as qualified by a qualifier is perceived all at once (*eka-vrtti-vedya*), but a determinate perception’s portions have distinct etiologies. Now the classificational power of the mind (or self) is not innate, as pointed out, but is rather the product of presentational experience (*anubhava*) over the course of a subject’s life. Repeatable features of reality get impressed on the mind (or self) in the form of memory dispositions. For most adults, prior determinate cognition is partly responsible for the content predicable of a particular, or a group of things, presented through the senses. That is, in perceiving *a* as an F, an F-*samskâra* formed by previous knowledge-source-produced bits of occurrent cognition of things F would be a causal factor. The perception’s own content includes the repeatable nature of the qualifier through the operation of this

factor. We see the tree as a tree. But sometimes neither a prior determinate cognition nor a memory disposition is at all responsible for the predication content, for example, when a child sees a cow for the very first time. Rather, an “in the raw” perceptual grasping of the qualifier (cowhood) delivers it to an ensuing concept-laden and verbalizable perception. In other words, there are cases of determinate cognition where indeterminate, concept-free perception furnishes the qualifier independently and the ensuing concept-laden perception is not tinged by memory. Normally, *samskâra*, “memory-dispositions,” do play a causal role in determinate perception, according to Nyaya and Mîmâmsâ and indeed epistemologists of all flags. But sometimes an immediately prior concept-free perception of a qualifier plays the role of the *samskâra*, furnishing by itself the concept, the predication content, the qualifier portion of an ensuing determinate, proposition-laden perception, which is the type of cognition that founds our beliefs about the world.

If this were not an “immaculate perception” but itself a grasping of a property through the grasping of another property, we would be faced with an infinite regress and direct perception of the world would be impossible. Concept-free perception need not provide the classifying not only with second and third-time perceptions of something as F but not even, strictly speaking, with a first-time perception, since there could be an intervening cognitive factor (provided, say, by analogy: see below). But with that factor again the question would arise how it gets its content, and so since an indeterminate perception has to be posited at some point to block a regress it might as well be at the start. This is the main argument of Gangesa, the late Nyaya systematizer, in defense of positing the concept-free as a type or first stage of perception (Phillips 2001).

Nevertheless, for all intents and purposes, perception embodies beliefs, according to the realists. More accurately, a perceptual belief is the result of the operation of perception as a knowledge source. Everything that is nameable is knowable and vice-versa. There is nothing that when we attend to it cannot bear a name, for we can make up new names. We can in principle verbalize the indications of our experience, though many of them are not named since we are indifferent (pebbles perceived along the road). Concept-free perception is the classical Indian realist rendering of our ability to form perceptual concepts by attending to perception’s phenomenological side. Epistemologically, it plays no role, since it is itself a posit and is unverbalizable and not directly apperceived (A. Chakrabarti 2000 gives this and other reasons for jettisoning the concept from Nyâya’s own realist point of view).

As mentioned, Yogâcâra takes issue with the realist theory of perception, viewing all perception as concept-free. What is perceived is only the unqualified particular, *sva-lakṣaṇa*. The realists’ “qualifiers” such as cowhood are mental constructions, “convenient fictions.” Various reductio arguments are put forth to show the incoherence of the realists’ conception of a qualificandum perceived at once to be qualified by a qualifier (*eka-vṛtti-vedya*). The different views of the objects of perception feed different views of inference.

# 3

## Philosophy and Curriculum

Most of the prominent philosophers in the last 2000 years were not philosophers of education but have at some point considered and written on the philosophy of education. Among them are Plato, Aristotle, Rousseau, Dewey, Adler, Confucius, Al Farabi, Tagore and many others. These philosophers have been key voices in philosophy of education and have contributed to our basic understanding of what education is and can be. They have also provided powerful critical perspectives revealing the problems in education.

What is the connection between philosophy and curriculum? For example, when you propose the teaching of a particular body of knowledge, course or subject, you will be asked, “What is your philosophy for introducing that content?” If you are unable to answer the question, you may not be able to convince others to accept your proposal. Philosophy is the starting point in any curriculum decision making and is the basis for all subsequent decisions regarding curriculum. Philosophy becomes the criteria for determining the aims, selection, organisation and implementation of the curriculum in the classroom.

Philosophy helps us answer general questions such as: ‘What are schools for?’ ‘What subjects are of value?’, ‘How should students learn the content?’ It also helps us to answer more precise tasks such as deciding what textbooks to use, how to use them, what homework to assign and how much of it, how to test and use the results.

Would you believe that the above statement was written more than 2000 years ago by the Greek philosopher Aristotle and we are still debating the same issues today. Sometimes one wonders whether we know what we want! We lament about the poor level of basic skills of students and call for a return to the

basics. At the same time we want students to develop critical thinking skills and call for lesser emphasis on rote learning. Through the centuries, many philosophies of education have emerged, each with their own beliefs about education. In this chapter, we will discuss four philosophies, namely; perennialism, essentialism, progressivism and reconstructionism proposed by Western philosophers. Also, discussed are the viewpoints of three Eastern philosophers; namely, al-Farabi, Tagore and Confucius. Each of these educational philosophies is examined to see what curriculum is proposed and how teaching and learning should be conducted.

## PERENNIALISM

### What is Perennialism

Perennial means “everlasting,” like a perennial flower that blooms year after year. Perennialism, the oldest and most conservative educational philosophy has its roots in the philosophy of Plato and Aristotle. Two modern day proponents of perennialism are Robert Hutchins and Mortimer Adler. The perennialists believed that humans are rational and the aim of education is “to improve man as man” (Hutchins, 1953).

The answers to all educational questions derive from the answer to one question: What is human nature? According to them, human nature is constant and humans have the ability to understand the universal truths of nature. Thus, the aim of education is to develop the rational person and to uncover universal truths by training the intellect. Towards developing one’s moral and spiritual being, character education should be emphasised.

Perennialism is based on the belief that some ideas have lasted over centuries and are as relevant today as when they were first conceived. These ideas should be studied in school. A list of the ‘Great Books’ was proposed covering topics in literature, art, psychology, philosophy, mathematics, science, economics, politics and so forth. Examples of such books are: *Robinson Crusoe* written by Daniel Defoe, *War and Peace* written by Leo Tolstoy, *Moby Dick* written by Herman Melville, Euclid’s book *Elements* on geometry, Newton’s book on *Optics*, *The Sexual Enlightenment of Children* written by Sigmund Freud, *An inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations* by Adam Smith and many others.

The book selected had to have contemporary significance, that is, it should be relevant to the problems and issues of present times. The book should espouse ideas and issues that have occupied the minds of thinking individuals in the last 2000 years.

The book should attract people to read it again and again and benefit from it. The perennialists believed that these are history’s finest thinkers and writers. Their ideas are profound and meaningful even today as when they were written. When students are immersed in the study of these profound and enduring ideas, they will appreciate learning for its own sake as well as develop their intellectual powers and moral qualities.

## The Perennialist Curriculum

*Based on the beliefs of perennialism, the curriculum proposed had the following characteristics:*

- The 'Great Books' programme or more commonly called the liberal arts will discipline the mind and cultivate the intellect. To read the book in its original language, students must learn Latin and Greek. Students also had to learn grammar, rhetoric, logic, advanced mathematics and philosophy (Hutchins, 1936).
- The study of philosophy is a crucial part of the perennialist curriculum. This was because they wanted students to discover those ideas that are most insightful and timeless in understanding the human condition.
- At a much later time, Mortimer Adler (1982) in his book the *Paideia Proposal*, recommended a single elementary and secondary curriculum for all students. The educationally disadvantaged had to spend some time in pre-schools.
- Perennialists were not keen on allowing students to take electives (except second languages) such as vocational and life-adjustment subjects. They argued that these subjects denied students the opportunity to fully develop their rational powers.
- The perennialists criticised the vast amount of disjointed factual information that educators have required students to absorb. They urge that teachers should spend more time teaching concepts and explaining how these concepts are meaningful to students.
- Since, enormous amount of scientific knowledge has been produced, teaching should focus on the processes by which scientific truths have been discovered. However, the perennialists advise that students should not be taught information that may soon be obsolete or found to be incorrect because of future scientific and technological findings.
- At the secondary and university level, perennialists were against reliance on textbooks and lectures in communicating ideas. Emphasis should be on teacher-guided seminars, where students and teachers engage in dialogue; and mutual inquiry sessions to enhance understanding of the great ideas and concepts that have stood the test to time. Student should learn to learn, and not to be evaluated
- Universities should not only prepare students for specific careers but to pursue knowledge for its own sake. "University students may learn a few trees, perennialists claim, but many will be quite ignorant about the forests: the timeless philosophical questions" (Hutchins, 1936)
- Teaching reasoning using the 'Great Books' of Western writers is advocated using the Socratic method to discipline the minds of students. Emphasis should be on scientific reasoning rather than mere acquisition of facts. Teach science but not technology, great ideas rather than vocational topics.

- Perennialists argue that the topics of the great books describe any society, at any time, and thus the books are appropriate for American society. Students must learn to recognise controversy and disagreement in these books because they reflect real disagreements between persons. Students must think about the disagreements and reach a reasoned, defensible conclusion.

## ESSENTIALISM

### What is Essentialism

Essentialism comes from the word ‘essential’ which means the main things or the basics. As an educational philosophy, it advocates instilling in students with the “essentials” or “basics” of academic knowledge and character development. The term essentialism as an educational philosophy was originally popularised in the 1930s by William Bagley and later in the 1950s by Arthur Bestor and Admiral Rickover.

When it was first introduced as an educational philosophy in American schools, it was criticised as being too rigid. In 1957, the Russians launched Sputnik which caused a panic in educational circles as Americans felt they had fallen behind the Soviet Union technologically. A rethinking of education followed that led to interest in essentialism.

Essentialism was grounded in a conservative philosophy that argues that schools should not try to radically reshape society. Rather, they should transmit traditional moral values and intellectual knowledge that students need to become model citizens. Essentialists believe that teachers should instill traditional virtues such as respect for authority, fidelity to duty, consideration for others and practicality. Essentialism placed importance on science and understanding the world through scientific experimentation. To convey important knowledge about the world, essentialist educators emphasised instruction in natural science rather than non-scientific disciplines such as philosophy or comparative religion.

### The Essentialist Curriculum

*Based on the beliefs of essentialism, the curriculum proposed has the following characteristics:*

- The ‘basics’ of the essentialist curriculum are mathematics, natural science, history, foreign language, and literature. Essentialists disapprove of vocational, life-adjustment, or other courses with “watered down” academic content.
- Elementary students receive instruction in skills such as writing, reading, and measurement. Even while learning art and music (subjects most often associated with the development of creativity) students are required to master a body of information and basic techniques, gradually moving from less to more complex skills and detailed knowledge. Only by mastering the required material for their grade level are students promoted to the next higher grade.



- Essentialist programmes are academically rigorous, for both slow and fast learners. Common subjects for all students regardless of abilities and interests. But, how much is to be learned is adjusted according to student ability.
- It advocates a longer school day, a longer academic year, and more challenging textbooks. Essentialists maintain that classrooms should be oriented around the teacher, who serves as the intellectual and moral role model for students.
- Teaching is teacher-centred and teachers decide what is most important for students to learn with little emphasis on student interests because it will divert time and attention from learning the academic subjects. Essentialist teachers focus heavily on achievement test scores as a means of evaluating progress.
- In an essentialist classroom, students are taught to be “culturally literate,” that is, to possess a working knowledge about the people, events, ideas, and institutions that have shaped society. Essentialists hope that when students leave school, they will possess not only basic skills and extensive knowledge, but also disciplined and practical minds, capable of applying their knowledge in real world settings.
- Discipline is necessary for systematic learning in a school situation. Students learn to respect authority in both school and society.
- Teachers need to be mature and well educated, who know their subjects well and can transmit their knowledge to students.

## PROGRESSIVISM

### What is Progressivism

Progressivism is a philosophical belief that argues that education must be based on the fact that humans are by nature social and learn best in real-life activities with other people. The person most responsible for progressivism was John Dewey (1859-1952). The progressive movement stimulated American schools to broaden their curriculum, making education more relevant to the needs and interests of students.

Dewey wrote extensively on psychology, epistemology (*the origin of knowledge*), ethics and democracy. But, his philosophy of education laid the foundation for progressivism. In 1896, while a professor at the University of Chicago, Dewey founded the famous Laboratory School to test his educational ideas. His writings and work with the Laboratory School set the stage for the progressive education movement.

According to Dewey, the role of education is to transmit society's identity by preparing young people for adult life. He was a keen advocate of democracy and for it to flourish, he felt that education should allow learners to realise their interests and potential. Learners should learn to work with others because learning in isolation separates the mind from action. According to him certain



abilities and skills can only be learned in a group. Social and intellectual interaction dissolves the artificial barriers of race and class by encouraging communication between various social groups (Dewey, 1920). He described education as a process of growth and experimentation in which thought and reason are applied to the solution of problems.

*Children should learn as if they were scientists using the scientific method proposed by Dewey (1920):*

1. To be aware of the problem (eg. plants need sunlight to grow)
2. Define the problem (eg. can plants grow without sunlight)
3. Propose hypotheses to solve it
4. Test the hypotheses
5. Evaluate the best solution to the problem

Students should be constantly experimenting and solving problems; reconstructing their experiences and creating new knowledge using the proposed five steps. Teachers should not only emphasise drill and practice, but should expose learners to activities that relate to the real life situations of students, emphasising 'Learning by doing'.

### **The Progressive Curriculum**

- Progressivists emphasise the study of the natural and social sciences. Teacher should introduce students to new scientific, technological, and social developments. To expand the personal experience of learners, learning should be related to present community life. Believing that people learn best from what they consider most relevant to their lives, the curriculum should centre on the experiences, interests, and abilities of students.
- Teachers should plan lessons that arouse curiosity and push students towards higher order thinking and knowledge construction. For example, in addition to reading textbooks, students must learn by doing such as fieldtrips where they can interact with nature and society.
- Students are encouraged to interact with one another and develop social virtues such as cooperation and tolerance for different points of view.
- Teachers should not be confined to focusing on one discrete discipline at a time but should introduce lessons that combine several different subjects.
- Students are to be exposed to a more democratic curriculum that recognises accomplishments of all citizens regardless of race, cultural background or gender. In addition,
- By including instruction in industrial arts and home economics, progressivists strive to make schooling both interesting and useful. Ideally, the home, workplace, and schoolhouse blend together to generate a continuous, fulfilling learning experience in life. It is the progressivist dream that the dreary, seemingly irrelevant classroom exercises that so many adults recall from childhood will someday become a thing of the past. Students solve problems in the classroom similar to those they will encounter outside school.

## What is Reconstructionism

Reconstructionism was a philosophy uniquely popular in the U.S., during the 1930's through the 1960's. It was largely the brain child of Theodore Brameld from Columbia Teachers College. He began as a communist, but shifted to reconstructionism. Reconstructionists favour reform and argue that students must be taught how to bring about change.

Reconstructionism is a philosophy that believes in the rebuilding of social and cultural infrastructures. Students are to study social problems and think of ways to improve society. Another proponent of reconstructionism was George Counts (1932) who in a speech titled *Dare the School Build a New Social Order* suggested that schools become the agent of social change and social reform. Students cannot afford to be neutral but must take a position.

Most advocates of reconstructionism are sensitive to race, gender, ethnicity and differences in socioeconomic status. Related to reconstructionism is another belief called *critical pedagogy*. It is primarily a teaching and curriculum theory, designed by Henry Giroux and Peter McLaren, which focuses upon the use of revolutionary literature in classrooms that is aimed at "liberation."

Radical in its conception, critical pedagogy was based on Marxist ideology which advocates equality in the distribution of wealth and strongly against capitalism. More recent reconstructionists such as Paulo Freire in his book *Pedagogy of the Oppressed* (1968) advocated a revolutionary pedagogy for poor students in which people can move through different stages to ultimately be able to take action and overcome oppression.

He argued that people must become active participants in changing their own status through social action to change bring about social justice.

## The Reconstructionist Curriculum

- In the reconstructionist curriculum, it was not enough for students to just analyse interpret and evaluate social problems. They had to be committed to the issues discussed and encouraged to take action to bring about constructive change.
- The curriculum is to be based on social and economic issues as well as social service. The curriculum should engage students in critical analysis of the local, national and international community. Examples of issues are poverty, environment degradation, unemployment, crime, war, political oppression, hunger, *etc.*
- There are many injustices in society and inequalities in terms of race, gender, and socioeconomic status. Schools are obliged to educate children towards resolution of these injustices and students should not be afraid to examine controversial issues. Students should learn to come to a consensus on issues and so group work was encouraged.
- The curriculum should be constantly changing to meet the changes in society. Students be aware of global issues and the interdependence between nations. Enhancing mutual understanding and global cooperation should be the focus of the curriculum.

- Teachers are considered the prime agents of social change, cultural renewal and internationalism. They are encouraged to challenge outdated structures and entrusted with the task of bringing about a new social order which may be utopian in nature.
- In general, the curriculum emphasised the social sciences (such as history, political science, economics, sociology, religion, ethics, poetry, and philosophy), rather than the sciences.

### ABU NASR AL-FARABI

Al-Farabi (872-950 AD) was born in Wasij, in the province of Farab in Turkestan, of a noble family. To understand the universe and humankind he undertook the meticulous study of ancient philosophy (particularly Plato and Aristotle) which he integrated into his own Islamic-Arabic civilization whose chief source was the Qur'an. Al-Farabi used a number of terms to describe education: discipline (*ta'dib*), training (*tahdhib*), guidance (*tasdid*), instruction (*ta'lim*), exercise or learning (*irtiyyad*) and upbringing (*tarbiya*) (quoted in Ammar al-Talbi, 1993). He believed that the first aim of knowledge was knowledge of God and His attributes. He emphasised the need for unity of society and the State to be achieved by unity of thought, wisdom and religion.

#### AL-FARABI ON EDUCATION

- According to him the whole activity of education is the acquisition of values, knowledge and practical skills leading to perfection and the attainment of happiness. The perfect human being (*al insan al kamil*) is one who has acquired
  - Theoretical virtue (intellectual knowledge) and
  - Practical moral virtues (moral behaviour).
- Virtue is the state of mind in which the human being carries out good and kind deeds such as wisdom, common sense, inventiveness, cleverness, temperance, courage, generosity and justice (*Al-Farabi, Talkhis*, cited in Ammar al-Talbi, 1993).
- Theoretical and practical virtue can only be obtained within society, for it is society that nurtures the individual and prepares him or her to be free. Thus, one of the goals of education is the creation of the ideal community, 'the one whose cities all work together in order to attain happiness' (*Al-Farabi, Mabadi ahl al-madina al-fadila*, cited in Ammar al-Talbi, 1993).
- Another aim of education is to educate political leaders, because ignorance among them is more harmful than it is in the common person.
- He considered the method of dialogue or debate as important in instruction. The method of argument and the method of discourse which can be used orally or in writing. For the common people, the methods used must be closely related to what they can grasp and understand.
- He also emphasised on the need for scientific discourse; that by which the knowledge of something is obtained either through asking questions

about the thing, or from the replies obtained, or by resolving a scientific problem (*Al-Farabi, Kitab al-huraf*, cited in Ammar al-Talbi, 1993).

- In this book Al-Alfaz, Farabi argues that there are two types of learning: learning through *speech* and learning by *imitation* (observing other people's actions with the intention of imitating or applying them).
- The method of instruction must be appropriate to the level of learners. For example, the method of imagination is encouraged for teaching the hard to grasp concepts to common people. The educator resorts to metaphors and illustrations in teaching especially for people who are reluctant to learn (*Al-Farabi, Tahsil*, cited in Ammar al-Talbi, 1993).
- According to Al-Farabi, understanding is better than memorization because the former deals mainly with details which could go on forever and hardly useful. But the action of understanding concerns meanings, universals and laws which are valid for all.

### Al-Farabi on Curriculum

- Al-Farabi classified the sciences and learning not just for the sake of listing them, but with an educational objective in mind.
- Content to be taught as suggested by Al-Farabi
  - Language and its structure (to express oneself and understand others)
  - Logic (*mantiq*) which includes verbal expression and intellectual procedures
  - Mathematics (he divided into 7 parts)
    - i. Arithmetic (begin with numbers and proceeding to measures)
    - ii. Geometry (use of geometric shapes to stimulate imagination)
    - iii. The science of optics
    - iv. Astronomy (study of instruments and observation skills)
    - v. Music (making and listening to musical instruments)
    - vi. Dynamics (eg. momentum)
    - vii. Science of machines
  - Natural sciences
  - Religion and scholastic theology (*kalam*)
  - Political science/civics
  - Jurisprudence (*fiqh*) and law (*qanun*)
- Mathematics called 'the teachings' (*ta'alim*) was given importance because it trains students towards the path of precision and clarity. The student is to begin with studying arithmetic (numbers) followed by geometry, optics, astronomy, music, dynamics and last of all mechanics. The student moves in stages from the immaterial and the immeasurable to what needs some matter. (*Al-Farabi, Ihsa' al-'ulum*, cited in Ammar al-Talbi, 1993).
- On evaluation, Al-Farabi emphasised that the aim of an examination is to find out a learner's level in the field being studied. He believed that the questions students ask could have either an *educational* or an

*experimental* character. Educational is when students demonstrate that they have mastered something. Experimental is when students test themselves using instruments (such as compass, abacus, ruler, tables) to determine whether they know the rules.

