

Chapter 27

Contemplation, Learning, and Teaching Through Love



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Abstract Many concepts and expressions link education with love, the uses of the will or manners of loving. In these pages, we will concentrate on some of the aspects, which come together: teaching and learning are only possible through love. Education may be defined as helping to love, to love learning.

Within this framework, contemplation is an act that may lead to the recovery of the will, thus permitting the reason to act in its full measure by integrating feeling with loving, which is taxing to accomplish, particularly in our times. The joy of learning is a key means of finding the correct pathway; a pathway that follows tracks leading to growth, which implies carrying out formative learning so that human learning can be achieved.

The text follows this outline: firstly, a reflection on the aim of human life and education, which will give rise to key concepts such as desire, contemplation, love, will, and knowledge. Then we give more specific consideration to the relationship between learning and contemplating, the necessary operative concurrence of intelligence and will for learning, which indicates the importance of imagination and memory. It is here that joy appears, associated with hopeful anticipation of promising future prospects. And it concludes by showing how learning is materialized in the formation of good operative habits.

One question remains as a response to the reading of this text: what effect would authentic pedagogical renovation have today?

Keywords Joy of learning · Imagination · Desire · Contemplation · Love

Many concepts and expressions link education with love, the uses of the will, or manners of loving. This is a particularly relevant contemporary issue, as the volume recently published by Miller (2018) shows. In these pages, we will concentrate on

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27.1 The Aim of Life and of Education

In the area of educational reflection, over the last three decades in the Western world we have seen the appearance of an extensive bibliography on issues, which demand greater attention on the ethical dimension of education, university level included (cf. Ibáñez-Martín 2017; Biesta 2020).

In the recent bibliography, we find subjects such as:

- Education for personal fulfillment (Damon 2008; Vazenou-Nieuwenhuis et al. 2017; Kristjánsson 2019)
- Preparing students for a meaningful life (Malin 2018; Moran 2017)
- Teaching for critical judgment and assessment (Christensen et al. 1992)
- How to raise ideals and assist vital transformation (Brassai et al. 2011)
- A return to reflection on the liberal arts and their current role (Scott 2014)
- How to reclaim excellence with soul (Lewis 2007)
- Happiness and education (Altarejos 1986; Noddings 2003; Kristjánsson 2016)
- Moral education and character education (Bernal et al. 2015; Berkowitz and Bier 2004; Duckworth 2016)
- Social commitment, civic participation, and education (Naval and Arbués 2017; York et al. 2018)
- The promotion of fulfillment includes a number of issues (Ibáñez-Martín 2017): the central role of freedom, a basic requirement; the practical dimension of education; consideration of the various pathways of knowledge, including the aesthetic dimension.

In short, speaking about education means dealing with what is considered to be beneficial. A coffee shop-type philosophy of education, like a big departmental store where one selects products off the shelves, hides their defects in wrapping paper and sends the customer home happily, thanks to the Student Services professionals, is not good enough.

A prime problem that arises in understanding the aim of human life, or in other words, the understanding of happiness, is that the answer does not lie in speculation on universal concepts, but rather on particular practices or actions.

In fact, human happiness may be understood through its references to concepts such as good, tendency, plenitude, delight, possession, and many others. But from this perspective, it is difficult to conclude which actions promote happiness; that is to say, knowing what happiness means is not enough to understand what could be done to achieve it.

Education refers to this latter point: to understand what human actions may be promoted to foster a happy outcome. Thus, educational knowledge starts and is constituted in a different way from philosophical ethics. Without rejecting this philosophy, without ignoring any of its principles or its norms, it converges with it but only after following a different cognitive pathway.

This route begins with a reflection on common experience. The aim is the object of learning, but also a term of love. This is how it is shown in experience: in a way, firstly it is wanted and later understood, or, at least, the tendency of the subject is recognized before the concept or idea of what is wanted; there is awareness of the dissatisfaction of wanting before knowing what will satisfy this need.

The objective belongs to practical philosophy, which cannot be solved by mere abstract conceptual knowledge but also demands the concurrence of the need and the experience of the action. It breaks the logical chain of the means–end relationship so as to confront the true existence of a final objective, which therefore returns the partial aims into means.

In order to place happiness as the objective of educational action, a different perspective may be adopted. This new perspective is not really so new, as it was suggested by Socrates in his life and in his words: to be happy, what one must do is practice the virtues, which are the riches of the soul, and in this way become virtuous (cf. for example, Plato, *Apology*, 30 a). The nullifying issue for Socrates, coming precisely from his formative intention, is not knowledge of the goods that bring happiness, but rather how the happy human being, with or without certain goods, behaves. But we may see a variety of perspectives on the topic, looking, for example, at the issues of the *Journal of Happiness Studies*, during the last decade.

The consideration of happiness from the perspective of happy behavior reduces the possibility of understanding happiness as a situation defined by the goods it contains. In this framework, it is advisable to suggest that, will not be resolved in terms of addition of emotions and feelings. This is to point out the appetitive dimension of reason. It is a characteristic note of *contemplation*. When we contemplate, not only do we know, but we also fully desire what is known.

Contemplation is the fusion of knowing and wanting in the same act. Wanting does not mean just desiring. Desire may be defined as an eagerness to possess or enjoy a valuable object, which is thus wanted. It is a tendential act that may be

truncated if the attainment of the object fails. Then, contemplative knowledge is not just logical discourse; it is the particular wanting of contemplation.

This is also called *love*: assent or affirmation, which is the act common to all forms of loving: “loving something or someone means finding him/her or it *probus*, the Latin word for ‘good’. It is a way of turning to him/her or it and saying, *it’s good that you exist. Good that you are in this world!*” (cf. Pieper 1997, p. 436). In another way, happy is who sees what she/he loves.

All human beings can know and love; therefore, all human beings are capable of contemplation. This is a significant characteristic of contemplation: it is an act that does not require special or exceptional qualities. Contemplation is not a behavior for illustrious minds only; all human being is capable of contemplation.

27.2 Learning and Contemplating

Contemplation as a final objective implies a demand for education, that is, the operative concurrence of intelligence and willpower for learning. In fact, this integration is the proper way for reason to act, and therefore, for human beings; but humans do not always behave in this way. The will is the rational appetite, which suggests that whenever there is a rational act, it is an act of the will. This is true, but the will has many uses, moving from rejection to approval, and, in addition, its actions differ in their intensity, from a vague desire to a firm wanting.

It seems that the will is an almost nonexistent subject in twentieth century empirical psychology, and this, in itself, is reason enough to explain its absence in pedagogical knowledge and practice. However, oversight of the will has deeper historical causes. The idea of reason as an entirely cognitive power would settle definitively in twentieth century scientism.

Science is then the prime objective of education. And as science uses the abstract knowledge of discursive reason. From this perspective, contemplation has no place in educational action.

However, contemplation is an action that may lead to the recovery of the will while simultaneously allowing reason to act at its peak. Since the late twentieth century, there have been various indications that reveal preferential attention to the affective world and, above all, to its integration with intelligence, which have arisen with a pedagogical objective. Books on these matters have broken into the market like authentic bestsellers (cf. Goleman 1995, 1996). One of the dimensions of will is to rule the emotions, to manage emotions through reason. This means the integration of feeling with wanting, an action which is extraordinarily complicated nowadays.

In addition, considering reason as a mere discursive capacity makes it shrink and withdraw from the internal capacities, such as *memory* and *imagination*. Memory has been generally discredited in knowledge and contemporary educational practice, as the result of the inertia of certain pedagogical revolutions. Thus, a new emerging sensitivity in education, together with recent studies and research, has initiated a clear recovery of memory in learning. In fact, the UNESCO report produced by

Delors, a real milestone, unreservedly proclaimed: “Using the memory is a necessary antidote to being swamped by the instant information being put out by the media. . . . All specialists agree that the memory must be trained from childhood and that it is inappropriate to eliminate from schools certain traditional, supposedly boring, exercises” (Delors 1996, p. 98).

Together with *memory*, imagination is the other aspect cast into oblivion by education and for the same reason: oversight or the lack of will. *Imagination* is the necessary intermediate capacity between the senses and the intelligence, transforming the singular data of the senses into generic images, which foster comprehension.