- Al-Farabi drew attention to the purpose of educational games and the role of play in human activity. He recommended games that stimulate creativity. Play should be used appropriately to restore the learner's strength to undertake more serious activity.

## CONFUCIUS

Confucius (551-479 BC), born in Quyi in the principality of Lu, is one of China's most famous philosophers. He spent a lifetime learning as well as teaching. He stated that education plays a fundamental role in the development of society and of individuals alike. Education should seek to produce virtuous individuals which will alter human nature.

By raising individual moral standard, society will become more virtuous and the country will be well-governed and its citizens law-abiding. He rejected feudalism in which the status of an individual was passed from one generation to the next based on birth which was prevalent during his time. His recommendations are in the *Analects* (Lun Yu) which is a record of his speeches and his disciples, as well as the discussions they had. It literally means "discussions over words". Confucian thought was not confined to China. It spread to Japan, Vietnam, North and South Korea, and parts of Southeast Asia.

### CONFUCIUS AND EDUCATION

- According to Confucius, education is to produce capable individuals (*ziancai*) whom he called shi (gentlemen) or junzi (men of quality) who combined competence with virtue. They would serve the government and bring about an ideal managed by men of virtue. The cultivation of virtue was to be through observation, study and reflective thought.
- Among the virtues given priority are: filial piety (*xiao*), respect for the elderly (*ti*), loyalty (*zhong*), respectfulness (*gong*), magnanimity (*kuan*); fidelity (*xin*), diligence (*min*), altruism (*hui*), kindness (*liang*), frugality (*jian*), tolerance (*rang*), wisdom (*zhi*) and courage (*yong*).
- Education was to be made available to all, regardless of socioeconomic status or social standing. He denounced favouritism and the passing of office from one generation of nobles to the next (Yang Huanyin, 1993).
- According to Confucius, 'Study without thought is labour lost; thought without study is dangerous'. He saw learning as a process of observation of some type of subject matter, whether it be books, objects or people, followed by reflection.
- He saw learning as a highly personal and individual activity but when awakened by real learning would be repeated by the student. Teachers should be committed to their work and have good mastery of the knowledge to be imparted.

- A good teacher must love his students, know them well, understand their psychological uniqueness, give thought to ways and means of facilitating their access to knowledge (Yang Huanyin, 1993).
- A mistake is acting on premature knowledge based on insufficient observation and insufficient processing. A lie is having full knowledge and deliberately misrepresenting that knowledge.

### **Confucius on Curriculum**

- Confucius stipulated that the main emphasis of the curriculum should be moral instruction and the imparting of knowledge. Moral education was thus for Confucius the means whereby his ideas concerning virtue might be realised.
- Content to be taught as proposed by Confucius
  - His six books; the *Book of Odes*, the *Book of History*, the *Book of Rites*, the *Book of Music*, the *Book of Changes* and the *Spring and Autumn Annals* – which dealt with subjects such as philosophy, politics, economics, culture and musicianship.
  - Music,
  - The Code and Manner of Proper Conduct (Li),
  - Poetry,
  - Literature
  - History.
- His emphasis on political and moral principles led to ignoring the natural sciences, trade and agriculture.
- His curriculum served as the curriculum for 2000 years in feudal China and the following pedagogical strategies were proposed:
  - To match learning with the aptitudes of students (consider the age of learners)
  - To inspire and guide learners by stages
  - To instruct oneself while teaching others
  - To explain the present in the light of the past
  - To combine theory with practice
  - To encourage independent thought
  - To set a good example
  - To correct one's errors and improve oneself
  - To welcome criticism
  - To curb evil and exalt the good.

## **RELATIONSHIP IN BETWEEN PHILOSOPHY AND EDUCATION**

Since philosophy is the art which teaches us how to live, and since children need to learn it as much as we do at other ages, why do we not instruct them in it?. But in truth I know nothing about the philosophy of education except this: that the greatest and the most important difficulty known to human learning



seems to lie in that area which treats how to bring up children and how to educate them. Interdependence of philosophy and education is an essentiality for human development. Both represents two side of a coin, both are equally important. PHILOSOPHY determines the view of life while education determines the way of life. They are so interlocked that without the one the existence of the other is beyond comprehension.

The inter-dependence of philosophy and education is clearly seen from the fact that the great philosophers of all times have also been great educators and their philosophy is reflected in their educational systems.

This inter-dependence can be better understood by analysing the implications of philosophical principles in the field of education. It is interesting to note in this connection that John Dewey defines philosophy simply as a general theory of education. But many other philosophers feel that it is more than this

If described so generally as to make room for most varieties of educational theory, education would have to be defined somewhat as follows: and activity or endeavour in which the more mature of human society deal with the less mature, in order to achieve a greater maturity in them and contribute thereby to the improvement of human life.

The close relationship between philosophy and education led to the emergence of a new branch of knowledge, Philosophy of education which traditionally assumed the burden of formulating goals, norms, and standards by which to conduct the educative process,.

It assures the "educator not only of the substance of the programmed of the schools but of its formal validity".

In spite of variance amongst diverse philosophies of education-empirical-non empirical, speculative-normative, commonsense-critical and a host of other combinations-all seem to be recognising "the importance of interest and individual differences". Philosophy is theoretical and speculative; education is practical. Philosophy asks questions, examining factors of reality and experience, many of which are involved in the educative process; whereas the actual process of education is a matter of actively dealing with these factors, *i.e.*, teaching, organising programmes, administering organisations, building curricula, *etc.*

In the words of Ross "philosophy is the contemplative side while education is the active side". Philosophy deals with the ends while education deals with the means and techniques of achieving those means.

Philosophy of education is the application of philosophical ideas to educational problems. It is not only a way of looking at ideas but also of how to use them in the best way. Therefore, it can be said that philosophy is the theory while education is the practice. Practice unguided by theory is aimless, inconsistent and inefficient just as theory which is not ultimately translatable into practice is useless and confusing.

Educational philosophy depends on formal philosophy because most of the major problems of education are in fact philosophical problems. Like general philosophy, educational philosophy is speculative, prescriptive critical or analytic.



### **There are Two Chief Ways in which Philosophy and Education are Related**

1. Philosophy yields a comprehensive understanding of reality, a world view, which when applied to educational practice lends direction and methodology which are likely to be lacking otherwise. By way of reciprocation,
2. The experience of the educator in nurturing the young places him in touch with phases of reality which are considered in making philosophic judgements. Because of this, those who are actively engaged in educating can advise philosophers about certain matters of facts. That is to say, that while philosophy is a guide to educational practice, education as a field of investigation yields certain data as a basis for philosophic judgements.

All philosophies are concerned with the nature of the self. As has been enquired just above, they ask, is the self a physical, social, or spiritual unit? Whatever answer is given will go far in determining a person's attitude towards the pupil, in case education is one of his major interests. If the self is a physical unit, then pupils are biological organisms. If the self is a social unit, then pupils are little pieces of society. If it is a spiritual unit, then pupils are souls with destinies which outreach both biological and social processes.

Philosophy is concerned, among other things, with value; education also must necessarily deal with value, more than most other social institutions. How does man possess or realise value? Or do values come to us without effort, like an inheritance? Such questions as these are most relevant to education. Value thinking in philosophy is thus related to education in another important way.

Educations must have objectives if it is to be effective; otherwise it descends to the level of aimless activity which is the antithesis of educative experiences. But how can education have valid objectives unless these are formulated within the context of responsible philosophy. The education will scarcely stop before determining what his philosophizing implies for the educational process itself. If the pupil is a biological unit only, and the context within which objectives are set is purely naturalistic, then the process of educating will be a purely natural process, in no sense transcending the natural order. But if the pupil is a spiritual being and the objectives of education are anchored in immortality and an ultimate divine society, then the process by which man is educated must be consistently and carefully refined so that personality is always treated as personality, never as mechanism or near-personality, and so that ceilings are not placed above individuals or societies inhibiting them in reaching out towards the ultimate.

Of course in all of the connections between philosophy and education the certainty of transfer is by no means assured. One educator may enjoy theorizing and be poor in performance of effective practice which grows out of his theory. Another may be at home only in concrete practice, confirmed in the practice. Both of these attitudes are inadequate and make the student shun equally the possibilities of becoming a theorist who cannot practice his theory or a

practitioner who assumes that he can practice without any theory. For there can be no clear and sharp separation between theory and practice. No teacher however effective in practice can avoid assumptions, conscious or unconscious, as to what it is that he is about.

These assumptions, it should be pointed out, are the material of theory, not of practice, and they need both to be examined critically and to be related to other assumptions in the largest context of belief, in order to be adequate as a basis for practice. Furthermore no theory is fully expressed until it is expressed in practice. Not being an end in itself, theory becomes the evident enjoyment of the dilettante when pursued without responsible reference to practice. It might be said that there can be no practice without thinking, practice always merges into action and action emerges out of thought.

Education and philosophy are inseparable because the ends of education are the ends of philosophy *i.e.*, wisdom; and the means of philosophy is the means of education *i.e.*, enquiry, which alone can lead to wisdom. Any separation of philosophy and education inhibits enquiry and frustrates wisdom.

Education involves both the world of ideas and the world of practical activity; good ideas can lead to good practice and good practices reinforce good ideas. In order to behave intelligently in the educational process, education needs direction and guidance which philosophy can provide. Hence philosophy is not only a professional tool for the educator but also a way of improving the quality of life because it helps us to gain a wider and deeper perspective on human existence and the world around us.

The chief task of philosophy is to determine what constitutes good life whereas the main task of education is how to make life worth living. So philosophy and education are mutually re-constructive. They give and take from each other. Philosophy deals with the goals and essentials of good life while education provides the means to achieve those goals of good life. In this sense philosophy of education is a distinct but not a separate discipline. It takes its contents from education and its methods from philosophy. Instructional pedagogy, depends quite directly upon the nature of knowledge, which depends quite directly upon the nature of man. The aims of education, the role of teacher, The concept of student, the curriculum, the concept of discipline, importance and involvement of social agencies, *etc.*, have determining influence of Philosophy.

If different areas of education are observed In relation to philosophy we will conclude that philosophy is an essentiality for a productive and progressive outlook on education Rusk had rightly commented' from every angle of educational problem comes thus the demand for a philosophical basis of the subject....There is no escape from a philosophy of life and of education.

## **SCOPE OF PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION**

The scope of philosophy of education is confined to the field of education. Thus, it is philosophy in the field of education. The scope of philosophy of education is concerned with the problems of education.

**These Problems Mainly Include**

- Interpretation of human nature, the world and the universe and their relation with man,
- Interpretation of aims and ideals of education,
- The relationship of various components of the system of education,
- Relationship of education and various areas of national life [economic system, political order, social progress, cultural reconstructions, *etc.*],
- Educational values,
- Theory of knowledge and its relationship to education.

# 4

## **Delineating the Field of Philosophy of Education**

There is a large-and ever expanding-number of works designed to give guidance to the novice setting out to explore the domain of philosophy of education; most if not all of the academic publishing houses have at least one representative of this genre on their list, and the titles are mostly variants of the following archetypes: *The History and Philosophy of Education*, *The Philosophical Foundations of Education*, *Philosophers on Education*, *Three Thousand Years of Educational Wisdom*, *A Guide to the Philosophy of Education*, and *Readings in Philosophy of Education*. The overall picture that emerges from even a sampling of this collective is not pretty; the field lacks intellectual cohesion, and (from the perspective taken in this essay) there is a widespread problem concerning the rigour of the work and the depth of scholarship-although undoubtedly there are islands, but not continents, of competent philosophical discussion of difficult and socially-important issues of the kind listed earlier. On the positive side-the obverse of the lack of cohesion-there is, in the field as a whole, a degree of adventurousness in the form of openness to ideas and radical approaches, a trait that is sometimes lacking in other academic fields. This is not to claim, of course, that taken individually philosophers of education are more open-minded than their philosophical cousins!

Part of the explanation for this diffuse state-of-affairs is that, quite reasonably, most philosophers of education have the goal (reinforced by their institutional affiliation with Schools of Education and their involvement in the initial training of teachers) of contributing not to philosophy but to educational policy and practice.

This shapes not only their selection of topics, but also the manner in which the discussion is pursued; and this orientation also explains why philosophers of education—to a far greater degree, it is to be suspected, than their "pure" cousins—publish not in philosophy journals but in a wide range of professionally-oriented journals (such as *Educational Researcher*, *Harvard Educational Review*, *Teachers College Record*, *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, and the like). Some individuals work directly on issues of classroom practice, others identify as much with fields such as educational policy analysis, curriculum theory, teacher education, or some particular subject-matter domain such as math or science education, as they do with philosophy of education.

It is still fashionable in some quarters to decry having one's intellectual agenda shaped so strongly as this by concerns emanating from a field of practice; but as Stokes (1997) has made clear, many of the great, theoretically-fruitful research programmes in natural science had their beginnings in such practical concerns—as Pasteur's groundbreaking work illustrates. It is dangerous to take the theory versus practice dichotomy too seriously.

However, there is another consequence of this institutional housing of the vast majority of philosophers of education that is worth noting—one that is not found in a comparable way in philosophers of science, for example, who almost always are located in departments of philosophy—namely, that experience as a teacher, or in some other education-related role, is a qualification to become a philosopher of education that in many cases is valued at least as much as depth of philosophical training. (The issue is not that educational experience is irrelevant—clearly it can be highly pertinent—but it is that in the tradeoff with philosophical training, philosophy often loses.) But there are still other factors at work that contribute to the field's diffuseness, that all relate in some way to the nature of the discipline of philosophy itself.

### **3.11.3 Paradigm Wars? The Diversity of, and Clashes Between, Philosophical Approaches**

As sketched earlier, the domain of education is vast, the issues it raises are almost overwhelmingly numerous and are of great complexity, and the social significance of the field is second to none. These features make the phenomena and problems of education of great interest to a wide range of socially-concerned intellectuals, who bring with them their own favoured conceptual frameworks—concepts, theories and ideologies, methods of analysis and argumentation, metaphysical and other assumptions, criteria for selecting evidence that has relevance for the problems that they consider central, and the like. No wonder educational discourse has occasionally been likened to Babel, for the differences in backgrounds and assumptions means that there is much mutual incomprehension. In the midst of the melee sit the philosophers of education. It is no surprise, then, to find that the significant intellectual and social trends of the past few centuries, together with the significant developments in philosophy, all have had an impact on the content and methods of argument in philosophy

of education-Marxism, psycho-analysis, existentialism, phenomenology, positivism, post-modernism, pragmatism, neo-liberalism, the several waves of feminism, analytic philosophy in both its ordinary language and more formal guises, are merely the tip of the iceberg. It is revealing to note some of the names that were heavily-cited in a pair of recent authoritative handbooks in the field (according to the indices of the two volumes, and in alphabetical order): Adorno, Aristotle, Derrida, Descartes, Dewey, Habermas, Hegel, Horkheimer, Kant, Locke, Lyotard, Marx, Mill, Nietzsche, Plato, Rawls, Richard Rorty, Rousseau, and Wittgenstein. Although this list conveys something of the diversity of the field, it fails to do it complete justice, for the influence of feminist philosophers is not adequately represented.

No one individual can have mastered work done by such a range of figures, representing as they do a number of quite different frameworks or approaches; and relatedly no one person stands as emblematic of the entire field of philosophy of education, and no one type of philosophical writing serves as the norm, either. At professional meetings, peace often reigns because the adherents of the different schools go their separate ways; but occasionally there are (intellectually) violent clashes, rivalling the tumult that greeted Derrida's nomination for an honorary degree at Cambridge in 1992.

It is sobering to reflect that only a few decades have passed since practitioners of analytic philosophy of education had to meet in individual hotel rooms, late at night, at annual meetings of the Philosophy of Education Society in the USA, because phenomenologists and others barred their access to the conference programmes; their path to liberation was marked by discord until, eventually, the compromise of "live and let live" was worked out (Kaminsky, 1996). Of course, the situation has hardly been better in the home discipline; an essay in *Time* magazine in 1966 on the state of the discipline of philosophy reported that adherents of the major philosophical schools "don't even understand one another", and added that as a result "philosophy today is bitterly segregated. Most of the major philosophy departments and scholarly journals are the exclusive property of one sect or another". Traditionally there has been a time-lag for developments in philosophy to migrate over into philosophy of education, but in this respect at least the two fields have been on a par.

Inevitably, however, traces of discord remain, and some groups still feel disenfranchised, but they are not quite the same groups as a few decades ago-for new intellectual paradigms have come into existence, and their adherents are struggling to have their voices heard; and clearly it is the case that-reflecting the situation in 1966-many analytically-trained philosophers of education find postmodern writings incomprehensible while scholars in the latter tradition are frequently dismissive if not contemptuous of work done by the former group. In effect, then, the passage of time has made the field more-and not less-diffuse. All this is evident in a volume published in 1995 in which the editor attempted to break-down borders by initiating dialogue between scholars with different approaches to philosophy of education; her introductory remarks are revealing:



Philosophers of education reflecting on the parameters of our field are faced not only with such perplexing and disruptive questions as: What counts as Philosophy of Education and why?; but also Who counts as a philosopher of education and why?; and What need is there for Philosophy of Education in a postmodern context? Embedded in these queries we find no less provocative ones: What knowledge, if any, can or should be privileged and why?; and Who is in a position to privilege particular discursive practices over others and why? Although such questions are disruptive, they offer the opportunity to take a fresh look at the nature and purposes of our work and, as we do, to expand the number and kinds of voices participating in the conversation.

There is an inward-looking tone to the questions posed here: Philosophy of education should focus upon itself, upon its own contents, methods, and practitioners. And of course there is nothing new about this; for one thing, almost forty years ago a collection of readings—with several score of entries—was published under the title *What is Philosophy of Education?* It is worth noting, too, that the same attitude is not unknown in philosophy; Simmel is reputed to have said a century or so ago that philosophy is its own first problem.

Having described the general topography of the field of philosophy of education, the focus can change to pockets of activity where from the perspective of this author interesting philosophical work is being, or has been, done—and sometimes this work has been influential in the worlds of educational policy or practice. It is appropriate to start with a discussion of the rise and partial decline—but lasting influence of—analytic philosophy of education. This approach (often called "APE" by both admirers and detractors) dominated the field in the English-speaking world for several decades after the second world war, and its eventual fate throws light on the current intellectual climate.

## **THE DIFFERENT BODIES OF WORK TRADITIONALLY INCLUDED IN THE FIELD**

It will not take long for a person who consults several of the introductory texts alluded to earlier to encounter a number of different bodies of work that have by one source or another been regarded as part of the domain of philosophy of education; the inclusion of some of these as part of the field is largely responsible for the diffuse topography described earlier. What follows is an informal and incomplete accounting.

First, there are works of advocacy produced by those non-technical, self-identified "philosophers" described above, who often have an axe to grind; they may wish to destroy (or to save) common schooling, support or attack some innovation or reform, shore-up or destroy the capitalist mode of production, see their own religion (or none at all) gain a foothold in the public schools, strengthen the place of "the basics" in the school curriculum, and so forth.

While these topics certainly can be, and have been, discussed with due care, often they have been pursued in loose but impressive language where exhortation substitutes for argumentation—and hence sometimes they are mistaken for works

of philosophy of education. In the following discussion this genre shall be passed over in silence. Second, there is a corpus of work somewhat resembling the first, but where the arguments are tighter, and where the authors usually are individuals of some distinction whose insights are thought-provoking—possibly because they have a degree of familiarity with some branch of educational activity, having been teachers, school principals, religious leaders, politicians, journalists, and the like. While these works frequently touch on philosophical issues, they are not pursued in any philosophical depth and can hardly be considered as contributions to the scholarship of the discipline. However, some works in this genre are among the classics of “educational thought”—a more felicitous label than “philosophy of education”; cases in point would be the essays, pamphlets and letters of Thomas Arnold (headmaster of Rugby school), John Wesley (the founder of Methodism), J.H. (Cardinal) Newman, T.H. Huxley, and the writings on progressive schooling by A.S. Neill (of Summerhill school).

Some textbooks even include extracts from the writings or recorded sayings of such figures as Thomas Jefferson, Ben Franklin, and Jesus of Nazareth (for the latter three, in works spanning more than half a century). Books and extracts in this genre—which might be called “cultured reflection on education”—are often used in teacher-training courses that march under the banner of “educational foundations”, “introduction to educational thought”, or “introduction to philosophy of education”.

Third, there are a number of educational theorists and researchers whose field of activity is not philosophy but (for example) human development or learning theory, who in their technical work and sometimes in their non-technical books and reflective essays explicitly raise philosophical issues or adopt philosophical modes of argumentation—and do so in ways worthy of careful study.

If philosophy (including philosophy of education) is defined so as to include analysis and reflection at an abstract or “meta-level”, which undoubtedly is a domain where many philosophers labour, then these individuals should have a place in the annals of philosophy or philosophy of education; but too often, although not always, accounts of the field ignore them. Their work might be subjected to scrutiny for being educationally important, but their conceptual or philosophical contributions are rarely focused upon. (Philosophers of the physical and biological sciences are far less prone to make this mistake about the meta-level work of reflective scientists in these domains.)

The educational theorists and researchers who are relevant as exemplars here are the behaviourist psychologist B.F. Skinner (who among other things wrote about the fate of the notions of human freedom and dignity in the light of the development of a “science of behaviour”, and who developed a model of human action and also of learning that eschewed the influence of mental entities such as motives, interests, and ideas and placed the emphasis instead upon “schedules of reinforcement”); the foundational figure in modern developmental psychology with its near-fixation on stage theories, Jean Piaget (who developed

in an abstract and detailed manner a “genetic epistemology” that was related to his developmental research); and the social psychologist Lev Vygotsky (who argued that the development of the human youngster was indelibly shaped by social forces, so much so that approaches which focused on the lone individual and that were biologically-oriented—he had Piaget in mind here—were quite inadequate).

Fourth, and in contrast to the group above, there is a type of work that is traditionally but undeservedly given a prominent place in the annals of philosophy of education, and which thereby generates a great deal of confusion and misunderstanding about the field. These are the books and reflective essays on educational topics that were written by mainstream philosophers, a number of whom are counted among the greatest in the history of the discipline. The catch is this: Even great philosophers do not always write philosophy!

The reflections being referred to contain little if any philosophical argumentation, and usually they were not intended to be contributions to the literature on any of the great philosophical questions. Rather, they expressed the author’s views (or even prejudices) on educational rather than philosophical problems, and sometimes—as in the case of Bertrand Russell’s rollicking pieces defending progressive educational practices—they explicitly were “potboilers” written to make money. (In Russell’s case the royalties were used to support a progressive school he was running with his then-current wife.) Locke, Kant, and Hegel also are among those who produced work of this genre.

John Locke is an interesting case in point. He had been requested by a cousin and her husband—possibly in part because of his medical training—to give advice on the upbringing of their son and heir; the youngster seems to have troubled his parents, most likely because he had learning difficulties.

Locke, then in exile in Europe, wrote the parents a series of letters in which alongside sensible advice about such matters as the priorities in the education of a landed gentleman, and about making learning fun for the boy, there were a few strange items such as the advice that the boy should wear leaky shoes in winter so that he would be toughened up!

The letters eventually were printed in book form under the title *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* (1693), and seem to have had enormous influence down the ages upon educational practice; after two centuries the book had run through some 35 English editions and well over thirty foreign editions, and it is still in print and is frequently excerpted in books of readings in philosophy of education.

In stark contrast, several of Locke’s major philosophical writings—the *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*, and the *Letter on Toleration*—have been overlooked by most educational theorists over the centuries, even though they have enormous relevance for educational philosophy, theory, policy, and practice. It is especially noteworthy that the former of these books was the foundation for an approach to psychology—associationism—that thrived during the nineteenth century.

In addition it stimulated interest in the processes of child development and human learning; Locke’s model of the way in which the “blank tablet” of the

human mind became “furnished” with simple ideas that were eventually combined or abstracted in various ways to form complex ideas suggested to some that it might be fruitful to study this process in the course of development of a young child.

Fifth, and finally, there is a large body of work that clearly falls within the more technically-defined domain of philosophy of education. Three historical giants of the field are Plato, Rousseau, and Dewey, and there are a dozen or more who would be in competition for inclusion along with them; the short-list of leading authors from the second-half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century would include Israel Scheffler, Richard Peters and Paul Hirst, with many jostling for the next places—but the choices become cloudy as we approach the present day, for schisms between philosophical schools have to be negotiated.

It is important to note, too, that there is a sub-category within this domain of literature that is made up of work by philosophers who are not primarily identified as philosophers of education, and who might or might not have had much to say directly about education, but whose philosophical work has been drawn upon by others and applied very fruitfully to educational issues.

We turn next to the difficulty in picturing the topography of the field that is presented by the influence of the last-mentioned category of philosophers.

## OTHER AREAS OF CONTEMPORARY ACTIVITY

As was stressed at the outset, the field of education is huge and contains within it a virtually inexhaustible number of issues that are of philosophical interest. To attempt comprehensive coverage of how philosophers of education have been working within this thicket would be a quixotic task for a large single volume and is out of the question for a solitary encyclopaedia entry. Nevertheless, a valiant attempt to give an overview was made in the recent *A Companion to the Philosophy of Education* (Curren 2003), which contained more than six-hundred pages divided into forty-five chapters each of which surveyed a subfield of work.

The following random selection of chapter topics gives a sense of the enormous scope of the field: Sex education, special education, science education, aesthetic education, theories of teaching and learning, religious education, knowledge, truth and learning, cultivating reason, the measurement of learning, multicultural education, education and the politics of identity, education and standards of living, motivation and classroom management, feminism, critical theory, postmodernism, romanticism, the purposes of universities, affirmative action in higher education, and professional education.

*The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Education* (Siegel 2009a) contains a similarly broad range of articles on (among other things) the epistemic and moral aims of education, liberal education and its imminent demise, thinking and reasoning, fallibilism and fallibility, indoctrination, authenticity, the development of rationality, Socratic teaching, educating the imagination, caring and empathy

in moral education, the limits of moral education, the cultivation of character, values education, curriculum and the value of knowledge, education and democracy, art and education, science education and religious toleration, constructivism and scientific methods, multicultural education, prejudice, authority and the interests of children, and on pragmatist, feminist, and postmodernist approaches to philosophy of education.

Given this enormous range, there is no non-arbitrary way to select a small number of topics for further discussion, nor can the topics that are chosen be pursued in great depth. The choice of those below has been made with an eye to filling out and deepening the topographical account of the field that was presented in the preceding sections. The discussion will open with a topic of great moment across the academic educational community, one concerning which adherents of some of the rival schools of philosophy (and philosophy of education) have had lively exchanges.

### **The Content of the Curriculum, and the Aims and Functions of Schooling**

The issue of what should be taught to students at all levels of education—the issue of curriculum content—obviously is a fundamental one, and it is an extraordinarily difficult one with which to grapple. In tackling it, care needs to be taken to distinguish between education and schooling—for although education can occur in schools, so can mis-education, and many other things can take place there that are educationally orthogonal (such as the provision of free or subsidized lunches, or the development of social networks); and it also must be recognized that education can occur in the home, in libraries and museums, in churches and clubs, in solitary interaction with the public media, and the like.

In developing a curriculum (whether in a specific subject area, or more broadly as the whole range of offerings in an educational institution or system), a number of difficult decisions need to be made. Issues such as the proper ordering or sequencing of topics in the chosen subject, the time to be allocated to each topic, the lab work or excursions or projects that are appropriate for particular topics, can all be regarded as technical issues best resolved either by educationists who have a depth of experience with the target age group or by experts in the psychology of learning.

But there are deeper issues, ones concerning the validity of the justifications that have been given for including particular subjects or topics in the offerings of formal educational institutions. (Why should evolution be included, or excluded, as a topic within the standard high school subject Biology? Is the justification that is given for teaching Economics in some schools coherent and convincing? Does the justification for not including the Holocaust or the phenomenon of wartime atrocities in the curriculum in some countries stand up to critical scrutiny?)

The different justifications for particular items of curriculum content that have been put forward by philosophers and others since Plato's pioneering efforts all draw, explicitly or implicitly, upon the positions that the respective theorists

hold about at least three sets of issues. First, what are the aims and/or functions of education (aims and functions are not necessarily the same)? Alternatively, as Aristotle asked, what constitutes the good life and/or human flourishing, such that education should foster these? (Curren, forthcoming) These two formulations are related, for it is arguable that our educational institutions should aim to equip individuals to pursue this good life—although this is not obvious, both because it is not clear that there is one conception of the good or flourishing life that is the good or flourishing life for everyone, and it is not clear that this is a question that should be settled in advance rather than determined by students for themselves.

Thus, for example, if our view of human flourishing includes the capacity to act rationally and/or autonomously, then the case can be made that educational institutions—and their curricula—should aim to prepare, or help to prepare, autonomous individuals. A rival approach, associated with Kant, champions the educational fostering of autonomy not on the basis of its contribution to human flourishing, but rather the obligation to treat students with respect as persons. (Scheffler 1973/1989, Siegel 1988) Still others urge the fostering of autonomy on the basis of students' fundamental interests, in ways that draw upon both Aristotelian and Kantian conceptual resources. (Brighouse 2006, 2009) How students should be helped to become autonomous or develop a conception of the good life and pursue it is of course not immediately obvious, and much philosophical ink has been spilled on the matter.

One influential line of argument was developed by Paul Hirst, who argued that knowledge is essential for developing and then pursuing a conception of the good life, and because logical analysis shows, he argued, that there are seven basic forms of knowledge, the case can be made that the function of the curriculum is to introduce students to each of these forms. Another is that curriculum content should be selected so as “to help the learner attain maximum self-sufficiency as economically as possible.”

Second, is it justifiable to treat the curriculum of an educational institution as a vehicle for furthering the socio-political interests and goals of a ruler or ruling class; and relatedly, is it justifiable to design the curriculum so that it serves as a medium of control or of social engineering? In the closing decades of the twentieth century there were numerous discussions of curriculum theory, particularly from Marxist and postmodern perspectives, that offered the sobering analysis that in many educational systems, including those in Western democracies, the curriculum does indeed reflect and serve the interests of the ruling class. Michael Apple is typical:

The knowledge that now gets into schools is already a choice from a much larger universe of possible social knowledge and principles. It is a form of cultural capital that comes from somewhere, that often reflects the perspectives and beliefs of powerful segments of our social collectivity. In its very production and dissemination as a public and economic commodity—as books, films, materials, and so forth—it is repeatedly filtered through ideological and



economic commitments. Social and economic values, hence, are already embedded in the design of the institutions we work in, in the ‘formal corpus of school knowledge’ we preserve in our curricula....

Third, should educational programmes at the elementary and secondary levels be made up of a number of disparate offerings, so that individuals with different interests and abilities and affinities for learning can pursue curricula that are suitable? Or should every student pursue the same curriculum as far as each is able—a curriculum, it should be noted, that in past cases nearly always was based on the needs or interests of those students who were academically inclined or were destined for elite social roles. Mortimer Adler and others in the late twentieth century sometimes used the aphorism “the best education for the best is the best education for all”.

The thinking here can be explicated in terms of the analogy of an out-of-control virulent disease, for which there is only one type of medicine available; taking a large dose of this medicine is extremely beneficial, and the hope is that taking only a little—while less effective—is better than taking none at all. Medically, this is dubious, while the educational version—forcing students to work, until they exit the system, on topics that do not interest them and for which they have no facility or motivation—has even less merit. It is interesting to compare the modern “one curriculum track for all” position with Plato’s system outlined in the *Republic*, according to which all students—and importantly this included girls—set out on the same course of study.

Over time, as they moved up the educational ladder it would become obvious that some had reached the limit imposed upon them by nature, and they would be directed off into appropriate social roles in which they would find fulfillment, for their abilities would match the demands of these roles. Those who continued on with their education would eventually be able to contemplate the metaphysical realm of the “forms”, thanks to their advanced training in mathematics and philosophy. Having seen the form of the Good, they would be eligible after a period of practical experience to become members of the ruling class of Guardians.

### **Social Epistemology**

Related to the issues concerning the aims and functions of education and schooling just rehearsed are those involving the specifically *epistemic* aims of education and attendant issues treated by social epistemologists. There is, first, a lively debate concerning putative epistemic aims, whether truth (or knowledge understood in the “weak” sense of true belief) (Goldman 1999), critical thinking or rationality and rational belief (or knowledge in the “strong” sense that includes justification), or understanding (Elgin 1999, 1999a).

Next is controversy concerning the places of *testimony* and *trust* in the classroom: In what circumstances if any ought students to trust their teachers’ pronouncements, and why? Related are questions concerning *indoctrination* : How if at all does it differ from legitimate teaching? Is it inevitable, and if so is

it not always or necessarily bad? Additionally there are traditional epistemological worries concerning *absolutism* and *relativism* with respect to knowledge, truth and justification as these relate to what is taught, with more recent worries concerning the character and status of *group epistemologies* and the prospects for understanding such epistemic goods “universalistically” in the face of some feminist, multiculturalist and postmodernist challenges adding newer dimensions to the more familiar mix. (There is more here than can be briefly summarized; for more systematic treatment cf. Robertson 2009 and Siegel 2004.)

### **Rousseau, Dewey, and the Progressive Movement**

Plato’s educational scheme was guided, presumably, by the understanding he thought he had achieved of the transcendental realm of fixed “forms”. Dewey, ever a strong critic of positions that were not naturalistic or that incorporated *a priori* premises, commented as follows: Plato’s starting point is that the organization of society depends ultimately upon knowledge of the end of existence. If we do not know its end, we shall be at the mercy of accident and caprice.... And only those who have rightly trained minds will be able to recognize the end, and ordering principle of things.

Furthermore, as Dewey again put it, Plato “had no perception of the uniqueness of individuals.... they fall by nature into classes”, which masks the “infinite diversity of active tendencies” which individuals harbour (104). In addition, Plato tended to talk of learning using the passive language of seeing, which has shaped our discourse down to the present.

In contrast, for Dewey each individual was an organism situated in a biological and social environment in which problems were constantly emerging, forcing the individual to reflect, act, and learn. Dewey, following William James, held that knowledge arises from reflection upon our actions and that the worth of a putative item of knowledge is directly correlated with the problem-solving success of the actions performed under its guidance.

Thus Dewey, sharply disagreeing with Plato, regarded knowing as an active rather than a passive affair—a strong theme in his writings is his opposition to what is sometimes called “the spectator theory of knowledge”. All this is made clear enough in a passage containing only a thinly-veiled allusion to Plato’s famous allegory of the prisoners in the cave whose eyes are turned to the light by education:

In schools, those under instruction are too customarily looked upon as acquiring knowledge as theoretical spectators, minds which appropriate knowledge by direct energy of intellect. The very word pupil has almost come to mean one who is engaged not in having fruitful experiences but in absorbing knowledge directly. Something which is called mind or consciousness is severed from the physical organs of activity. (164)

It is easy to see here the tight link between Dewey’s epistemology and his views on education—his anti-spectator epistemology morphs directly into

advocacy for anti-spectator learning by students in school—students learn by being active inquirers. Over the past few decades this view of learning has inspired a major tradition of research by educational psychologists, and related theory-development (the “situated cognition” framework); and these bodies of work have in turn led to innovative efforts in curriculum development.

The final important difference with Plato is that, for Dewey, each student is an individual who blazes his or her unique trail of growth; the teacher has the task of guiding and facilitating this growth, without imposing a fixed end upon the process. Dewey sometimes uses the term “curriculum” to mean “the funded wisdom of the human race”, the point being that over the course of human history an enormous stock of knowledge and skills has accumulated and the teacher has the task of helping the student to make contact with this repertoire—but helping by facilitating rather than by imposing. (All this, of course, has been the subject of intense discussion among philosophers of education: Does growth imply a direction?)

Is growth always good—can’t a plant end up misshapen, and can’t a child develop to become bad? Is Dewey some type of perfectionist? Is his philosophy too vague to offer worthwhile educational guidance? Isn’t it possible for a “Deweyan” student to end up without enough relevant knowledge and skills to be able to make a living in the modern world?)

Dewey’s work was of central importance for the American progressive education movement in its formative years, although there was a fair degree of misunderstanding of his ideas as progressives interpreted his often extremely dense prose to be saying what they personally happened to believe. Nevertheless, for better or worse, Dewey became the “poster child” of progressive education.

His popularity, however, sharply declined after the Soviets launched Sputnik, for Dewey and progressive education were blamed for the USA losing the race into space (illustrating the point about scapegoating made earlier). But he did not remain in disgrace for long and for some time has been the focus of renewed interest—although it is still noticeable that commentators interpret Dewey to be holding views that mirror their own positions or interests. And interestingly, there now is slightly more interest in Dewey on the part of philosophers of education in the UK than there was in earlier years, and there is growing interest by philosophers from the Continent.

To be the poster child for progressivism, however, is not to be the parent. That honour must go to Jean-Jacques Rousseau, and to his educational novel written in soaring prose, *Emile* (first published in 1762). Starting with the premise that “God makes all things good; man meddles with them and they become evil” (Rousseau 1955, 5), Rousseau held that contemporary man has been misshapen by his education; the “crushing force” of social conventions has stifled the “Nature within him”.

The remedy adopted in the novel is for the young Emile to be taken to his family estate in the country where, away from the corrupting influence of society and under the watchful eye of his tutor, “everything should ... be brought into

harmony with these natural tendencies”. (This idea of education according to nature, it will be recalled, was the object of Hardie’s analytic attention almost two centuries later.)

Out in the countryside, rather than having a set curriculum that he is forced to follow, Emile learns when some natural stimulus or innate interest motivates him—and under these conditions learning comes easily. He is allowed to suffer the natural consequences of his actions (if he breaks a window, he gets cold; if he takes the gardener’s property, the gardener will no longer do him favours), and experiences such as these lead to the development of his moral system.

Although Rousseau never intended these educational details to be taken literally as a blueprint (he saw himself as developing and illustrating the basic principles), over the ages there have been attempts to implement them, one being the famous British “free school”, A.S. Neill’s Summerhill. (It is worth noting that Neill claimed not to have read Rousseau, but he was working in a milieu in which Rousseau’s ideas were well-known.) Furthermore, over the ages these principles also have proven to be fertile soil for philosophers of education to till.

Even more fertile ground for comment, in recent years, has been Rousseau’s proposal for the education of girls, developed in a section of the novel (Book V) that bears the name of the young woman who is destined to be Emile’s soul-mate, Sophie. The puzzle has been why Rousseau—who had been so far-sighted in his discussion of Emile’s education—was so hide-bound if not retrograde in his thinking about her education.

One short quotation is sufficient to illustrate the problem: “If woman is made to please and to be in subjection to man, she ought to make herself pleasing in his eyes and not provoke him ...her strength is in her charms” (324). Not surprisingly, feminist philosophers of education have been in the vanguard of the critique of this position (Martin 1985).

The educational principles developed by Rousseau and Dewey, and numerous educational theorists and philosophers in the interregnum, are alive and well in the twenty-first century. Of particular contemporary interest is the evolution that has occurred of the progressive idea that each student is an active learner who is pursuing his or her own individual educational path.

By incorporating elements of the classical empiricist epistemology of John Locke, this progressive principle has become transformed into the extremely popular position known as *constructivism*, according to which each student in a classroom constructs his or her own individual body of understandings even when all in the group are given what appears to be the same stimulus or educational experience. (A consequence of this is that a classroom of thirty students will have thirty individually-constructed, and possibly different, bodies of “knowledge”, in addition to that of the teacher.)

There is also a solipsistic element here, for constructivists also believe that none of us—teachers included—can directly access the bodies of understandings of anyone else; each of us is imprisoned in a world of our own making. It is an

understatement to say that this poses great difficulties for the teacher. The education journals of the past two decades contain many thousands of references to discussions of this position, which has become a type of educational “secular religion”; for reasons that are hard to discern it is particularly influential in mathematics and science education. (For a discussion of the underlying philosophical ideas in constructivism, and for an account of some of its varieties and flaws, see the essays in Phillips.

# 5

## Marx's Theory and Educational Philosophy

Fundamentally, Marx assumed that human nature involves transforming material nature. To this process of transformation he applies the term “labour”, and to the capacity to transform nature the term “labour power”. Marx stated: “A spider conducts operations that resemble those of a weaver, and a bee puts to shame many an architect in the construction of her cells. But what distinguishes the worst architect from the best of bees is this, that the architect raises his structure in imagination before he erects it in reality.”

Unlike insects and arachnids, humans recognise that they possess both actual and potential selves. For both Marx and Hegel, self-development begins with an experience of internal alienation stemming from this recognition, followed by a realisation that the actual self, as a subjective agent, renders its potential counterpart an object to be apprehended. Marx further argues that, by molding nature in desired ways, the subject takes the object as its own, and thus permits the individual to be actualised as fully human. For Marx, then, human nature—*Gattungswesen*, or species-being—exists as a function of human labour. Fundamental to Marx's idea of meaningful labour is the proposition that, in order for a subject to come to terms with its alienated object, it must first exert influence upon literal, material objects in the subject's world. Marx acknowledges that Hegel “grasps the nature of *work* and comprehends objective man, authentic because actual, as the result of his *own work*”, but characterises Hegelian self-development as unduly “spiritual” and abstract. Marx thus departs from Hegel by insisting that “the fact that man is a *corporeal*, actual, sentient, objective being with natural capacities



means that he has *actual, sensuous objects* for his nature as objects of his life-expression, or that he can only *express* his life in actual sensuous objects.” Consequently, Marx revises Hegelian “work” into material labour.

*Marx’s analysis of history focuses on the organisation of labour and depends on his distinction between:*

1. The means/forces of production, literally those things (like land, natural resources, and technology) necessary for the production of material goods; and
2. The relations of production, in other words, the social relationships people enter into as they acquire and use the means of production.

Together these compose the mode of production, and Marx distinguished historical eras in terms of distinct modes of production. For example, he observed that European societies had progressed from a feudal mode of production to a capitalist mode of production. Marx believed that under capitalism, the means of production change more rapidly than the relations of production. Marx regarded this mismatch between (economic) base and (social) superstructure as a major source of social disruption and conflict.

As a scientist and materialist, Marx did not understand classes as purely subjective (in other words, groups of people who consciously identified with one another). He sought to define classes in terms of objective criteria, such as their access to resources—that is, whether or not a group owns the means of production. For Marx:

*“The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles.”*

Marx had a special concern with how people relate to that most fundamental resource of all, their own labour power. He wrote extensively about this in terms of the problem of alienation. As with the dialectic, Marx began with a Hegelian notion of alienation but developed a more materialist conception. Capitalism mediates social relationships of production (such as among workers or between workers and capitalists) through commodities, including labour, that are bought and sold on the market. For Marx, the possibility that one may give up ownership of one’s own labour—one’s capacity to transform the world—is tantamount to being alienated from one’s own nature; it is a spiritual loss. Marx described this loss as commodity fetishism, in which the things that people produce, commodities, appear to have a life and movement of their own to which humans and their behaviour merely adapt.