In the analysis carried out by J. Marías on the radical obstacles to happiness, together with the fears that stalk humanity, is the absence of the imagination needed to confront the present and the future. The easily understood complaint in this situation as a direct pedagogical reference: “If there were a different idea of education, we could teach people to imagine. We teach them to multiply, to extract square roots, to swim, to do sport, but we do not teach them to use their imagination; this would be easy and would result in an amazing expansion of life” (Marías 1995, p. 59).

Education in schools demands the complementarity of the scientific disciplines oriented toward formal thinking with the narrative skills, which facilitate contemplation. The educational influence of narrative knowledge cannot be overstated. All peoples, since the very dawn of humanity, have been educated through stories. At present, part of the educational knowledge that teaches us is the cinema. And, in addition, the contents of social networks and media are of great influence.

At least 50 years ago, people began to be aware of the fragility and inadequacy of what was called formal education, institutional academic teaching that was chronologically and hierarchically graded from the first years at school until, in a sense, the final years at university. The superiority given to academic schooling, marginalizing other educational areas and agents, has been the object of criticism in educational research.

A first warning was given at the *International Conference on World Crisis in Education*, held in Williamsburg (Virginia, USA) in 1967. A document was begun and entrusted to the International Institute for Educational Planning, then directed by P. H. Coombs. A year later, the document was published with the addition of contributions from the Conference with the title *The World Educational Crisis*, with Coombs as lead author (Coombs 1968). The central point of the work is crisis in schools and criticism of them as the main educational environment. Unfortunately, its conclusions were fragile in practice and only critical in theory, which explains its lack of a transformative effect in the following years. It did not reflect in-depth on the objective of education, and merely dealt with the analysis of the learning processes. It is strange to see how contemporary pedagogical revolutions tend to be conservative, particularly when carried out by official or government bodies. There is a fear of breaking the established templates, strictly demanded by majorities. If we were to rethink education from another perspective, how would our educational leaders react? Or what attitude would they take?

For example, contemplation as happy behavior and the final end of education undoubtedly implies a major modification of the objectives and partial ends of education, and a revision of certain educational action concepts. “In its original and simplest sense, contemplation is simply seeing and enjoying seeing” (Maritain 1969, p. 133). As the realization of happy behavior, it should guide all teaching, and its final end will be operative at the start, during and at the end of human learning.

Taken thus, there is one element that can be seen as a thermometer to measure the efficacy of education: *joy*. Joy is “the response to happiness” (Pieper 2011, p. 273). We cannot observe the contemplation of others, but we can perceive their external effective effusiveness, which is joy. If education culminates happily, this will be shown in joy (García Hoz 1950, p. 91), naturally, in the *joy of learning*. Joy is what differentiates true virtues from false ones, which only appear to be virtues.

It must not be forgotten that joy is reflected a sentiment, that is, it springs from a specific cause, and is reduplicated in its own self-awareness. For this reason, we can say that there is a stable state or situation of joy in learning, not merely joyful moments or incidents due to specific learnings.

Learning generally appears as a tough, painful process of assimilation, at the end of which is received the pedagogical prize, good grades, a gift from the family or a competition trophy. This idea is not appropriate when it is considered exclusive, ignoring the fact that the effort to learn is compatible with the pleasure of contemplation.

Joy, as the primary effect of contemplation, is seen in attitudes, which consolidate happy behavior. The most proximate attitude, as it leads toward the future, has been highlighted by J. Marías: *hopeful anticipation* (Marías 1984). For this author, “it is a method to promote happiness. In two senses: firstly, to make it more frequent and likely; secondly, to make it more intense. However, this method is precisely the cultivation of hopeful anticipation, which is something that can be cultivated perfectly” (Marías 1995, p. 380). Obviously, J. Marías is referring to “method” in its original broadest sense: as a pathway or route, and not as a tidy protocol for activity; as open guidance and not as a specific routine. If joy is the reflected sentiment of the present, concomitant with happy behavior, hopeful anticipation is its projection into the future, which shapes this latter as an open personal project, not in closed in teaching activity programs. Therefore, “the achievement of the anticipation does not make it melt away (. . .) In the case of hopeful anticipation, it must be said that, once achieved, this continues: far from ending, what is perceived or possessed continues to inspire hope” (Marías 1995, p. 375).

Learning then is produced with the guidance of contemplation, it spills over an immediate joy and reflection of work, and is projected in tension regarding the future in the form of hopeful anticipation. Contemplation may be interwoven with the smallest and most everyday actions, but it demands that the subject find appropriate, balanced objects in order to contemplate.