Commodity fetishism provides an example of what Engels called “false consciousness”, which relates closely to the understanding of ideology. By “ideology”, Marx and Engels meant ideas that reflect the interests of a particular class at a particular time in history, but which contemporaries see as universal and eternal. Marx and Engels’ point was not only that such beliefs are at best half-truths; they serve an important political function. Put another way, the control that one class exercises over the means of production includes not only the production of food or manufactured goods; it includes the production of

ideas as well (this provides one possible explanation for why members of a subordinate class may hold ideas contrary to their own interests). Thus, while such ideas may be false, they also reveal in coded form some truth about political relations. For example, although the belief that the things people produce are actually more productive than the people who produce them is literally absurd, it does reflect (according to Marx and Engels) that people under capitalism are alienated from their own labour-power. Another example of this sort of analysis is Marx's understanding of religion, summed up in a passage from the preface to his 1843 *Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*:

*"Religious suffering is, at one and the same time, the expression of real suffering and a protest against real suffering. Religion is the sigh of the oppressed creature, the heart of a heartless world, and the soul of soulless conditions. It is the opium of the people."*

— (*Contribution to the Critique of Hegel's Philosophy of Right*)

Whereas his Gymnasium senior thesis argued that religion had as its primary social aim the promotion of solidarity, here Marx sees the social function of religion in terms of highlighting/preserving political and economic inequality. Moreover, he provides an analysis of the ideological functions of religion: to reveal "an *inverted consciousness of the world*." He continues: "It is the immediate *task of philosophy*, which is in the service of history, to unmask self-estrangement in its *unholy forms*, once religion, the *holy form* of human self-estrangement has been unmasked". For Marx, this unholy self-estrangement, the "loss of man", is complete once the proletariat realizes its potential to unite in revolutionary solidarity. His final conclusion is that for Germany, general human emancipation is only possible as a suspension of private property by the proletariat.

## POLITICAL ECONOMY

Marx argued that this alienation of human work (and resulting commodity fetishism) functions precisely as the defining feature of capitalism. Prior to capitalism, markets existed in Europe where producers and merchants bought and sold commodities. According to Marx, a capitalist mode of production developed in Europe when labour itself became a commodity—when peasants became free to sell their own labour-power, and needed to do so because they no longer possessed their own land. People sell their labour-power when they accept compensation in return for whatever work they do in a given period of time. In return for selling their labour-power they receive money, which allows them to survive. Those who must sell their labour-power are "proletarians". The person who buys the labour power, generally someone who does own the land and technology to produce, is a "capitalist" or "bourgeois". The proletarians inevitably outnumber the capitalists.

Marx distinguished industrial capitalists from merchant capitalists. Merchants buy goods in one market and sell them in another. Since the laws of supply and demand operate within given markets, a difference often exists between the

price of a commodity in one market and another. Merchants, then, practise arbitrage, and hope to capture the difference between these two markets. According to Marx, capitalists, on the other hand, take advantage of the difference between the labour market and the market for whatever commodity the capitalist can produce. Marx observed that in practically every successful industry input unit-costs are lower than output unit-prices. Marx called the difference “surplus value” and argued that this surplus value had its source in surplus labour, the difference between what it costs to keep workers alive and what they can produce.

Capitalism can stimulate considerable growth because the capitalist can, and has an incentive to, reinvest profits in new technologies and capital equipment. Marx considered the capitalist class to be one of the most revolutionary in history, because it constantly improved the means of production. But Marx argued that capitalism was prone to periodic crises. He suggested that over time, capitalists would invest more and more in new technologies, and less and less in labour. Since Marx believed that surplus value appropriated from labour is the source of profits, he concluded that the rate of profit would fall even as the economy grew. When the rate of profit falls below a certain point, the result would be a recession or depression in which certain sectors of the economy would collapse. Marx thought that during such an economic crisis the price of labour would also fall, and eventually make possible the investment in new technologies and the growth of new sectors of the economy.

Marx believed that increasingly severe crises would punctuate this cycle of growth, collapse, and more growth. Moreover, he believed that in the long-term this process would necessarily enrich and empower the capitalist class and impoverish the proletariat. He believed that if the proletariat were to seize the means of production, they would encourage social relations that would benefit everyone equally, and a system of production less vulnerable to periodic crises.

He theorized that between capitalism and the establishment of a socialist system, a dictatorship of the proletariat—a period where the working class holds political power and forcibly socializes the means of production—would exist. As he wrote in his “Critique of the Gotha Programme”, “between capitalist and communist society there lies the period of the revolutionary transformation of the one into the other. Corresponding to this is also a political transition period in which the state can be nothing but the revolutionary dictatorship of the proletariat.” While he allowed for the possibility of peaceful transition in some countries with strong democratic institutional structures, he suggested that in other countries with strong centralized state-oriented traditions, like France and Germany, the “lever of our revolution must be force.” As a Founder of Social Science

Marx is typically cited, along with Emile Durkheim and Max Weber, as one of the three principal architects of modern social science. Both Marx and Auguste Comte set out to develop scientifically justified ideologies in the wake of European secularisation and new developments in the philosophies of history and science. Whilst Marx, working in the Hegelian tradition, rejected Comtean

sociological positivism, in attempting to develop a *science of society* he nevertheless came to be recognized as a founder of sociology as the word gained wider meaning. For Isaiah Berlin, Marx may be regarded as the “true father” of modern sociology, “in so far as anyone can claim the title.”

*To have given clear and unified answers in familiar empirical terms to those theoretical questions which most occupied men’s minds at the time, and to have deduced from them clear practical directives without creating obviously artificial links between the two, was the principle achievement of Marx’s theory ... The sociological treatment of historical and moral problems, which Comte and after him, Spencer and Taine, had discussed and mapped, became a precise and concrete study only when the attack of militant Marxism made its conclusions a burning issue, and so made the search for evidence more zealous and the attention to method more intense. – Isaiah Berlin Karl Marx: His Life and Environment 1937.*

## SIGNIFICANCE IN MARX’S THOUGHT

Alienation is a foundational claim in Marxist theory. Hegel described a succession of historic stages in the human *Geist* (Spirit), by which that Spirit progresses towards perfect self-understanding, and away from ignorance. In Marx’s reaction to Hegel, these two, idealist poles are replaced with materialist categories: spiritual ignorance becomes alienation, and the transcendent end of history becomes man’s *realisation of his species-being*; triumph over alienation and establishment of an objectively better society. This teleological (goal-oriented) reading of Marx, particularly supported by Alexandre Kojève before World War II, is criticized by Louis Althusser in his writings about “random materialism”. Althusser claimed that said reading made the proletariat the subject of history, was tainted with Hegelian idealism, the “philosophy of the subject” that had been in force for five centuries, which was criticized as the “bourgeois ideology of philosophy”.

## RELATION TO MARX’S THEORY OF HISTORY

In *The German Ideology* Marx writes that ‘things have now come to such a pass that the individuals must appropriate the existing totality of productive forces, not only to achieve self-activity, but, also, merely to safeguard their very existence’. In other words, Marx seems to think that, while humans do have a need for self-activity, this will be of secondary historical relevance. This is because he thinks that capitalism will increase the economic impoverishment of the proletariat so rapidly that they will be forced to make the social revolution just to stay alive-they probably wouldn’t even get to the point of worrying that much about self-activity. This doesn’t mean, though, that tendencies against alienation *only* manifest themselves once other needs are amply met, only that they are of reduced importance. The work of Raya Dunayevskaya and others in the tradition of Marxist humanism drew attention to manifestations of the desire for self-activity even among workers struggling for more basic goals.

## CLASS

In this passage, from *The Holy Family*, Marx says that capitalists and proletarians are equally alienated, but experience their alienation in different ways: The propertied class and the class of the proletariat present the same human self-estrangement. But the former class feels at ease and strengthened in this self-estrangement, it recognizes estrangement as its own power and has in it the semblance of a human existence. The class of the proletariat feels annihilated, this means that they cease to exist in estrangement; it sees in it its own powerlessness and the reality of an inhuman existence. It is, to use an expression of Hegel, in its abasement the indignation at that abasement, an indignation to which it is necessarily driven by the contradiction between its human nature and its condition of life, which is the outright, resolute and comprehensive negation of that nature. Within this antithesis the private property-owner is therefore the conservative side, the proletarian the destructive side. From the former arises the action of preserving the antithesis, from the latter the action of annihilating it.

## THEORY OF KARL MARX

According to Karl Marx, private property is the necessary and inevitable result of alienated labour or the product of the worker who is estranged from himself. The basis for this idea is found in the notion that the working class labors to produce products that belong to someone else, and that the compensation the working class receives is always less than the value of the product they create. "Private property is thus the product, the result, the necessary consequence of alienated labour, of the external relation of the worker to nature and to himself. Private property thus results by analysis from the concept of alienated labour, of alienated man, of estranged labour, of estranged life, of estranged man."

Believing that the product of one's labour should belong solely to the laborer, Marx postulated that in a capitalist system the laborer is forced to accept the notion that his labour belongs to someone else and is therefore estranged and alienated from his own being, in an almost schizophrenic manner. Even though the laborer is compensated, this compensation is insufficient due to the fact that it is less than the actual value of the commodity being produced; this being the source of the capitalist's profit.

The capitalist who hires the laborers is depicted as an exploiter of the working class, and the ultimate beneficiary of the property which should rightfully belong to the ones who created it. Private property serves as the basis for which Marx divides people into two classes; the property owners and the property-less workers. In his view all private property is ill-gained and the end-product of the exploitation and abuse of the working class, who are helpless victims.

Marx also views the idea of private property as the foundation for which Political Economy exists. He criticizes the political economy for failing to

educate the masses on the economic laws that surround private property, and that the political economy itself does not fully understanding them. He further criticizes the political economy: "Political economy conceals the estrangement inherent in the nature of labour by not considering the direct relationship between the worker (labour) and production."

Again, the basis for this idea is found in the idea that the end product of one's labour should rightfully belong to its producer. This goes back to the alienation of the laborer from his work, from nature, and ultimately from himself. The above ideas also necessitate the idea that wages no matter how great or small are merely a token of slavery. Since the laborer is not working for himself, but for another, it is not possible to view the laborer as anything but a slave. This idea forms Karl Marx's fundamental notion of the employer/employee relationship. He views the worker's relationship to his employer in terms of power and that the employer is the master and the employee is the servant or slave. According to Marx, the servant is more valuable because he is the one doing the actual work. This work requires a certain amount of creative energy and therefore the employee will become smarter than the employer. At this point, the servant develops an enormous amount of resentment towards his employer and this evolves into a classic struggle.

Marx goes on to state that he believes that this class warfare harms the greater good by impoverishing the general public while empowering and enriching a minority elite and ruling class. This class war is further exasperated by the idea that the more valuable the product produced by the worker, the less valuable the worker becomes and that the more the workers produce, the less they have to consume, and the more civilized the product is the more barbaric it becomes to the worker. Due to the growth of capitalist systems, the laborer becomes less humanized and more of a commodity as the worker is nothing more than a source of labour which serves the capitalist and not the worker himself. To Karl Marx, the reduction of a worker to a mere commodity accompanied by his complete dehumanization, estrangement and alienation to himself and nature, as well as his ultimate enslavement and loss of happiness, are the end results of the existence of private property. Competition is viewed as an endless war of greedy capitalists that is destructive to society and also results in the enslavement of the working class. One of the major problems with Karl Marx's philosophy is what I see as a fundamental flaw in its foundation. The idea that there are two classes of people as the result of private property is overly simplistic at best. It is also quick to simply dismiss the importance of wages and the power that they give to the working class. Is not the worker free to use his wages for the acquisition of property or employees for himself?

There is also no mention of the value of intellectual property, which gives the inventor of a product credit for his creation. Why should the worker own a product that they had no part in designing or inventing? The worker's choice in profession is certainly a factor in determining whether or not he or she can be replaced by a machine. A worker who chooses to do the work of an automaton



is merely acting as a machine, and should a more efficient and less costly-machine become available to the employer, it is his right if not his duty to replace the outdated, more expensive, and less-efficient process for the newer, more efficient version for the sake of the consumer (a class which the employer and employee are both members of). While he is quick to criticize the employer for replacing workers with machines, he fails to mention anything about the inventors, engineers, salesman, managers, production workers, and other staff that create, build, market, and sell those machines. Obviously, he would view this as simply an expansion of the market which further impoverishes the working class rather than doing anything for its benefit.

There is also another terrible mistake made by Karl Marx. He assumes that people cannot and do not feel fulfilment or happiness in the labouring for the benefit of others.

The world is full of people who labour because they believe strongly in a cause, in a product, or a service that they love or respect. Marx believes strongly that greed and self-importance are the driving factors in all humans. While, on a certain animalistic level, this is instinctual, it is not so simple. Psychologists have shown that when people act in ways that are selfless and beneficial to others they become happier.

This fundamental misunderstanding of human nature coupled with his oversimplification of complex economic systems into two categories proves to be fatal to many of Karl Marx's ideas, assumptions, and conclusions. While his ideas may find popularity among lower/entry-level workers, and were at the heart of the Soviet Revolution, they do nothing to advance the cause of the workers who adopt them, in fact by breeding hostility in workers towards their employers, the workers often find themselves worse off and more unhappy than before.

True Marxists would probably argue that the Soviets did not adopt true Marxist ideas, and the reason for this is probably due to the fact that his ideas are too impractical to exist in the real world. Some Israeli kibbutzim (communal farms) attempted to adopt a more idealistic form of Marxism and found a bit more success although it was short-lived. Most kibbutzim are no-longer functional or have altered the way they function in order to continue to exist. Although Karl Marx has some novel ideas and makes some valid points, I find that overall his conclusions and underlying philosophy are terribly flawed and only bring harm to society and serve little or no positive purpose.

## **KARL MARX AND EDUCATION**

Karl Marx never wrote anything directly on education – yet his influence on writers, academics, intellectuals and educators who came after him has been profound. The power of his ideas has changed the way we look at the world. Whether you accept his analysis of society or whether you oppose it, he cannot be ignored. As Karl Popper, a fierce opponent of Marxism, has claimed 'all modern writers are indebted to Marx, even if they do not know it'.

## LIFE

Karl Marx was born in Trier on May 5, 1818. He studied at the universities of Bonn, Berlin, and Jena. His early writings for, and editorship of, the Cologne newspaper *Rheinische Zeitung* brought him quickly into conflict with the government. He was critical of social conditions and existing political arrangements. In 1843 after only a year in post, Marx was compelled to resign as editor. Soon afterwards the paper was also forced to stop publication. Marx then went to Paris (where he first met Engels). His radicalism had come to be recognizably 'communistic'. His revolutionary analysis and activity led to him being ordered to leave Paris in 1845. Karl Marx went onto settle in Brussels and began to organize Communist Correspondence Committees in a number of European cities. This led to the organizing of the Communist League (and the writing of the *Communist Manifesto* with Engels). With the unrest and revolutionary activity of 1848, Marx was again forced to leave a country. He returned to Paris and then to the Rhineland. In Cologne he set up and edited the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, and continued organizing. In 1849 Marx was arrested and tried on a charge of incitement to armed insurrection. He got off, but was expelled from Germany. Karl Marx spent the remainder of his life in England, arriving in London in 1849. His most productive years were spent in the Reading Room of the British Museum where much of his research and writing took place. He wrote a great deal although hardly any of it was published in English until after his death in 1883.

## KARL MARX AS A THINKER

Marx's intellectual output is difficult to categorize for whilst his major work, *Das Kapital*, translated into English as *Capital*, is a work of economics, he is more popularly recognised as a social scientist and a political philosopher. As C. Wright Mills has explained: "as with most complicated thinkers, there is no *one* Marx. The various presentations of his work which we can construct from his books, pamphlets, articles, letters written at different times in his own development, depend upon our point of interest ...; every student must earn his own Marx." So today, we have Marxist anthropology, Marxist literary criticism, Marxist aesthetics, Marxist pedagogy, Marxist cultural studies, Marxist sociology, *etc.* His intellectual output lasted from the early 1840s to the early 1880s and over that long period of 40 years produced a number of works that have enriched the thinking of those who came after him.

There are many who see different stages in the thinking of Karl Marx. His earlier works are sometimes referred to as showing a humanistic Marx, a philosophical Marx who was concerned with the role of the individual, with what human beings are actually like, with the relationship between consciousness and existence. The later Marx, we are told, wrote as a social scientist, a political economist who was more concerned with social structure than with individuals. It is possible to read this into the work of Karl Marx but it is also possible to see

a basic thread going right through all his work. One of the reasons for this is that one of his major works, the *Grundrisse* or *Outlines*, described by David McLellan, Marx's biographer as "the most fundamental of all Marx's writings" was not published in English until the 1970s. It is quite easy, therefore, to see why there are different perspectives on Karl Marx, why my Marx can be different from your Marx.

## KARL MARX ON THE CLASS STRUGGLE

So what was it that made Karl Marx so important? At the cornerstone of his thinking is the concept of the class struggle. He was not unique in discovering the existence of classes. Others had done this before him. What Marx did that was new was to recognize that the existence of classes was bound up with particular modes of production or economic structure and that the proletariat, the new working class that Capitalism had created, had a historical potential leading to the abolition of all classes and to the creation of a classless society. He maintained that "the history of all existing society is a history of class struggle". Each society, whether it was tribal, feudal or capitalist was characterized by the way its individuals produced their means of subsistence, their material means of life, how they went about producing the goods and services they needed to live. Each society created a ruling class and a subordinate class as a result of their mode of production or economy. By their very nature the relationship between these two was antagonistic. Marx referred to this as the relations of production. Their interests were not the same. The feudal economy was characterized by the existence of a small group of lords and barons that later developed into a landed aristocracy and a large group of landless peasants. The capitalist economy that superseded it was characterized by a small group of property owners who owned the means of production *i.e.*, the factories, the mines and the mills and all the machinery within them. This group was also referred to as the bourgeoisie or capitalist class. Alongside them was a large and growing working class. He saw the emergence of this new propertyless working class as the agent of its own self emancipation. It was precisely the working class, created and organized into industrial armies, that would destroy its creator and usher in a new society free from exploitation and oppression. "What the bourgeoisie, therefore, produces, above all, is its own grave-diggers".

## THE COMMUNIST MANIFESTO

These ideas first saw the light of day as an integrated whole in the *Communist Manifesto* which Marx wrote with his compatriot Frederick Engels in 1847/8. The Manifesto begins with a glowing tribute to the historical and revolutionary role of the bourgeoisie. It points out how the bourgeoisie had totally altered the face of the earth as it revolutionized the means of production, constantly expanded the market for its products, created towns and cities, moved vast populations from rural occupations into factories and centralized political administration. Karl Marx sums up the massive achievements of the bourgeoisie

by declaring that “during its rule of scarce one hundred years (it) has created more massive and more colossal productive forces than have all preceding generations together. Subjection of Nature’s forces to Man, machinery, application of chemistry to industry and agriculture, steam-navigation, railways, electric telegraphs, clearing of whole continents for cultivation, canalization of rivers, whole populations conjured out of the ground – what earlier century had even a presentiment that such productive forces slumbered in the lap of social labour?”. However, the creation of these productive forces had the effect, not of improving the lot of society, but of periodically creating a situation of crisis. Commercial crises as a result of over-production occurred more and more frequently as the productive forces were held back by the bourgeois organization of production and exchange.

But along with the development of the bourgeoisie who own the means of production we find the development of the proletariat – the propertyless working class. With the evolution of modern industry, Marx pointed out that workmen became factory fodder, appendages to machines. Men were crowded into factories with army-like discipline, constantly watched by overseers and at the whim of individual manufacturers. Increasing competition and commercial crises led to fluctuating wages whilst technological improvement led to a livelihood that was increasingly precarious. The result was a growth in the number of battles between individual workmen and individual employers whilst collisions took on more and more “the character of collisions between two classes”. Marx and Engels characterize the growth of the working class as a “more or less veiled civil war raging within existing society” but unlike previous historical movements which were minority movements, the working class movement is “the self-conscious independent movement of the immense majority, in the interests of the immense majority”. The conclusion they drew from this was that the overthrow of bourgeois supremacy and a victory for the working class would not, therefore, produce another minority ruling class but “in place of the old bourgeois society, with its classes and class antagonisms, we shall have an association, in which the free development of each is the condition of the free development of all”.

The *Communist Manifesto* contains within it, the basic political theory of Marxism – a theory that Marx was to unfold, reshape and develop for the rest of his life. Without doubt, the Manifesto is sketchy and over-simplistic but its general principles were never repudiated by Marx although those parts that had become antiquated he was only too ready to reject or modify.

For instance, the two-class model which has always been associated with Marx was never an accurate picture of his theory. Marx later made it quite clear that within the bourgeoisie, there were a whole number of factions existing based on different types of property such as finance, industry, land and commerce. He was aware of the growth of the middle classes, situated midway between the workers on the one side and the capitalists and landowners on the other. He regarded them as resting with all their weight upon the working class and at the

same time increasing the security and power of the upper class. At the other end of the spectrum, he explains the existence of different strata of the working class such as the nomad population moving around the country, the paupers, the unemployed or industrial reserve army and what has become known as the aristocracy of labour, the skilled artisans. All of these strata made up a working class created by capitalist accumulation.