In education, it is the responsibility of the educator to supply these objects through *teaching*, which has a threefold, transcendent effect (cf. Altarejos and Naval 2011, p. 129).

Firstly, knowing the nature of these objects, which is none other than what is human: the human being, the person, is the primary object for contemplation. But this is not the anthropological, psychological or sociological concept of man or woman; this would again lead to curricular structuring based on formal subjects or disciplines, which promote learning as a terminal activity.

Second, it is necessary to be open to humanism as a configuring element in the curriculum; a formative humanism, which is more than the teaching of humanistic disciplines, although it begins with them. A humanism leading to the communication of narrative knowledge. It does not mean conceptually understanding what a human being is, but to observe her act and to observe how she sees herself acting, which occurs through present and past narratives. And this demands awareness of teaching as an activity promoting human formation which is not a mere explanation of science, but must elicit happy behavior.

The third point is the use of appropriate language, embracing, and making use of rhetorical and poetic resources. “In order to be educational—to open the way to communication, so that it is not to be mere communication of knowledge and even to permit this communication, teaching must use logical resources but also resources of other types: rhetoric and poetry in the proper way. This is demanded by the human condition, a subjectivity after all” (Naval 1992, p. 290). The objectivity of knowledge is eminently important in scientific research; but pedagogically its role is smaller and does not predominate when the objective is to educate complete human beings.

We may then conclude that learning comes into being in the formation of good operative habits, precisely because it is addressed to each individual person.

27.3 Human Learning: A Question of Freedom

Development is a strictly personal matter. “But if development is the responsibility of each individual, in such a way that, for this, no-one can replace another, what is possible and also required, is assistance in developing. Assistance in development is not merely an arrangement or progress, but support for which the learner pays fully: by developing, no less. The most magnificent thing to be found in this world is a developing human being” (Polo 1999, p. 107). Such is the happy everyday opportunity of education: to attend and contemplate human development.

Above all, we must be aware that this attendance to development is a way of defining education. Education is, thus, the integration of the actions of the educator and the pupil. There may be learning without teaching—discovery—and teaching which does not give rise to any learning—due to defective teaching activity or rejection by the student—but this is not strictly speaking either learning or educational teaching. But this integration of teaching and learning is not a simple concurrence of actions; there is an order in teaching to promote learning.

Sustaining this relationship is not at all easy, either in theory or in pedagogical practice. It is common then for both the theory and the practice to frequently

emphasize one of the extremes. In truth, we cannot imagine how education can be carried out by ignoring one of the two poles. Nevertheless, the risk of listing to one side by giving greater importance to the teacher or the pupil is a constant in the comprehension of education. This is the reason, for example, for one of the tendencies of educators—both in theory and in practice—which is most harmful to pedagogical action and greatly reduces its effectiveness: the tendency to take the place of the student when he or she does not reach the objectives of the teaching. This replacement is invalid and risks encouraging the wrong attitude in the learner: neglect of his/her personal responsibility for learning. This attitude is easily adopted in teaching very young children, due to their inability to answer freely, but maybe perpetuated with adolescents if the educator assumes more educational power than they have, that is, if they give too much importance to their role as an assistant in personal development.

The principle of development is rooted in the learner. This is the first point that must be emphasized. The educator's task is dispositive regarding the objects he/she shows and the actions he/she promotes. The learner is not moved directly, obviously; but the educator's teaching does not function either as a univocal stimulus, leading always, or almost always, to the same learning response. This has been the tipping point in many educational approaches, particularly in the twentieth century: considering the relationship between teaching and learning of a certain necessary nature, almost a cause and effect relationship. However, the best lesson—taking "lesson" to mean the product of teaching—for one person is not the same as for another, which is evident in teaching experience.

Generally, two reasons are given for academic or school failure: rejection by the student, a result of his/her freedom, or the inefficacy of the teaching, a result of the impoverishment of didactic techniques or the incompetence of the educator. There is no doubt that these are two possible reasons; but they are not the only ones. The main reason—even in these two cases—is always the personal situation of the learner and also of the teacher.