However, why is it that Marx felt that the existence of classes meant that the relationship between them was one of exploitation? In feudal societies, exploitation often took the form of the direct transfer of produce from the peasantry to the aristocracy. Serfs were compelled to give a certain proportion of their production to their aristocratic masters, or had to work for a number of days each month in the lord's fields to produce crops consumed by the lord and his retinue. In capitalist societies, the source of exploitation is less obvious, and Marx devoted much attention to trying to clarify its nature. In the course of the working day, Marx reasoned, workers produce more than is actually needed by employers to repay the cost of hiring them. This surplus value, as he called it, is the source of profit, which capitalists were able to put to their own use. For instance, a group of workers in a widget factory might produce a hundred widgets a day. Selling half of them provides enough income for the manufacturer to pay the workers' wages. Income from the sale of the other half is then taken for profit. Marx was struck by the enormous inequalities this system of production created. With the development of modern industry, wealth was created on a scale never before imagined but the workers who produced that wealth had little access to it. They remained relatively poor while the wealth accumulated by the propertied class grew out of all proportion. In addition, the nature of the work became increasingly dull, monotonous and physically wearing to the workforce who became increasingly alienated from both the products they were creating, from their own individuality and from each other as human beings.

## **KARL MARX'S RELEVANCE TO KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION**

Karl Marx made it clear that "life is not determined by consciousness, but consciousness by life" and what he meant by life was actual living everyday material activity. Human thought or consciousness was rooted in human activity not the other way round as a number of philosophers felt at the time. What this meant was the way we went about our business, the way we were organized in our daily life was reflected in the way we thought about things and the sort of world we created. The institutions we built, the philosophies we adhered to, the prevailing ideas of the time, the culture of society, were all determined to some extent or another by the economic structure of society. This did not mean that they were *totally* determined but were quite clearly a spin-off from the economic base of society. The political system, the legal system, the family, the press, the education system were all rooted, *in the final analysis*, to the class nature of society, which in turn was a reflection of the economic base. Marx maintained

that the economic base or infrastructure generated or had built upon it a superstructure that kept it functioning. The education system, as part of the superstructure, therefore, was a reflection of the economic base and served to reproduce it. This did not mean that education and teaching was a sinister plot by the ruling class to ensure that it kept its privileges and its domination over the rest of the population. There were no conspirators hatching devious schemes. It simply meant that the institutions of society, like education, were reflections of the world created by human activity and that ideas arose from and reflected the material conditions and circumstances in which they were generated.

This relationship between base and superstructure has been the subject of fierce debate between Marxists for many years. To what extent is the superstructure determined by the economic base? How much of a reflection is it? Do the institutions that make up the superstructure have any autonomy at all? If they are not autonomous, can we talk about relative autonomy when we speak about the institutions of society? There have been furious debates on the subject and whole forests have been decimated as a result of the need to publish contributions to the debate.

I now want to turn to Marx's contribution to the theory of knowledge and to the problem of ideology. In his book, *The German Ideology*, Marx maintained that "the class which is the dominant *material* force in society is at the same time its dominant *intellectual* force". What he meant by that is that the individuals who make up the ruling class of any age determine the agenda. They rule as thinkers, as producers of ideas that get noticed. They control what goes by the name "common sense". Ideas that are taken as natural, as part of human nature, as universal concepts are given a veneer of neutrality when, in fact, they are part of the superstructure of a class-ridden society. Marx explained that "each new class which puts itself in the place of the one ruling before it, is compelled, simply in order to achieve its aims, to represent its interest as the common interest of all members of society *i.e.*...to give its ideas the form of universality and to represent them as the only rational and universally valid ones". Ideas become presented as if they are universal, neutral, common sense. However, more subtly, we find concepts such as freedom, democracy, liberty or phrases such as "a fair days work for a fair days pay" being banded around by opinion makers as if they were not contentious. They are, in Marxist terms, ideological constructs, in so far as they are ideas serving as weapons for social interests. They are put forward for people to accept in order to prop up the system.

What Marx and Marxists would say is that ideas are not neutral. They are determined by the existing relations of production, by the economic structure of society. Ideas change according to the interests of the dominant class in society. Antonio Gramsci coined the phrase "ideological hegemony" to describe the influence the ruling class has over what counts as knowledge. For Marxists, this hegemony is exercised through institutions such as education, or the media, which the Marxist philosopher and sociologist, Louis Althusser referred to as being part of what he called the Ideological State Apparatus. The important



thing to note about this is that it is not to be regarded as part of a conspiracy by the ruling class. It is a natural effect of the way in which what we count as knowledge is socially constructed. The ideology of democracy and liberty, beliefs about freedom of the individual and competition are generated historically by the mode of production through the agency of the dominant class. They are not neutral ideas serving the common good but ruling class ideas accepted by everyone *as if they were for the common good*.

This brings us back to the notion of education as part of the super-structural support for the economic status quo. If this is the case, there are a number of questions that need to be asked. The first is can society be changed by education? If not, why not? Secondly, can education be changed and if so, how?

## MARXIAN CLASS THEORY

Marxian Class Theory is a broad range of social concepts related to the study of Marxism. It asserts that an individual's position within a class hierarchy is determined by his role in the production process, and argues that political and ideological consciousness is determined by class position (Parkin). Within Marxian Class Theory, the structure of the production process forms the basis of class construction. Marxian Class Theory has been open to a range of alternate positions, most notably from scholars such as E. P. Thompson and Mario Tronti. Both Thompson and Tronti suggest class consciousness within the production process precedes the formation of productive relationships. In this sense, Marxian Class Theory often relates to discussion over pre-existing class struggles.

## ORIGINS OF MARX'S THEORY

Marx's class theory derives from a range of philosophical schools of thought including left Hegelianism, Scottish Empiricism and Anglo-French political-economics. Marx's view of class originated from a series of personal interests relating to social alienation and human struggle, whereby the formation of class structure relates to acute historical consciousness. Political-economics also contributed to Marx's theories, centering around the concept of "origin of income" where society is divided into three sub-groups: Rentier, Capitalist, and Worker. This construction is based on Ricardo's theory of capitalism. Marx strengthened this with a discussion over verifiable class relationships. Marx sought to define class as embedded in productive relations rather than social status. His political and economic thought developed towards an interest in production as opposed to distribution, and this henceforth became a central theme in his concept of class.

## CLASS STRUCTURE

Marx distinguishes one class from another on the basis of two criteria: ownership of the means of production and control of the labour power of others. From this, he defines modern society as having three distinct classes:

- i. Capitalists, or bourgeoisie, own the means of production and purchase the labour power of others
- ii. Workers, or proletariat, do not own any means of production or the ability to purchase the labour power of others. Rather, they sell their own labour power.
- iii. A small, transitional class known as the petite bourgeoisie own sufficient means of production but do not purchase labour power. Marx's Communist Manifesto fails to properly define the petite bourgeoisie beyond "smaller capitalists".

Class is thus determined by property relations not by income or status. These factors are determined by distribution and consumption, which mirror the production and power relations of classes.

# 6

## **The Role of the Teacher and Learner in Educational Philosophy**

### **EXPLORING SUBJECTIVITY IN TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

“Know Thyself!” This oracle at Delphi which was Socrates’ motto inspires many philosophers but also psychologists and even psychotherapists. Each of them has good reasons for insisting that this is his domain. Several questions could be raised: Was Socrates a philosopher or a ‘psychologist’? What kind of knowledge is this self-knowledge? How do these domains differ and do they have something in common? How are they related to spirituality? And many others. My interest, however, is more narrow. Although we can suppose there is an overlap between philosophy, psychology and psychotherapy, in this paper I will focus on the overlap between teaching philosophy and psychotherapy. More precisely: how can Gestalt principles and techniques help in the teaching of the topic of selfhood. I will outline some theoretical background of the importance of Gestalt in relation to didactics of philosophy and describe some possible applications.

When I ask whether Socrates was a philosopher or a psychologist, this is also a question about what kind of knowledge is involved. Do I really want to know myself or do I just search for general knowledge about human nature? This is the difference between a subjective knowledge on individuality and a knowledge seeking for objectivity and universality. It seems that Socrates’ main concern was to overcome subjectivity. While his partner in a dialogue insisted

in the particular, individual, he was interested in common characteristics which would enable him to form a definition and consequently a concept. Truth has been understood in terms of universality and objectivity since the time of Socrates. If we exclude some exceptions like Kierkegaard, who reestablished the concept of subjective truth, we can say that this tendency for objectivity and universality was, and is, the main characteristic of western philosophy. The teaching of philosophy, consequently, followed and still follows the same route. The question is, how can this traditional approach successfully deal with questions of selfhood which by their nature are subjective as well? With regard to didactics, the consequence of the re-evaluation of the concept of subjective truth could be the re-evaluation of didactic principles. How can this be performed in teaching practice?

The difficulty in introductory courses is that students have to deal with philosophical problems at quite an abstract level. The task can be made easier if the problems have some personal significance to them; motivation is higher when students acquire more knowledge about themselves. From a philosophical perspective it is expected that this knowledge would be a basis of a philosophically relevant discussion. Is this possible? Regarding the topic of selfhood many philosophy textbooks present different philosophical perspectives. Although these theories of human nature are sometimes preceded by interesting questions and illustrations related to everyday life, they are just an introduction. The answers to these questions are to be found only in the theories and the link is missing. Philosophy itself, or its didactics does not offer tools for this kind of exploration in philosophy class. I have found appropriate tools in the domain of psychotherapy, or more specifically in Gestalt psychotherapy. Although other approaches can also be successfully applied, there is a specific aspect of Gestalt therapy which is in this case advantageous - the emphasis on personal experience. The application of the principles of Gestalt therapy means introducing a new dimension into the teaching of philosophy. On one hand it is a challenge and offers great potentials, on the other it bears considerable risks and requires responsibility.

## **DIMENSIONS OF ‘EXPERIENCE BASED TEACHING PHILOSOPHY’**

### **Questioning the Basic Concepts**

When describing their experiences, students often use expressions or concepts which need to be examined. One of the aims of philosophical analysis is to become aware of what we assume and to clarify our understanding of basic terms.

If we take a simple example, the statement “I knew it was you”, questions which should be raised are: “What does it mean ‘to know’?” or “What is knowledge?” Other simple statements related to the topic of Selfhood are “I know you!” or “I don’t know you.” In these cases the question is: “What does it mean ‘to have knowledge of another person’?” This is the level of questioning the basic concepts.

### **Exploring presuppositions and implications**

An experience can also be a starting point for new questions which are already present in a situation or can be derived from it. From the statement “I know you!” several questions can be raised: Is it possible to have knowledge of another person? What kind of knowledge is that? Can it be true? What kind of truth is that? If they are different, what is the difference? What are the implications? Each question usually has more than one answer, and consequently new questions are multiplied. Nevertheless, these different answers introduce different philosophical perspectives from which problems can be analysed. Since these differences have their origin in the understanding of basic concepts, it is evident that this aspect is connected and interwoven with the first one. This level is the questioning of presuppositions and implications.

### **Personal Experience**

The basis of both previous dimensions is personal experience, which either precedes them or is incorporated in them. It is a basis for philosophical reflection and questioning which offers the possibility to students of getting to know themselves better. It can appear spontaneously in relation to certain topics, or it can arise from a teacher’s initiative in the form of questions or by planned exercises and experiments. It can happen that a student comes across something very significant to her. In Gestalt terms we say that becomes a figure which can be explored further, but with clear limitations and cautions, since the aim is philosophical questioning and not psychotherapy. Nevertheless, tools are borrowed from psychotherapy and this fact requires an appropriately skilled teacher who can manage and control the process.

In experience-based teaching of philosophy all three dimensions form a whole. Despite common points in the first two dimensions, there is still a difference. While in the first dimension the emphasis is on reflection and questioning, in the second dimension the emphasis is on analysis and argument as the method of philosophical inquiry.

### **DIDACTIC PRINCIPLES IN EXPERIENCE-BASED TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

How to incorporate experience into the teaching process, and where is its place? From a didactic perspective, in the teaching process as well as in the examination process students are supposed to solve certain philosophical problems by using philosophical perspectives(theories) and using appropriate examples. An appropriate example expresses the essence of a given problem, and in course of successful analysis its use demonstrates the student’s understanding of a problem and the appropriateness of the relationship between philosophical perspectives and everyday life. In our case of applying Gestalt principles when proceeding from personal experience, this is not just an example but a student’s real situation. Personal experience can, therefore, offer a better

understanding of concepts, problems and perspectives. Since this is her personal experience and possible new insight (which has its own value), there is a possibility of a higher motivation.

In the teaching process there are three important elements: the requirements of the institution, such as syllabus, the needs of students, and as the teacher I (hopefully) have my needs for creativity. All the three are part of the field, and although it seems impossible to expect complete compatibility between them, acknowledging this reality and seeking a reconciliation is already a significant step further. If I admit that students' needs are not in accordance with aims and objectives of a subject like philosophy, I can consider how they might become in accordance or how the choice of topics and their treatment can contribute to finding a meeting point. Choosing the topic of Selfhood and its related problems is more likely to be in accordance with students' personal experiences than other topics. I look for a need which is not only intellectual curiosity but also a need for self-knowledge which has its background in personal experience. According to my experience this is the most successful way to finding that meeting point. I try to find a way to offer something that would draw the students' attention and become figural to them but in a way that emerges from the phenomenological field of each individual. Regarding my teaching aims and objectives, this should be something that carries a potential philosophical problem or is a philosophical problem itself. There are several group exercises and experiments which, on one hand contain particular philosophical problems, and on the other hand are designed to evoke particular kinds of experiences. If I wait for a discussion to emerge instead of imposing it, I follow a phenomenological method and allow students to raise a problem that really concerns them. The benefit is higher motivation and the possibility of a link between personal experience and philosophical inquiry. Not only do philosophical concepts get meaning, but they also become personally significant. If a student is in contact with herself and the experience cycle develops further, in a practical way she answers for herself the philosophical question, Who am I?

Experience-based teaching philosophy is, therefore, an attempt to make a philosophical inquiry a cycle of experience where a philosophical problem emerges as a figure, goes through the phases of sharpening, scanning, resolution and assimilation and by withdrawal allows a new need to emerge. I would call this cycle of experience educational gestalt. This cycle is based on a personal cycle of experience and an effective outcome is expected if these two cycles correspond, *i.e.*, if a philosophical problem has its basis in a personal experience either of an individual or of most of the individuals in a class. If we agree that, apart from a personal gestalt or cycle of experience, there is also a group gestalt or group cycle of experience, then I can say that in experience-based teaching philosophy I follow the educational gestalt of a group. Experience-based teaching of philosophy would be, therefore, a correspondence between a personal and educational gestalt.



## **FORMS OF EXPERIENTIAL WORK AND THEIR PURPOSES**

I believe that this phase (part, stage, component) of a philosophy class can be very creative and challenging. Although some basic forms of work can be mentioned, there can be many others with innumerable varieties. The right moment to employ them can be a sensitive question and the outcome unpredictable. It is thus difficult to make a detailed plan. Among the most useful forms of work are group exercises and experiments. These can be combined with working in pairs or small groups or with individuals. The question of confidentiality is, naturally, also a very sensitive and an extremely important issue. So the teacher can suggest, that the students share their experiences or keep them to themselves. It may be that they have very rich experiences but nobody wants to share. It seems that we can not continue with the work. However, we can still perform the task: each of them can keep her own experience private and follow the discussion on its basis. The point is in the purpose of an exercise or experiment and this is the second aspect of experiential work. Let us look at some examples.

### **Personal Experience as an Introduction to a Philosophical Topic or theme**

If we want higher motivation of students, and present them the significance of a certain topic, it is appropriate to introduce the topic with an experiment that has some general characteristics but also opens different possibilities. Several such exercises and experiments are available from different sources. One of them is 'The Rosebush fantasy' described in J.M. Stevens' book *Awareness: exploring, experimenting, experiencing*, and also by Violet Oaklander in her book *Windows to Our Children*. Although it is very frequently used with children, older students take it seriously and with interest as well. Confidentiality is a good reason for students to work in pairs, choosing a close friend. They are invited to imagine what it is like to be a rosebush and asked several questions about themselves, their relations and their environment. Then they open their eyes, draw their rosebushes, and tell each other a story. One partner writes it down and reads it back. As a projective technique it is a very rich source of possible self-awareness and self-knowledge. If the students tell their stories, we can relate them to implicit or explicit philosophical questions and their solutions, and always return to the students' personal situations. This can be an introduction to the topic of selfhood in general or to any philosophically relevant question which arises. One of the philosophical problems that can be introduced is the problem of personal identity, which brings us to the next purpose.

### **Personal Experience as an Introduction to a Philosophical Problem**

One of the most fruitful exercises for philosophical purposes is 'Disidentification Exercise' which originally appeared in Assagioli's *Psychosynthesis* and was later described by Janette Rainwater in her book *You're In Charge*. For our purpose it could be summarised to three statements: "I have a body, but I am not my body.... I have emotions, but I am not my emotions.... I have an intellect, but I am not my

intellect.” It is very rich exercise from the point of view of variety of different experiences, insights, awareness, as well as from the point of view of philosophical questions which arise. The most important is the possibility of experiencing identification and its opposition. Immediately after the exercise several questions can be discussed and clarified as for example: “What is the difference between I have and I am? What does it mean if I identify myself with something? What is identity (in general)? What kind of identities are there? What is personal identity?” There are also some other important concepts such as polarities, self, *etc.* The exercise offers also a specific and unusual look at the basic principle of Descartes’ philosophy.

### **Experience of a Philosophical Concept before its Rational Examination**

We can propose the following group exercise to students. They are invited to imagine a situation where each of them is treated by another person in a way that she has pleasant feelings, like as in genuine friendship. It could be an experience from the past but as experienced here and now. They are asked to be aware of thoughts, feelings and sensations. Then we switch to the opposite situation of being a little bit mistreated or abused. We ask them again to evoke thoughts, feelings, sensations. To end the exercise we ask them how they would like to be treated in this situation. From discussion of their different experiences we derive the common ground, in this case the opposition between being (and feeling) an end in itself and being (and feeling) just as a means. In this case we were introducing Kantian distinction between means and ends. Although the explanation is clear and understandable, it can happen (and it usually happens) that the understanding of conceptual distinction is not satisfactory. In that case this exercise prepares in advance the ground for better understanding which is just a part of holistic experience and remains much more solidly in memory. This conceptual difference can be employed in dealing with Kantian ethics as well as with the concept of person. The same exercise can also be used after the usual presentation, in that case as an illustration.

### **Individual Work with Students, Related to their Essays**

It happens that a student chooses for her written work (Essay, Guided Coursework) a topic that is related to her personal issue, whether she is aware of it or not. A motive is not necessarily only of theoretical interest. Exploration of this background can significantly contribute to the outcome.

### **Other Forms of Experiential Work**

Since it is impossible to predict or plan the course of a philosophical discussion in details, occasions for experiential work can occur at any point. Sometimes an idea to illustrate something or to explore a certain point can emerge suddenly and it is worth-while to trust our intuition and try. Very different things can be done: already known exercises, adaptations to a situation or completely new experiments. A special case in experiential work is working on dreams. This is an extremely challenging field and many important philosophical questions,

themes and theories can be related to it. We can discuss the nature of dreams and their role, the distinction between the conscious and unconscious or being aware and not being aware, repression, symbolism, even the transition to collective unconscious and mythology. The field is also of strong personal interest to students: they are curious about the meaning of their dreams. However, apart from the challenge, there is a risk and special attention is necessary.

## EVALUATION AND CRITICAL THINKING

Educational research about critical thinking is increasing in the last decades, at least in the U.S.A., The main interest is about intelligence education and evaluation ability; that ability is to make a guided judgement based on logical and epistemological criteria guided. There are discussions and debates about theory and educational methods and instruments. Researchers emphasise the value of human person, the social, educational and curricular dimension, including teaching and evaluating. Why so much interest for this topic? Critical thinking research have originally a social and philosophical-educational dimension: one of the first book on this subject was edited by National Council for the social Studies, in Washington D.C. in 1942: the editor was H.R. Anderson associated professor at the Cornell University, which presented a series of studies by G. Marcham, professor of English History at the Cornell University, H. Taba, assistant professor of Education and Research Associates at the University of Chicago ("The evaluation of critical thinking"), H.E. Wilson, associate professor at Harvard University. Theoretical debate emphasises many aspects of the critical thinking idea: for many authors it is quite the same as logical thinking or problem solving thinking. The researchers stress the social motivation, the value of human person: the education of critical thinking could be a good defence against propaganda, advertisement and all the enemies of freedom and democracy. Others emphasise the critical evaluation in scientific method, specially about the hypothese's nature and analysis. Other authors underline critical thinking as a cognitive act: the main components are logical analysis, data and experience evaluation, problem solving steps evaluation. Analysing different researches through the years, we can see a common trend that unifies many authors: critical thinking is theorised as an intelligence ability, but as a particular one, like a thinking directed to evaluate and verify a process or a product of mind. This trend is clearly exposed by an italian pedagogist: critical ability is a control on mind product and it is different from any other mental activity, for example verbal understanding and logical thinking or problem solving activity.

Methods to evaluate critical thinking. Different methods are used to evaluate critical thinking. Among written tests, one of the first tools is the "Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal": published in the U.S.A., in many editions, «is broken up into five parts, each of which has its own set of directions and examples. The parts are called "Inference" (Items 1-20), "Recognition of Assumptions" (Item 21-36), "Deduction" (Item 37-61), "Interpretation", and "Evaluation of Arguments". (...) The materials were developed in the late 30's

and have since been revised several times. The items consistently require students to examine evidence and to think (...). The Watson-Glaser Critical Thinking Appraisal is a popular critical thinking, and as such, deserves careful examination» Example from the Watson-Glaser-Critical-Thinking-Appraisal - section on assumption identification: “If you think the assumption is not necessarily taken for granted in the statement, blacken the space under “ASSUMPTION NOT MADE” - “I’m travelling to South America. I want to be sure that I do not get typhoid fever, so I shall go my physician and get vaccinated against typhoid fever before I begin my trip”. Proposed Assumption: Typhoid fever is more common in South America than it is where I live. MADE or NOT MADE?”. This test aims to assess evaluative and reasoning abilities, including the critical ones. «However, many studies stress the necessity of a better validation: the main objection is that this test seems more similar to a reading test than to a critical thinking test. The “Cornell Critical Thinking Test” instead, by R.H. Ennis e J. Millman aims to evaluate critical abilities, but in fact is a test of logical thinking. The Ennis model of critical evaluation and thinking: «Critical thinking is reasonable and reflective thinking that is focused on deciding what to believe or do. Based upon this definition, I suggested a conception of critical thinking utilizing the simple idea that a decision about belief or action involves four basic elements:

- Basic support (especially information) on which the decision is grounded,
- The inference to the decision,
- Clarity, and
- A set of critical thinking dispositions. These four major categories generate a set of aspects that could be a set of specifications for the critical thinking component of a teacher-competence test, both in and out of teachers’ subject-area specialities.
- *Basic support:*
  - Judging the credibility of sources;
  - Observing and judging observation statements.
- *Inference:*
  - Deducing, and judging deductions;
  - Inducing, and judging inductions;
  - Value judging.
- *Clarity:*
  - Focusing on a question;
  - Analyzing arguments;
  - Asking and answering clarifying questions;
  - Defining terms, and judging definitions;
  - Identifying assumptions;
- *Dispositions, including these:*
  - Being openminded;
  - Looking for other alternatives;
  - Being well informed;
  - Using one’s critical thinking abilities

The American Council on Education built a test to evaluate critical thinking: in this case too there is an overlapping between critical evaluation and other intellectual abilities, like verbal competence and problem solving capacity. The test of critical thinking by S.W. Lundsteen is directed to evaluate this ability in a sample of preadolescents, and aims to assess it more exactly, without overlapping with any other intellectual (verbal, logical,...) abilities. «What is meant by critical thinking and by critical listening? The opinion presented in this report is taken from the definition by Russell, also found in the descriptions by Guilford (cit) and Bloom (cit) for evaluation.

*Russell distinguished this basic mental process from the five others (perceptual, associative, conceptual, creative and problem solving) by insisting:*

- That a standard or highly conscious criteria be present in the mind of the thinker at the same time the process takes place;
- That as the thinker sifts the evidence regarding an object or statement and suspends evaluation, he does then make a critical judgment;
- Finally, that the thinker, who is able to support his judgment with reasons derived from either internal logic or external values, in the form of consensual data, acts or concludes on the judgment made. «Critical listening was defined as a fourfold process that included examining spoken materials in the light of related objective evidence, comparing the ideas under evaluation with some criteria, making a judgment on the ideas, and acting on the judgment made. B.S. Bloom says the evaluation «is defined as the making of judgments about the value, for some purpose, of ideas, works, solutions, methods, material, *etc.* It involves the use of criteria as well as standards for appraising the extent to which particulars are accurate, effective, economical, or satisfying. The judgments may be either quantitative or qualitative, and the criteria may be either those determined by the student or those which are given to him. (...) After an individual has comprehended and perhaps analyzed a work, he may be called upon to evaluate it in terms of various internal criteria. Such criteria are for the most part tests of the accuracy of the work as judged by the logical relationship evident in the work itself. Has the writer (or speaker) been consistent in his use of terms, does one idea really follow from another, and do conclusions follow logically from the material presented. (...) Judgments in terms of external criteria. Evaluation of material with reference to selected or remembered criteria. The criteria may be ends to be satisfied; the techniques, rules, or standards by which such works are generally judged; or the comparison of the work with other works in the field. This type of evaluation involves the classification of the phenomena that the appropriate criteria for judgment may be employed. Thus, a work of history is to be judged by criteria relevant to historical works rather than to works of fiction. A rhetorical work is to be judged by criteria relevant to such works rather than criteria appropriate to different kinds of verbal presentations (...) All of this involves the

assumption that each phenomenon is a member of a class and is to be judged by criteria which are appropriate to that class. This also includes the possibility of comparing a work with other members of the same class work.

J.P. Guilford & ass. studied also a way to analyse intelligence and critical thinking, and a method to evaluate it: an interesting distinction Guilford does about the contents critical thinking can be applied: verbal or non verbal, auditory, perceptual, behavioural, *etc.* «Evaluation involves reaching decisions as to the accuracy, goodness, suitability, or workability of information. «The best established evaluation factor is that of logical evaluation. This is defined as the ability to judge the soundness of conclusions where logical consistency is the criterion. The factor has sometimes been called “deduction”, with the belief that it is the ability to draw conclusions logically consistent with premises. If this were the case, the factor would belong with the production-factors group. Most tests in which the factor has been found to be a component are the true-false or multiple-choice form, in which the examinee is given conclusions.; On the light of these and others studies we built a new test, the “Caccia all’errore 12A”. This test has been originally built for a Ph.D. in Education, in the University “La Sapienza” of Roma. It’s a non verbal test, including 60 multiple alternative items, experimentally validated on a sample of preadolescents.

The model is strictly based on the idea we described (and criticized) in the previous sections: the test consists in comparing different geometrical figures in logical order; one of the elements can be a mistake: the task is to find the mistake, if there is one. The logical operations are selected among seriation and classification, the only ones children 11 years old usually master. So we can be sure that the evaluation is only about critical ability, without any verbal overlapping.

## LEARNING PHILOSOPHY

To ensure that real learning takes place and endures, we emphasize and encourage a holistic approach by integrating both formal and informal elements. We believe that the most effective way to learn and develop a new skill or behaviour is to apply and practice it on the job and in real life situations.

Our learning and development philosophy is built upon how individuals internalize and apply what they learn based on how they acquire the knowledge. We rely on the 70/20/10 formula\* that describes how learning occurs:

- 70 per cent from real life and on-the-job experiences, tasks and problem solving. This is the most important aspect of any learning and development plan.
- 20 per cent from feedback and from observing and working with role models.
- 10 per cent from formal training.

We believe that the key elements to a successful learning process include both the 70/20/10 formula and how individuals internalize and apply what they’ve learned.



## **RELATED THEORIES OF LEARNING (PSYCHOLOGICAL ORIENTATIONS)**

Related to both the metaphysical worldview philosophies and the educational philosophies are theories of learning that focus on how learning occurs, the psychological orientations. They provide structures for the instructional aspects of teaching, suggesting methods that are related to their perspective on learning. These theoretical beliefs about learning are also at the epistemic level of philosophy, as they are concerned with the nature of learning. Each psychological orientation is most directly related to a particular educational philosophy, but may have other influences as well. The first two theoretical approaches can be thought of as transmissive, in that information is given to learners. The second two approaches are constructivist, in that the learner has to make meaning from experiences in the world.

### **INFORMATION PROCESSING**

Information Processing theorists focus on the mind and how it works to explain how learning occurs. The focus is on the processing of a relatively fixed body of knowledge and how it is attended to, received in the mind, processed, stored, and retrieved from memory. This model is derived from analogies between how the brain works and computer processing. Information processing theorists focus on the individual rather than the social aspects of thinking and learning. The mind is a symbolic processor that stores information in schemas or hierarchically arranged structures.

Knowledge may be general, applicable to many situations; for example, knowing how to type or spell. Other knowledge is domain specific, applicable to a specific subject or task, such as vowel sounds in Spanish. Knowledge is also declarative (content, or knowing that; for example, schools have students, teachers, and administrators), procedural (knowing how to do things—the steps or strategies; for example, to multiply mixed number, change both sides to improper fractions, then multiply numerators and denominators), or conditional (knowing when and why to apply the other two types of knowledge; for example, when taking a standardized multiple choice test, keep track of time, be strategic, and don't get bogged down on hard problems).

The intake and representation of information is called encoding. It is sent to the short term or working memory, acted upon, and those pieces determined as important are sent to long term memory storage, where they must be retrieved and sent back to the working or short-term memory for use. Short term memory has very limited capacity, so it must be kept active to be retained. Long term memory is organized in structures, called schemas, scripts, or propositional or hierarchical networks. Something learned can be retrieved by relating it to other aspects, procedures, or episodes. There are many strategies that can help in both getting information into long term memory and retrieving it from memory. The teacher's job is to help students to develop strategies for thinking and remembering.

## BEHAVIOURISM

Behaviourist theorists believe that behaviour is shaped deliberately by forces in the environment and that the type of person and actions desired can be the product of design. In other words, behaviour is determined by others, rather than by our own free will. By carefully shaping desirable behaviour, morality and information is learned. Learners will acquire and remember responses that lead to satisfying aftereffects. Repetition of a meaningful connection results in learning. If the student is ready for the connection, learning is enhanced; if not, learning is inhibited. Motivation to learn is the satisfying aftereffect, or reinforcement.

Behaviourism is linked with empiricism, which stresses scientific information and observation, rather than subjective or metaphysical realities. Behaviourists search for laws that govern human behaviour, like scientists who look for pattern in empirical events. Change in behaviour must be observable; internal thought processes are not considered.

Ivan Pavlov's research on using the reinforcement of a bell sound when food was presented to a dog and finding the sound alone would make a dog salivate after several presentations of the conditioned stimulus, was the beginning of behaviourist approaches. Learning occurs as a result of responses to stimuli in the environment that are reinforced by adults and others, as well as from feedback from actions on objects. The teacher can help students learn by conditioning them through identifying the desired behaviours in measurable, observable terms, recording these behaviours and their frequencies, identifying appropriate reinforcers for each desired behaviour, and providing the reinforcer as soon as the student displays the behaviour. For example, if children are supposed to raise hands to get called on, we might reinforce a child who raises his hand by using praise, "Thank you for raising your hand." Other influential behaviourists include B.F. Skinner (1904-1990) and James B. Watson (1878-1958).

## COGNITIVISM/CONSTRUCTIVISM

Cognitivists or Constructivists believe that the learner actively constructs his or her own understandings of reality through interaction with objects, events, and people in the environment, and reflecting on these interactions. Early perceptual psychologists (Gestalt psychology) focused on the making of wholes from bits and pieces of objects and events in the world, believing that meaning was the construction in the brain of patterns from these pieces.

For learning to occur, an event, object, or experience must conflict with what the learner already knows. Therefore, the learner's previous experiences determine what can be learned. Motivation to learn is experiencing conflict with what one knows, which causes an imbalance, which triggers a quest to restore the equilibrium. Piaget described intelligent behaviour as adaptation. The learner organizes his or her understanding in organized structures. At the simplest level, these are called schemes. When something new is presented, the

learner must modify these structures in order to deal with the new information. This process, called equilibration, is the balancing between what is assimilated (the new) and accommodation, the change in structure. The child goes through four distinct stages or levels in his or her understandings of the world.

Some constructivists (particularly Vygotsky) emphasize the shared, social construction of knowledge, believing that the particular social and cultural context and the interactions of novices with more expert thinkers (usually adult) facilitate or scaffold the learning process. The teacher mediates between the new material to be learned and the learner's level of readiness, supporting the child's growth through his or her "zone of proximal development."

## **HUMANISM**

The roots of humanism are found in the thinking of Erasmus (1466-1536), who attacked the religious teaching and thought prevalent in his time to focus on free inquiry and rediscovery of the classical roots from Greece and Rome. Erasmus believed in the essential goodness of children, that humans have free will, moral conscience, the ability to reason, aesthetic sensibility, and religious instinct. He advocated that the young should be treated kindly and that learning should not be forced or rushed, as it proceeds in stages. Humanism was developed as an educational philosophy by Rousseau (1712-1778) and Pestalozzi, who emphasized nature and the basic goodness of humans, understanding through the senses, and education as a gradual and unhurried process in which the development of human character follows the unfolding of nature. Humanists believe that the learner should be in control of his or her own destiny. Since the learner should become a fully autonomous person, personal freedom, choice, and responsibility are the focus. The learner is self-motivated to achieve towards the highest level possible. Motivation to learn is intrinsic in humanism.

Recent applications of humanist philosophy focus on the social and emotional well-being of the child, as well as the cognitive. Development of a healthy self-concept, awareness of the psychological needs, helping students to strive to be all that they can are important concepts, espoused in theories of Abraham Maslow, Carl Rogers, and Alfred Adler that are found in classrooms today. Teachers emphasize freedom from threat, emotional well-being, learning processes, and self-fulfillment.

## **SOME GENERAL IDEAS ABOUT TEACHING PHILOSOPHY**

A statement of teaching philosophy answers two questions: "Why do I teach?" and "How do I teach?". It should communicate the goals of your teaching and your corresponding actions as a teacher. It becomes the central point of your teaching portfolio; and around it you arrange a collection of artefacts that support this philosophy both directly and indirectly. Your statement about your teaching philosophy gives the reader of your teaching portfolio a context within which to understand and assess your teaching activities.

A statement of teaching philosophy is a very personal statement - one which people often have difficulty writing. It derives from your basic values and beliefs about yourself and your teaching. We all have a philosophy by which we live although many of us never stop to put this philosophy into words and some of us remain blissfully unaware of it. However, most of us can articulate the values that contribute to this philosophy. And while our values tell us who we are and who we want to become, our statement of philosophy goes one step further by telling us how we would like to become this person.

*A statement of teaching philosophy is usually brief - only one or two pages long - and presents an integrated view of some of the values we hold about various aspects of teaching such as:*

- How we think learning and teaching happen;
- How we understand learners, their differences and what motivates them;
- How we interact with learners;
- What we think the primary purposes of education, teaching and learning are;
- How we view the primary role of the teacher or instructor;
- What teaching and learning methods we value; and
- How we think evaluation of learning should be conducted.

Teaching philosophy statements should avoid technical terms and jargon, and favour language and concepts that can be broadly understood. If the statement is being submitted with an application for a new position, it should be written for a specific audience; otherwise it should be written for a more general audience. It should be reviewed and revised every year to reflect changes in your understanding of your own teaching.

The statement should be reflective and personal. What brings a teaching philosophy to life is the extent to which it creates a vivid portrait of you as a person who is intentional and authentic about teaching practices and committed to your vocation as a teacher. The best way to write your statement is to write it as a narrative, in the first person singular (I, me, mine). Avoid using impersonal pronouns (you, one, it) because such pronouns create confusion for the reader. In some fields, a more creative approach, such as a poem, might be appropriate and valued. But in most situations, a straightforward, well-organized statement is preferred. Include examples to illustrate your points.

Those with little experience as teachers should write about their future plans and desires for their teaching. Those with experience should reflect on how they have taught in the past and how they plan to improve in the future.

## **WRITING YOUR TEACHING STATEMENT**

You can begin the process of writing your statement in different ways, all of them designed to help you assemble a set of ideas about what you value in your teaching practice - what is most important to you. I have listed several different approaches to this task. Select one or two that seem best suited to your style of thinking and use them to generate lots of different information. You will use

this information to write an integrated statement. Do not use the questions you answer as headings and do not use just the answers - they must be combined into a logical narrative.

*Option 1: Generate a list of single words or short phrases that represent what you value most about yourself and your teaching. Examples of such words and phrases might be:*

- Equitable communication
- Good relationships
- Independent thinking
- Patience
- Strong work ethic

Next, take each one of these words or phrases and write a statement around each that reflects its importance in your teaching. In the examples provided below, the first part of each is a general statement and is turned into a teaching statement by the second part:

“I value independent thinking and encourage students to both critically analyse the ideas of experts in the field and develop their own ideas.”

“I try to be open to new or different ideas or perspectives although I sometimes find it very difficult. I try to see the value in students’ ideas before responding to them.”

“I recognize that how I react to a situation depends largely on my past experiences. I plan to seek out new experiences to change some of my more negative reactions.”

“I believe that knowledge is power; and the purpose of my teaching is to help students learn the knowledge and skills that will help them feel empowered.”

“I believe that learning should be fun and that learners should be as active as possible while they are learning.”

*Option 2: Another way to write your statement of teaching philosophy is to develop answers to questions such as:*

- Why do I teach? Where does my passion for teaching come from?
- What techniques do I use in the classroom to encourage student learning?
- What do I expect to be the outcomes of my teaching?
- How do I know my students are “getting it”? How do I know when I have taught successfully?
- What values and attitudes do I consciously attempt to impart to my students? What values and attitudes do I unconsciously impart?
- How do my approaches to teaching reflect who I am?
- What code of ethics guides my teaching and my relationships with my students?

*Option 3: Another approach is to identify the assumptions that underlie your understanding of teaching and learning processes. Think through the answers to the following questions:*

- What are three assumptions I make about teaching?
- What are three assumptions I make about learning?
- How does each of these assumptions appear in my courses?

- How does each of these assumptions facilitate/guide my teaching?
- How does each of these assumptions hinder my teaching?

*Option 4:* For those who are really stuck trying to generate information about your teaching, you can consult the resources listed below. Each will give you some information about your teaching that could then be used in combination with some of the answers you generated to previous techniques.

- The Teaching Goals Inventory, developed by Thomas Angelo and Patricia Cross (Classroom Assessment Techniques, 1993). Follow the directions. The results will indicate which of six clusters of teaching goals - higher-order thinking skills, discipline-specific facts and principles, work and career preparation, student development and personal growth, basic learning skills, and providing a role model for students - are most typical in your courses.
- The Teaching Perspectives Inventory, developed by Daniel Pratt (Five perspectives on teaching in adult and higher education, 1995). The results will indicate which of five teaching perspectives - transmission, apprenticeship, nurturing, developmental or social reform - are most typical of your teaching.
- The Teaching Styles Inventory by Anthony Grasha. The results indicate which of five teaching styles - expert, formal authority, personal model, facilitator, and delegator - are most typical of your teaching.
- Instructions for developing a statement of teaching philosophy for working with adult learners, prepared by Roger Hiemstra (1988), helps the reader translate personal values and philosophy into practical action.

## THE CHANGING TEACHER-TAUGHT SCENARIO

The teacher and the taught represent the two most significant components of the educational sub-system. Over the decades the class base of both has changed. Second and first generation learners are now flooding the institutions of learning. They bring with them a variety of problems with which the existing pedagogy cannot cope.

First, in increasing number, teachers are drawn from groups which do not have a tradition of literacy and learning. The social background and cultural orientations of the learners and their instructors pose a new set of problems to the educational process.

Second, education has now been brought within the orbit of the demand for social justice and is claimed as a matter of right. Coping with the demand for equality of educational opportunity is difficult enough; but when the demand for equality of results is added to it, the problem becomes infinitely more complex.

Third, education cannot be inflexible in respect of its ideology and content and has to be responsive to the urges and demands of different sectors impinging on it. A series of questions arise in this context: What do the guardians expect from the education of their wards? What are the perceptions of learners from



different strata regarding the objectives and methods of education? How do different interests in society exert visible and invisible pressures on the educational system to tilt its advantages towards them? What are the latent and manifest functions that the elite, which supports the educational system, expects it to perform?

Fourth, what about the unintended consequences of education? How are these, to be managed so that they do not become dysfunctional to the larger objectives of society? These, questions are important and feeble-minded handling of them pushes the educational system into a state of disarray. Adequate answer to them have to be found so that the educational system, being sensitive and vulnerable to them, does not lose its sense of direction and purpose.

Finally, in many countries of the 'Third World,' education is viewed as an aspect of power and even of profit. The implications of the power and profit motive in the organised educational endeavour have not been examined sufficiently and in depth. If the educational system is moving like a massive but rudderless ship, it is because some of these critical issues have either not been faced or faced halfheartedly. Much of the value chaos in the contemporary educational system can be attributed to this failure. The world-view and value constellations of the teachers in India today present a series of ambiguous and blurred images and contradictory and conflicting values.

## **WORLD-VIEW AND VALUES**

In this context 'world-view' is taken to mean the summation of the shared outlook of a society regarding the past, present, and future of the human order and its components. It takes account of both qualitative and quantitative dimensions, it attributes or assumes quality in the elements of the order and its processes and often tends to translate quantity into quality. It may also evaluate quality into aggregate quantity terms. Basic questions with which it is concerned are those of relative primacy of principles over persons, of natural (including social) over super-natural order, and of man-made objectives and conditions over non-man-made objective and subjective conditions. Thus, a consideration of world-view implies assumptions regarding what the human order was in the past and why, what it is now and why, and what it would be in the future and why. It may also envisage conscious intervention to set desirable sailing direction so that human destinies can be controlled and piloted towards a preferred and desired future. By value we shall mean a preference quality in action. Values have normative overtones, but they often lack the sanctions that go with social norms. They attribute quality to different modes of behaviour along a continuum—from the most desired to the least desired (and also the undesired). They may be explicit or implicit and there may be a significant gap between the ultimate and the proximate values. In proximate terms, the choices may be situational and pragmatic although they, may be at variance from the ultimate desired action, which may continue to be articulated and cherished. They form a part of the cognitive universe and encompass within them aesthetic and

evaluative elements. They provide guides to behaviour without being rigidly prescriptive. Often there is a hierarchy of values and the permissible range allows different levels of choices. Some values may be universal to a society, others may be specific to particular groups and categories. Nonetheless, a social order cannot be conceptualised without a scheme of values. In reference to teachers it may be asserted that while they will share some general societal values they are likely also to have a set of values which are specific to their professional category and its cultural role definition.

### **DESIRED WORLD-VIEW OF TEACHERS**

In the grim context of today's India, it would be useful to start with an inventory of the elements of world-view and values, which are considered desirable and necessary in those who belong to the-teaching profession. We shall examine later how far the existing reality approximates to this normative model. Absence of a fit between the two will necessitate deep causal analysis and indications of possible remedial action. For a country of India's cultural heterogeneity, social complexity, economic inequalities, and ideological differentiations, unanimity in respect of all values is not possible nor perhaps even desirable. 'The area of personal belief has therefore to be omitted from this discussion. However, a consensus is needed on some premises and in respect of some core socio-political as well as academic values. Let us first list some of the desired elements of the world-view of teachers as a category.

- First, principles should have primacy over persons. This should be based on some universal norms as against particular considerations of status and station or considerations of caste, class or sex.
- Second, in the scheme of social action the accent should be on rationality rather than on obscurantism. Super-natural powers should at best feature in personal beliefs and their hold on arenas of public policy and action should be gradually minimized and ultimately eliminated. Creative rationality should emerge as the key force.
- Third, man should be viewed as capable of gaming mastery over the physical universe. In exploiting its resources, however, man should recognize some outer limits and in the process, he should not destroy the delicate harmony and balance of nature.
- Fourth, the necessity of freedom for all human beings has been theoretically established. A subjective ethos and objective conditions for the realization of genuine freedom, however, remain to be established,
- Fifth, freedom without equality makes little sense. Equality of creative expression is a must not only for individuals but for their collectivities of different orders. Grant of equality should not be reduced to a ritual act; conditions conducive to its realization must be consciously promoted.
- Sixth, cultural differences persist and will continue to persist for they have deep-rooted functions. There should be no cause for alarm. In fact, they, may even be, maximized; what need to be minimized are economic disparities and cultural deprivations.

- Seventh, man is a product of history, but in many significant ways he has also been its author. An increasing interventionist role should be envisioned for him, if for nothing else, for his own survival. Henceforth, he shall have to learn to define his role as an architect of his destiny.

Values rooted in personal belief can be left out of consideration so long as they do not clash with national and social values that need to be promoted, urgently. The fact that individually held values get, directly or indirectly, consciously or sub-consciously, projected on the educational scene and into educational offerings, does not need to be reiterated.

Democracy, secularism, and social justice have been enshrined in the Constitution as the three most important national values. One can legitimately have some doubt about the honesty of such articulation and indeed the approach towards their realisation can be faulted on many scores, but there can be little, doubt that on the awareness level, they have been accepted as core values and enjoy a consensus at least among large sections of the elite. It is difficult to estimate how far they have percolated down to common citizens. Ritualistic acceptance of these values by the teachers will not do these must inform and inspire their teaching. The concept of the autonomous individual must be expanded with reference to his rights and obligations. The class room itself should become an example of a participative community. It is possible for one to be secular in profession and non-secular in practice. Such 'duplicity must be exposed and genuine secular habits of thought and action promoted. Faith in social justice would necessitate debunking of all discriminatory practices based on ethnic or caste considerations', religion or sex. The gospel of egalitarianism is much more than mouthing some high-minded slogans. An attitude of caring for and sharing with the deprived and the underprivileged, need to be inculcated. If one accepts social justice as a value, one should learn to be appalled by the enormity of injustice meted to various section and categories of the community everyday and protest about it. The acceptance of these core values should be judged not by their formal enunciation but by the praxis they generate.

To these three, let us consider adding three more national values in our general scheme of values there is emphasis on past-present orientation; instead, the shift should be towards a present-future orientation. This does not imply negation of history, but it certainly involves rejection of harking back to the past more often than is really necessary. What concerns us most in existential terms is the living present and to-be-lived future. For the baffling problems of present, history may have new answers; new maladies require new remedies. These must represent a creative response to the challenges that we face today. At the same time it is necessary that in solving today's problems we do not mortgage the future. Options that offer temporary relief today but endanger human survival a few decades later are no solutions it is important, thus, that we examine the problems of today in a present-future perspective. The second value that is to be added involves the rejection of the passivity principle. Servility and compliance have to be ruled out. The autonomous individual is an active

individual. His consciousness should be extended to enable him to critically examine the goings on in society and to judge the rights and wrongs of it. He should not stop at judging, he must learn to do something about the rectification of the wrongs. The third related value has a bearing on the cultivation of what has been called the scientific temper. The overt and covert dimensions of this temper need to be worked out meticulously. Despite the erosion of his influence, the teacher continues to be an opinion leader of considerable power. His faith in these core values is necessary if the younger generation is not to start on a shaky foundation of beliefs, misbeliefs and disbeliefs.

## **TEACHER AS PROFESSIONALS AND THEIR PROFESSIONAL ETHICS**

### **ACQUISITION, TRANSMISSION AND ADDITION OF NEW KNOWLEDGE**

In the knowledge industry, especially in the teaching profession, one has to acquire and also add to fund of existing knowledge. The teachers additionally have to transmit knowledge to the successive generations of students who come under their mentorship. A good teacher, thus, has to equip himself with the major growth points in his speciality or sub-speciality, demonstrate adequate communicational skills to transmit the knowledge he has acquired, and continuously strive through his research endeavours to create new knowledge. Ideally a balance has to be struck between acquisition, transmission, and addition. This calls for a passionate devotion to knowledge in these three dimensions.

For a teacher, acquisition of knowledge alone would be a selfish and unproductive pursuit if it is not followed up by the transmission function. Teaching is not to be viewed as a mechanical process. It is not enough to tell the students what one knows about a subject. There is an element of high creativity in teaching. The plus factor requires creation of enquiring and questioning minds. A competent teacher would not promote excessive dependence of the students on the teacher; instead, he would generate a self-learning and group learning processes. Routine teaching gets an element of inspiration when the individual research of the teacher and his instructional role get organically linked. Through this process a good teacher gets to be a better teacher, if not always an inspired teacher. Creativity thus emerges as a central value in the teaching profession.

### **SOCIAL RELEVANCE**

Knowledge in itself is important, but at some stage one has to ask the question: knowledge for what? Knowledge, thus, has to be socially relevant and useful. To invest a social purpose into education, the teaching-learning process must aim at sharpening the problem-solving capabilities of the learners. Socially useful knowledge will therefore involve coming to grips with the pressing problems of the day as well as their multidimensional causal analysis and possible pathways for their solution. Application orientation will have to be accepted as a value, if the ideal of creative teaching is accepted.

## **EXTENSION-ORGANIC LINKS WITH COMMUNITY**

The notion of a scholar leading a cloistered or ivory tower existence, devoting oneself only to reflection 'and research, is dated. Extension is now regarded as an important aspect of the educational process. The isolation of the academic, thus, has to be broken. He must develop organic linkages with the community. In a simplified form his knowledge should become a part of the cognitive universe of the common people and more than that, this knowledge should contribute to improving the quality of life around him. It is erroneous to believe, that the academic 'Knows best in which areas of knowledge he should reflect and carry out his investigations. Organic linkages with the people will bring useful feedback and provide the academic with new perspectives that will equip him better to determine the themes for reflection and research. A shift from individual-centred research and study to people-oriented academic endeavours is indicated. If knowledge and its gains have to have a wide spread, this has, to be incorporated as a central value of the teaching profession.

## **IRRELEVANCE OF SOME KNOWLEDGE AND SO CONTINUOUS RENOVATION AND INNOVATION**

The criterion of relevance necessarily brings us to a consideration of the irrelevance of some knowledge. The size of knowledge industry being what it is, knowledge is growing at a very fast pace. It is now said to double itself every five years. This brings us to a knotty problem; what was good and useful teaching twenty years ago may be out dated and practically useless today. The teacher has to make some critical and effective choices; the deadwood of knowledge has to be chopped off and modern, uptodate and relevant knowledge emphasized. Continuous renovation and innovation in the knowledge field, thus, emerges as an important value. A good teacher can never rest on his oars; mentally he has continuously to be on the move.

## **DECOLONISATION OF THE THIRD WORLD MIND**

A related point needs, consideration here. Perceptive observers of the academic scene in the Third World have noticed that the academia in these countries suffers from a captive mind syndrome. A decolonization process of the minds of the academics has not seriously been taken in hand. Standards of scholarship are set by high prestige centres of learning abroad and much of Third World scholarship emulates it, The attitude of our scholars is one of servile adoption.

In consequence, our recognition and reward system is distorted. There is evidence of quest for chasing "international standards", which may be meaningless in our own national context. Decolonisation of our academic life, therefore, should emerge as a value. This is not a plea for raising iron or bamboo curtains or for barring the free flow of knowledge internationally. What is indicated is the need for cautious thought geared to promoting an intellectual

tradition that emphasizes posing of right and relevant questions and devising methods of finding answers to them efficiently 'and economically. This task has to be incorporated in the value system of our academics.

### **CULTIVATION OF EXCELLENCE**

The central value of academic life must be the cultivation of excellence. This fact is implicit in the foregoing argument. Excellence is an attractive and easy term, but so far it has been poorly defined. Accepting cultivation of excellence as a core value, we must proceed to define it precisely and work out a set of indicators that leave little room for equivocation and doubt.

### **FREEDOM AND RESPONSIBILITY**

A propitious climate for true academic growth requires freedom of enquiry. The operating culture of academic life, when burdened with authoritarian management and bureaucratic procedures, inhibits the growth of ideas and corrodes the cultivation of excellence. Little thought appears to have been given so far to evolving a suitable philosophy of management of the academic enterprise. Such a philosophy would permit the individual academic freedom to question, to doubt, to dissent, and to deny. At the same time, this freedom cannot divest itself from social responsibility.

### **IMPORTANCE OF FREEDOM TO WORK TOGETHER**

Great spurts in knowledge require concentration of ideas and collaboration of effort. The contribution of lone workers has been significant but major breakthroughs at the present state of knowledge will be possible only if teams pursue problems in harmonious working relationship. This brings us to two important values—one, freedom of enquiry, and two, fostering a true team spirit for the attainment of stipulated scientific objectives.

### **CRITICAL AWARENESS AND ARTICULATION OF THE TRADITION**

Men of knowledge, of necessity, are transmitters of the heritage. This function cannot be questioned. However, orientation to the heritage may differ and the explicit or implicit purposes for which it is transmitted may also not be the same. The core 'value in this context will therefore emphasize critical awareness and articulation of the tradition.

### **A SOCIAL CONSCIOUSNESS TO UNDERTAKE SOCIAL CRITICISM**

Finally, the academic is not a passive observer of the social scene. Whatever his speciality or subspeciality, he is also an analyst social trends.

The analyses have an evaluative dimension. He has of necessity to emerge as a critic of society—its trends and processes. His criticism will be worthless if it is only negative in character. An academic with a social consciousness will also illuminate pathways to progressive action. A social consciousness unafraid to undertake social criticism, thus, has to be emphasised as a Value.



## **PROBLEM SOLVING APPROACH AND EMERGENCE OF NEW SOCIAL ORDER**

The world-view and value system outlined in the foregoing pages represent a somewhat idealistic conceptualisation, but it is not the projection of an unrealizable utopia.

An elite sector, such as the one represented by the teachers, has to function as the prime mover and, pace setter of change. Unless it defines its goal and performs its role with conscious determination, society at large is likely to surrender itself to the negative forces at work.

Exertions of the academic profession in the right direction bold out hopes not only of problem-solving but also of the emergence of a new social order.

# 7

## The Significance of Philosophy in Education

As teachers, you might face numerous posers from your students. They may declare, 'Sir, this course is too argumentative, it is nothing short of mudslinging among scholars'. Of course, it may sound tautological, monotonous, *etc.*, to many among learners but its relevance cannot be over emphasised.

- It encourages critical examination of issues and justification for actions.
- It equips teachers with the ideas required for educational reforms and considers those changes to be based on the analysis of current practices in education in line with the values of the society.
- Educational philosophy tends to provide an insight of what education is and the role education should perform at the various stages of growth and for what category of learners.
- It gives more weight to the validity or soundness of arguments than to the authority of the person arguing a case, thereby disregarding prejudice and personal interests.
- It has an humbling effect, in other words, it compels one to keep an open mind on evidence/findings that may render ones previous opinion less valuable.

### **Philosophy as a Rational Activity**

Reasoning involves many things. It involves the use of deductive and inductive methods, clarity in the use of language, and regard to evidence. Deductive or inductive reasoning involves arranging certain kinds of statements in such a

way that we can infer conclusions from them. Deductive reasoning leads to a necessarily true conclusion whereas inductive reasoning leads to a causally true conclusion. Philosophy is a rational activity not in the sense that it gives us information about the world but in the sense that it enables us to scrutinise our beliefs and see whether or not they are rationally tenable. Philosophy makes us rational human beings.

## INTRODUCTION

Analytic philosophy of education is perhaps most useful in helping educators clarify what they think and do. The intent is not to develop new educational ideology, but to understand the meanings of our ideologies better. The benefits of analysis for students come as a result of a clarified and more meaningful education. Analytic philosophy has an important role because so much of education deals with logic and language.

The analyst emphasizes the importance of language in learning and the need to evaluate and clarify the statements we make about education. Analysts point out that language is a very important part of life, and it is doubtful that we could even think without it. Analytic philosophy of education is interested in improving how educators think about education by being sensitive to the complexities of language and its variety of meanings and usages.

Many concepts (such as justice, honour, and virtue) give a “halo” effect to statements about the aims of education. Since most people have had little training in logical thought, they are easy victims for the misuse of language to make them support particular viewpoints; therefore, educators should be sensitive to language problems and attempt to make their language precise and clear. We must clarify the aims of education in a philosophically adequate manner, and philosophical analysis is a major tool in accomplishing this task of clarification.

Analytic philosophers believe that educators should be attuned to the logical complexities of language and its variety of meanings and usages. In short, they do not attempt to prescribe a particular kind of education as much as to clarify the conceptual presuppositions and intended purposes of educators. They prefer to look at what advantages may accrue from a clarified concept of education. Analytic philosophers are aware that methods and media of all kinds educate the child in many ways.

Although educators should understand the value-laden character of language, they do not always seem to operate with an awareness of this fact. There are a number of meanings involved in the way words are used, and these must be viewed against the conditions and circumstances of contemporary society. Some analysts use paradigms or models of logic to help clarify and order our concepts of education. This is similar to Wittgenstein’s idea of “language games in some respects” because paradigms have specific uses for particular kinds of problems. Analytic philosophers advocate the need for empirical research on specific teaching methods because most are based on little more than hunches and personal prejudices.

Curriculum planning is often superficial because of faulty language, confused meanings, and unclear purposes. We need to promote a critical attitude towards curriculum restructuring when meanings and purposes are not made clear.

## **A NEW GUISE? CONTEMPORARY SOCIAL, POLITICAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY**

By the 1980s, the rather simple if not simplistic ordinary language analysis practiced most often in philosophy of education was reeling under the attack from the combination of forces sketched above, but the analytic spirit lived on in the form of rigorous work done in other specialist areas of philosophy—work that trickled out and took philosophy of education in rich new directions. Technically-oriented epistemology, philosophy of science, and metaphysics flourished, as did the interrelated fields of social, political and moral philosophy.

John Rawls published *A Theory of Justice* in 1971, a decade later Alasdair MacIntyre's *After Virtue* appeared, and in another decade or so there was a flood of work on individualism, communitarianism, democratic citizenship, inclusion, exclusion, the rights of children versus the rights of parents, and the rights of groups (such as the Amish) versus the rights of the larger polity.

From the early 1990s philosophers of education have contributed significantly to the debates on these and related topics; indeed, this corpus of work illustrates that good philosophy of education flows seamlessly into work being done in mainstream areas of philosophy. Illustrative examples are Eamonn Callan's *Creating Citizens: Political Education and Liberal Democracy* (1997), Meira Levinson's *The Demands of Liberal Education* (1999), Harry Brighouse's *Social Justice and School Choice* (2000), and Rob Reich's *Bridging Liberalism and Multiculturalism in American Education* (2002).

These works stand shoulder-to-shoulder with semi-classics on the same range of topics by Amy Gutmann (1999), Will Kymlicka (1995), Stephen Macedo (2000), and others. An excerpt from the book by Callan nicely illustrates that the analytic spirit lives on in this body of work; the broader topic being pursued is the status of the aims of education in a pluralistic society where there can be deep fundamental disagreements: ... the distinction must be underlined between the ends that properly inform political education and the extent to which we should tolerate deviations from those ends in a world where reasonable and unreasonable pluralism are entangled and the moral costs of coercion against the unreasonable variety are often prohibitive.

Our theoretical as well as our commonsense discourse do not always respect the distinction.... If some of the teachings of the Roman Catholic Church conflict with our best theory of the ends of civic education, it does not follow that we have any reason to revise our theory; but neither does it mean we have any reason to impose these ends on Catholic schools and the families that they serve.

Callan and White (2003) have offered an explanation of why the topics described above have become such a focus of attention. "What has been

happening in philosophy of education in recent years”, they argue, mirrors “a wider self-examination in liberal societies themselves”. World events, from the fall of communism to the spread of ethnic conflicts “have all heightened consciousness of the contingency of liberal politics”.

A body of work in philosophy, from the early Rawls on, has systematically examined (and critiqued) the foundations of liberalism, and philosophy of education has been drawn into the debates. Callan and White mention communitarianism as offering perhaps “the most influential challenge” to liberalism, and they write:

The debate between liberals and communitarians is far more than a theoretical diversion for philosophers and political scientists. At stake are rival understandings of what makes human lives and the societies in which they unfold both good and just, and derivatively, competing conceptions of the education needed for individual and social betterment.

It should be appended here that it is not only “external” world events that have stimulated this body of work; events internal to a number of democratic societies also have been significant. To cite one example that is prominent in the literature in North America at least, the US Supreme Court issued a ruling (*Wisconsin v. Yoder*) in which members of the Amish sect were allowed to withdraw their children from public schools after the eighth grade—for, it had been argued, any deeper education would endanger the existence of the group and its culture.

In assessing this decision—as of course philosophers have frequently done—a balance has to be achieved between (i) the interest of civic society in having an informed, well-educated, participatory citizenry; (ii) the interest of the Amish as a group in preserving their own culture; and (iii) the interests of the Amish children, who (according to some at least) have a right to develop into autonomous individuals who can make reflective decisions for themselves about the nature of the life they wish to lead. These are issues that fall squarely in the domain covered by the works mentioned above.

The quantity, variety and quality of work being produced on the complex and interrelated issues just outlined amounts to a veritable cottage industry of post-Rawlsian philosophy of education. There are, of course, other areas of activity where interesting contributions are being made, and the discussion will next turn to a sampling of these.

### **Philosophical Disputes Concerning Empirical Education Research**

The educational research enterprise has been criticized for a century or more by politicians, policymakers, administrators, curriculum developers, teachers, philosophers of education, and by researchers themselves—but the criticisms have been contradictory. Charges of being “too ivory tower and theory-oriented” are found alongside “too focused on practice and too atheoretical”; but particularly since publication of the book by Stokes mentioned earlier, and also in light of the views of John Dewey and William James that the function of

theory is to guide intelligent practice and problem-solving, it is becoming more fashionable to hold that the “theory v. practice” dichotomy is a false one.

A similar trend can be discerned with respect to the long warfare between two rival groups of research methods—on one hand quantitative/statistical approaches to research, and on the other hand the qualitative/ethnographic family. (The choice of labels here is not entirely risk-free, for they have been contested; furthermore the first approach is quite often associated with “experimental” studies, and the latter with “case studies”, but this is an over-simplification.)

For several decades these two rival methodological camps were treated by researchers and a few philosophers of education as being rival paradigms (Kuhn’s ideas, albeit in a very loose form, have been influential in the field of educational research), and the dispute between them was commonly referred to as “the paradigm wars”.

In essence the issue at stake was epistemological: members of the quantitative/experimental camp believed that only their methods could lead to well-warranted knowledge claims, especially about the causal factors at play in educational phenomena, and on the whole they regarded qualitative methods as lacking in rigour; on the other hand the adherents of qualitative/ethnographic approaches held that the other camp was too “positivistic” and was operating with an inadequate view of causation in human affairs—one that ignored the role of motives and reasons, possession of relevant background knowledge, awareness of cultural norms, and the like.

Few if any commentators in the “paradigm wars” suggested that there was anything prohibiting the use of both approaches in the one research programme—provided that if both were used, they only were used sequentially or in parallel, for they were underwritten by different epistemologies and hence could not be blended together. But recently the trend has been towards rapprochement, towards the view that the two methodological families are, in fact, compatible and are not at all like paradigms in the Kuhnian sense(s) of the term; the melding of the two approaches is often called “mixed methods research”, and is growing in popularity.

The most lively contemporary debates about education research, however, were set in motion around the turn of the millennium when the US Federal Government moved in the direction of funding only rigourously scientific educational research—the kind that could establish causal factors which could then guide the development of practically effective policies. (It was held that such a causal knowledge base was available for medical decisionmaking.)

The definition of “rigourously scientific”, however, was decided by politicians and not by the research community, and it was given in terms of the use of a specific research method—the net effect being that the only research projects to receive Federal funding (until this policy was reversed by the new Obama administration) were those that carried out randomized controlled experiments or field trials (RFTs). It has become common over the last decade to refer to the RFT as the “gold standard” methodology.



The National Research Council (NRC)—an arm of the U.S., National Academies of Science—issued a report, influenced by post positivistic philosophy of science (NRC 2002), that argued that this criterion was far too narrow. Numerous essays have appeared subsequently that point out how the “gold standard” account of scientific rigour distorts the history of science, how the complex nature of the relation between evidence and policy-making has been distorted and made to appear overly simple (for instance the role of value judgements in linking empirical findings to policy directives is often overlooked), and qualitative researchers have insisted upon the scientific nature of their work.

Nevertheless, and possibly because it tried to be balanced and supported the use of RFTs in some research contexts, the NRC report has been the subject of symposia in four journals, where it has been supported by a few and attacked from a variety of philosophical fronts: Its authors were positivists, they erroneously believed that educational inquiry could be value neutral and that it could ignore the ways in which the exercise of power constrains the research process, they misunderstood the nature of educational phenomena, they were guilty of advocating “your father’s paradigm”.

This last critic asserted that educational research should move “towards a Nietzschean sort of ‘unnatural science’ that leads to greater health by fostering ways of knowing that escape normativity” (Lather 2004, p. 27)—a suggestion that evokes the reaction, namely, one of incomprehension on the part of most researchers and those philosophers of education who work within a different tradition where a “way of knowing”, in order to be a way of *knowing*, must inevitably be normative.

The final complexity in the debates over the nature of educational research is that there are some respected members of the philosophy of education community who claim, along with Carr, that “the forms of human association characteristic of educational engagement are not really apt for scientific or empirical study at all” (Carr 2003, 54–5). His reasoning is that educational processes cannot be studied empirically because they are processes of “normative initiation”—a position that as it stands begs the question by not making clear *why* such processes cannot be studied empirically.

## **PEACE EDUCATION: CONFLICT RESOLUTION TRAINING**

Peace education programmes centered on conflict resolution typically focus on the social-behavioural symptoms of conflict, training individuals to resolve inter-personal disputes through techniques of negotiation and (peer) mediation. Learning to manage anger, “fight fair” and improve communication through skills such as listening, turn-taking, identifying needs, and separating facts from emotions, constitute the main elements of these programmes. Participants are also encouraged to take responsibility for their actions and to brainstorm together on compromises.

In general, approaches of this type aim to “alter beliefs, attitudes, and behaviours...from negative to positive attitudes towards conflict as a basis for preventing violence” (Van Slyck, Stern and Elbedour, 1999, emphasis added). There are various styles or approaches in conflict resolution training (ADR, Verbal Aikido, NVC) that can give the practitioner the means to accept the conflictual situation and orient it towards a peaceful resolution. As one peer mediation coordinator put it: “Conflict is very natural and normal, but you can’t go through your entire life beating everybody up—you have to learn different ways to resolve conflict”

### **Democracy Education**

Peace education programmes centered on democracy education typically focus on the political processes associated with conflict, and postulate that with an increase in democratic participation the likelihood of societies resolving conflict through violence and war decreases. At the same time, “a democratic society needs the commitment of citizens who accept the inevitability of conflict as well as the necessity for tolerance” (U.S., Department of State, *The Culture of Democracy*, emphasis added). Thus programmes of this kind attempt to foster a conflict-positive orientation in the community by training students to view conflict as a platform for creativity and growth.

Approaches of this type train participants in the skills of critical thinking, debate and coalition-building, and promote the values of freedom of speech, individuality, tolerance of diversity, compromise and conscientious objection. Their aim is to produce “responsible citizens” who will hold their governments accountable to the standards of peace, primarily through adversarial processes. Activities are structured to have students “assume the role of the citizen that chooses, makes decisions, takes positions, argues positions and respects the opinions of others”: skills that a multi-party democracy are based upon. Based on the assumption that democracy decreases the likelihood of violence and war, it is assumed that these are the same skills necessary for creating a culture of peace.

### **Human Rights Education**

Peace education programmes centered on raising awareness of human rights typically focus at the level of policies that humanity ought to adopt in order to move closer to a peaceful global community. The aim is to engender a commitment among participants to a vision of structural peace in which all individual members of the human race can exercise their personal freedoms and be legally protected from violence, oppression and indignity.

Approaches of this type familiarize participants with the international covenants and declarations of the United Nations system; train students to recognize violations of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights; and promote tolerance, solidarity, autonomy and self-affirmation at the individual and collective levels.

*Human rights education “faces continual elaboration, a significant theory-practice gap and frequent challenge as to its validity”. In one practitioner’s view:*

*“Human rights education does not work in communities fraught with conflict unless it is part of a comprehensive approach... In fact, such education can be counterproductive and lead to greater conflict if people become aware of rights which are not realized. In this respect, human rights education can increase the potential for conflict”*

To prevent these outcomes, many such programmes are now being combined with aspects of conflict resolution and democracy education schools of thought, along with training in non-violent action.

### **Worldview Transformation**

New approaches to peace education are starting from insights gleaned from psychology which recognize the developmental nature of human psychosocial dispositions. Essentially, while conflict-promoting attitudes and behaviours are characteristic of earlier phases of human development, unity-promoting attitudes and behaviours emerge in later phases of healthy development. H.B. Danesh (2002a, 2002b, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008a, 2008b) proposes an “Integrative Theory of Peace” in which peace is understood as a psychosocial, political, moral and spiritual reality. Peace education, he says, must focus on the healthy development and maturation of human consciousness through assisting people to examine and transform their worldviews.

*Worldviews are defined as the subconscious lens (acquired through cultural, family, historical, religious and societal influences) through which people perceive four key issues:*

- The nature of reality,
- Human nature,
- The purpose of existence,
- The principles governing appropriate human relationships.

Surveying a mass of material, Danesh argues that the majority of people and societies in the world hold conflict-based worldviews, which express themselves in conflicted intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, and international relationships.

He subdivides conflict-based worldviews into two main categories which he correlates to phases of human development: the Survival-Based Worldview and the Identity-Based Worldview. It is through the acquisition of a more integrative, Unity-Based Worldview that human capacity to mitigate conflict, create unity in the context of diversity, and establish sustainable cultures of peace, is increased - be it in the home, at school, at work, or in the international community.

‘== Criticism ==’ Toh Swee-Hin (1997) observes that each of the various streams of peace education “inevitably have their own dynamics and ‘autonomy’ in terms of theory and practice”. “Salomon (2002) has described how the challenges, goals, and methods of peace education differ substantially between areas characterized by intractable conflict, interethnic tension, or relative tranquility”.

Salomon (2002) raises the problem and its consequences: “Imagine that medical practitioners would not distinguish between invasive surgery to remove malignant tumors and surgery to correct one’s vision. Imagine also that while surgeries are practiced, no research and no evaluation of their differential effectiveness accompany them. The field would be considered neither very serious nor very trustworthy. Luckily enough, such a state of affairs does not describe the field of medicine, but it comes pretty close to describing the field of peace education. First, too many profoundly different kinds of activities taking place in an exceedingly wide array of contexts are all lumped under the same category label of “peace education” as if they belong together. Second, for whatever reason, the field’s scholarship in the form of theorizing, research and programme evaluation badly lags behind practice... In the absence of clarity of what peace education really is, or how its different varieties relate to each other, it is unclear how experience with one variant of peace education in one region can usefully inform programmes in another region.”

According to Clarke-Habibi (2005), “A general or integrated theory of peace is needed: one that can holistically account for the intrapersonal, inter-personal, inter-group and international dynamics of peace, as well as its main principles and pre-requisites. An essential component of this integrated theory must also be the recognition that a culture of peace can only result from an authentic process of transformation, both individual and collective.”

One major aspect under debate is the issue of conflict itself in peace education theory. Most peace education programmes postulate that conflict is an inseparable, indeed beneficial, aspect of human nature and human social relations. Increasingly, this assumption is being questioned.

## **DEFINITION: THE PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE EDUCATION**

The philosophy of peace education can be defined, most simply, as the elaboration of reasons why we ought to be committed to peace education. To some extent, all writers on peace and peace education may be said to be articulating reasons why we ought to be committed to peace education. However, if we think of an organized philosophy of peace education, this implies that such reasons for the commitment to peace education as organized within the context of established philosophical traditions. A philosophy of peace education is thus more than a personal statement of the importance of peace education, as valuable as this might be. There must be some argumentation of the importance of peace education through either established philosophers and/or established schools of philosophical debate.

## **DEARTH OF ATTENTION TO THE PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE EDUCATION**

There are many within the field of peace research and education who have lamented the dearth of attention to developing a systematic philosophy of peace

education. In 1965, Johan Galtung referred to “dephilosophizing” within peace research, that is, merely “collecting research experience without having a satisfactory definition and a conceptual framework and a deductive theory” (EPR:1:171).

Galtung was referring to peace research, although the diagnosis from Galtung regarding peace education is similar. Galtung contended in 1971 that a theory for peace education had yet to be developed and the need for such a theory clearly existed (EPR:1:334-339).

Over a decade later, Nigel Blake reached a similar conclusion, ending an essay on peace education with a call for philosophical work on the field, as such work was “urgent” (1985:38).

The comments by Galtung and Blake are now dated, although problem of a lack of a developed philosophical rationale for peace education is an enduring one. Ilan Gur-Ze’ev has more recently identified a lack of theoretical coherence and philosophical elaboration for peace education, although he wryly suggests (2001:351) that this lack of theoretical coherence or philosophical elaboration is not always viewed as a bad thing, as “at times philosophical work is understood as unnecessary, artificial or even dangerous for this educational cause”.

James Page (2004:5,11) suggests that the dearth of attention is due to the fideistic nature of peace education, that is, those involved in peace education tend to be already convinced of its importance and see the reasons for peace education to be self-obvious. Yet it is precisely the fideistic nature of the commitment to peace education which underscores how important it is to articulate clear reasons for such an educational endeavour.

## **REASONS FOR A PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE EDUCATION**

The reasons for developing a philosophy of peace education are, at one level, similar to the reasons for developing a philosophy for any educational activity. Put simply, if the state and civil society are expected to commit resources to peace education, then it is reasonable that the state and civil society be told why this is important.

Peace education is often mentioned within United Nations instruments as being of central importance, although in most instances this is an assumed importance (Page, 2004:4,5). The importance of peace and education for peace may well be obvious to some, although it does nevertheless need to be argued.

In addition to this, there is a special reason for articulating an educational philosophy with regard to peace education: peace education is often prone to accusations of political correctness (something which we might define as fashionable morality) or constituting a form of indoctrination. If indeed peace education is to be regarded as more than political correctness or indoctrination, then a well developed philosophy of peace education is one way of countering this accusation. In developing a philosophy of peace education, we are arguably engaging in an apologetics of peace education and subtly also an apologetics of peace.

### **The Expansive Nature of a Philosophy of Peace Education**

One of the central problems for articulating a philosophy of peace education is the definition problem of peace education, in much same way that the definition of peace is a problem for peace research. Working from Galtungian theory, peace is now generally taken to include direct peace, structural peace and cultural peace.

So too, peace education may be taken to include development education, futures education, educational for international understanding, human rights education, inclusive education and environmental education. One problem which flows from this is whether a philosophy of peace education ought to constitute a philosophy of the expansive understanding of peace education and, if so, how ought the definitional boundaries be drawn.

A related problem for a philosophy of peace education is the closeness of peace education to peace advocacy, especially if we think of education operating within formal and informal contexts. For education within formal contexts, it is relatively easy to distinguish peace education from peace advocacy, although the distinction is not so straightforward for education within an informal context.

In some respects peace education is a form of peace advocacy. This expanded notion of the philosophy of peace education is not something we ought necessarily to feel uneasy about: the leading figure of modern educational philosophy, John Dewey, famously equated philosophy with the philosophy-of-education (MW9:331-342), suggesting that philosophy may be described as a general theory of education (338) and that philosophy substantially originated in response to educational questions (339).

### **The Literature on a Philosophy of Peace Education**

It is appropriate to discuss two recent attempts to develop a philosophy of peace education. James Calleja, who has been active in the international leadership of peace education, has written (1991) of possible philosophical basis for peace education in the Kantian epistemology of education and peace, and specifically in the Kantian categorical imperative. The categorical imperative has a number of formulations, including that our actions must be morally universal and we must regard humans as ends in themselves.

Kant argues we have a duty to act according to the categorical imperative and that we also have a duty to educate in this manner. Kant was also a strong peace advocate and, in his writing on peace, duty figures prominently: indeed in the Second Definitive Article of the 1795 essay *Zum Ewigen Frieden* (On Perpetual Peace), Kant suggests we have “an immediate duty” to peace. It follows that peace education ought also to be regarded as a duty, flowing from the categorical imperative and from the importance of reason.

More recently, James Page (2004, 2008) has suggested five possible ethical or philosophical foundations for peace education: virtue ethics, whereby peace may be interpreted as a virtue, and/or virtue is interpreted as peacefulness, and



peace education as education in that virtue; consequentialist ethics, whereby peace education may be interpreted as education regarding the consequences of our action and inaction, both as individuals and collectivities; conservative political ethics, whereby peace education may be interpreted as emphasizing the importance of the evolution of social institutions and the importance of ordered and lawful social change; aesthetic ethics, whereby peace may be interpreted as something beautiful and valuable in itself, and peace education as emphasizing the importance of that beauty and value; and the ethics of care, whereby care may be interpreted as a core element in peace, and peace education as encouraging trust and engagement with the other.

## **PHILOSOPHY OF PEACE EDUCATION: FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR RESEARCH**

One of the adages of philosophy is that there is always more work to be undertaken and this applies also to the project of establishing a philosophy of peace education. The challenge of encouraging individuals and groups to interact harmoniously and creatively, with themselves and their environment, is such a profound and multifaceted challenge that it is appropriate that we should think of the task of establishing a philosophy of education as one which still yet to be completed.

Areas for further investigation include: the interaction between religious education and peace education; peace education and indoctrination; a postfoundationalist basis for peace education; non-western sources for peace education; imagination and peace education; eschatology and peace education; peace education and justice education; and a philosophy for teaching peace to the military.

The philosophy of peace education is fundamentally a theoretical exercise, although it may nevertheless serve as an exercise in applied philosophy. A formal philosophy of peace education can assist to undergird both individual and institutional commitment to peace education, in all levels of education. For instance, within each of the five philosophical rationales for peace education outlined in the previous section, there are hints as to what some practical approaches to peace education might look like.

Peace education may be thought of as encouraging a commitment to peace as a settled disposition and enhancing the confidence of the individual as an agent for peace; as informing the student on the consequences of war and social injustice; as informing the student on the value of peaceful and just social structures and working to uphold or develop such social structures; as encouraging the student to love the world and to imagine a peaceful future; and as caring for the student and encouraging the student to care for others.

## **POSTMODERN DIVERSITY**

Postmodernist hallmarks are concern with irony, contingency, and popular culture; and a fascination with variety, difference, and deconstruction are

prominent. Postmodernists see a crisis in contemporary culture and hold that no single cultural tradition will suffice to meet it. In education, many postmodernists are critical theorists who see the curricular canons of Western cultural traditions, “scientific laws” or first principles as forms of continuing domination. They promote knowledge about cultures on the margins and discourses around gender, race, ethnicity, and class identities.

### **Postmodernism and Philosophy**

Postmodern philosophy is highly critical of modern philosophy, but is dependent on it for many of its themes. Two leading postmodern philosophers are Foucault and Derrida. Foucault explored how notions of truth have their origins in historical conflict and struggle, and how these notions exercise power over institutions, social systems, and personal identities. He examined how social policies and movements come together in historical events to send us in certain directions rather than others.

Rather than seeking universal causal forces in history, philosophy should look for the “regimes of truth” that exercise power and control over people and institutions. Derrida critiques the logocentrism of Western philosophers since Aristotle who have assumed that what appears to the intellect is representative of the world. As Derrida sees it, intellectual representations belong not to logos, the organizing rational principle of the world, but to human discourses, writings, or texts. We need to “deconstruct” our texts and examine how the vagaries of language confuse meanings, because we are never fully in control of the language we use. Derrida believes that language cannot be exactly precise, and the assumption that mind precedes language is mistaken: what we call mind comes from our cultural texts and how we interpret them.

Postmodern philosophy is not a unified philosophical perspective. It projects a critical mood or frame of mind without a definite sense of direction or outcome. In part, postmodernism echoes elements of neo-pragmatism: Bernstein promotes an engaged community of enquirers who respond to the conflicts of the day, West claims that neo-pragmatism promotes cultural criticism and political engagement in the service of creative democracy, and Rorty maintains that our best hope is for solidarity to overcome cruelty in the world.

### **Postmodern Philosophy and Education**

Postmodern philosophers of education reflect critical theory and elements of Marxism, but they also find fault with the totalizing language of Marxism. Giroux wants to retain modernism’s belief in human reason and ethics, but redefine relations between the margins and the center of society for change and justice. McLaren promotes a critical pedagogy that opposes positivistic, ahistorical, and depoliticized education, and is opposed to the politics of power found in contemporary schools and the larger society.

Cherryholmes advances a “poststructuralist” approach to education to overcome the emphasis on a rigidly structured curriculum, testing and sorting,

and bureaucratic control. Bowers wants a theory of education that conserves significant cultural achievements but builds a reflective community that looks to the future. Postmodernist aims of education stress ethical relations among people, including people of different background, origin, and perspective. A basic aim is to engage students in critical discourses on human exploitation and to emancipate them from oppression. Education should result in self and social empowerment rather than serving the marketplace and economic competition.

The postmodernist curriculum includes issues of power, history, identities, cultural politics, and social criticism leading to collective action. It connects educational processes (means) to the imperatives of a democratic community (ends), and believes that curriculum should empower people and transform society. Postmodernists reject reliance on master narratives and include the study of people who are on the margins of culture. An important aspect of curriculum is the ordinary experiences and outlooks that students bring with them. Postmodernist curriculum recasts the meaning and use of canons of knowledge, and it seeks a new conception of knowledge that does not depend upon disciplinary boundaries. Therefore, teachers must be seen as “transformative intellectuals” occupying political and social roles. Interaction between students and teachers is a crucial consideration, and students must learn to express themselves, experiment, and be personally and socially responsible.

### **Analysis of Postmodernism in Education**

Strengths in the postmodernist view include attention to moral and ethical education in order to develop personal and social identities. Postmodernists emphasize diversity and social discourse, and they promote a pluralistic democratic community. They want to shed light on how personal and social identities are formed, and they emphasize how discourse and narrative shape people’s minds. They call attention to how the curriculum and the teaching-learning process may serve to liberate or oppress. However, postmodernist language is difficult to decipher, and attention is needed on a public language that communicates and persuades. Postmodernists seem to be more conscious of what they oppose than what they promote, and their emphasis on human differences may encourage fragmentation and separateness instead of a recognition of common human bonds.

# AN INTRODUCTION TO EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

"An Introduction to Educational Philosophy" serves as a comprehensive exploration of the foundational principles and theories that underpin the field of education. Delving into the philosophical roots of education, this introductory text examines various schools of thought and their implications for teaching and learning. From the ancient philosophies of Plato and Aristotle to modern theories of pragmatism, existentialism, and critical pedagogy, the book offers a nuanced understanding of the diverse philosophical perspectives that shape educational practice. Through engaging narratives and thought-provoking analyses, readers are introduced to key concepts such as the nature of knowledge, the purpose of education, and the role of the teacher and learner in the educational process. The text navigates complex philosophical debates surrounding topics such as the aims of education, the relationship between education and society, and the tensions between traditional and progressive approaches to teaching. Moreover, "An Introduction to Educational Philosophy" explores the practical implications of philosophical theories for educational policy and practice. It examines how different philosophical perspectives inform curriculum design, pedagogical methods, and assessment practices, offering educators valuable insights into creating meaningful learning experiences for their students. By fostering critical reflection and dialogue, this book empowers educators to develop a coherent philosophy of education that guides their teaching practice and decision-making in the classroom. Whether novice or experienced educators, readers will find this text to be a rich resource for deepening their understanding of the philosophical foundations of education and its implications for contemporary educational practice.



**Dr. Babita Sharma** is associated with Academics for more than 10 years. She holds the degree of M.A. (Pol. Science) from Maharaja Ganga Singh University, Bikaner, M.A. (Hindi & Education) from Vardhman Open University, Kota, B.Ed. & M.Ed. from Maharaja Ganga Singh University and Doctor of Philosophy in Education from Tanta University, Sri Ganganagar. She is supervising Research Work in the field of Education. At present, she is working as an Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, Tanta University, Sri Ganganagar (Rajasthan). She has been continuously involved in Research Work with bulk of publication in renowned Journals and attended various conferences and Seminars and Webinar Work Shops to share and impart her knowledge. She has participated and presented papers in more than 05 International/National Seminars.



4378/4-B, Murarilal Street, Ansari Road, Daryaganj, New Delhi-110002  
Phone : +91-11-23281685, 41043100, Fax: +91-11-23270680  
E-Mail: academicuniversitypress@gmail.com