Teaching does not reach the personal self; it merely reaches the person's powers or abilities. Over and above these abilities—or underneath, depending on the perspective—is the person, the nucleus for their integration and actualization; and the lessons are embraced in accordance with this. As the medieval proverb reminds us, "Whatever is received is received according to the manner of the receiver." Therefore, the tendency to personalize education must be maximized in as far as possible, depending on the material conditions of the teaching. This tendency to personalize—always within a social context—is the touchstone for any didactic methodology or organization and for the planning of teaching.

Education does not reach the personal self because the person is not a completely unformed being, but rather has in himself the beginning of his formation. Strictly speaking, people are not formed, but are helped to form themselves; this happens by means of assistance in actualizing their powers. What is relevant here is confirmation of the thesis of human powers as the recipients of learning, and an increase in these powers as the objective of assisting in the personal development, which defines educational action (Altarejos and Naval 2011, pp. 193–194; Polo 1999).

As educational work is a dispositive task, the first action is to choose what is to be taught. The criteria for this choice will determine whether the teaching will be truly educational, that is, promoting human formation. Among these criteria, the first is an increase in human powers. Teaching is showing something through signs; the choice, then, is twofold: what is shown and how is it shown? This second question, that of educational language, is as full of riches as it is barely addressed. Clearly, what is priority for teaching and offers most human formation is, undoubtedly, the decision about which objects are shown; that is to say, what the contents of the teaching are.

In general, the current reasoning is as follows: as what is taught will be the student's future knowledge, and as it will be her greatest and best lifetime possession, this should be what is most useful in life, both for participation and culture and in social relationships, and for employability. Put this way, the argument seems irrevocable, and the goodwill of its intentions appears to be evident. But this approach may lead to errors and, to a certain extent, to the omission of the personal reference.

Firstly, in this approach the decisive criterion is tacit but clear: practicality. What is taught is what is considered most convenient, meaning most beneficial, of the greatest advantage. But in the norms of instrumental reasoning, what is most useful tends to be conceived as that which can be best used. In other words, as what will permit greater returns, not only in intellectual formation but also character education or social harmony. It implies considering knowledge as power.

This criterion is not completely unacceptable, but its scope must be discussed, because, for example, the value of humanities in human education would be greatly compromised. In this sense, Aristotle emphasized the main value of learning the humanities: they prepare the way for further knowledge (cf. *Politics*, V, 2, 1338 a 36–38). This simple statement goes directly to the core of the matter; and this is not surprising because, although the concept of person is absent from Aristotelian thinking, he does bear in mind the value of knowledge as an immanent act, as an action that is good in itself which must be fostered and practiced by oneself. Simply put, it means learning to know, rather than knowing this or that.

Here, it is worth recalling the revitalization of the immanent action advocated by the Report of the International Commission on Education for the Twenty-First Century, sponsored by UNESCO. In short, it is the declaration of what is called “the four pillars of education,” which may be seen as a synthesis of the meaning of human learning from a personal perspective. As is well known, these four pillars are (Altarejos and Naval 2011, pp. 195–198):

- (a) *Learning to know*. We can learn to know and “this type of learning is concerned less with acquiring structured or factual knowledge than with the mastery of learning tools. It may be regarded as both a means and an end of human existence” (Delors 1996, p. 96). In contrast to the value of usefulness—which has led to specialization of knowledge and the resulting fragmentation of human learning—what is proposed is learning to know, as an end: its justification is the “pleasure in, learning, the ability to learn how to learn, and intellectual curiosity”

(ibid). This appeal to the affective instance is the clear recognition of the unity of the human being—his status as a person—and the abolition of the illustrated rationalism, which has been of such great aspiration for pedagogy over the last few centuries. It connects with the conception of learning as contemplation and emphasizes the importance of the development of imagination and memory. It means developing knowledge for its own sake, so, to a certain extent, it declares the secondary nature of learned objects, which become valuable due to their influence on the development of the cognitive powers.

- (b) *Learning to do*. The commission warns that the expression “learning to do” can no longer be given the simple meaning it had when it meant preparing someone for a well-defined material task, for their participation in making something (Delors 1996). The changes in the world of labor, which define our present-day post-industrial or post-capitalist society result in a labor situation where employees are no longer interchangeable and tasks are personalized (Ibid, p. 100). On the other hand, the expanse and growth of the services sector in the economy allow us to speak of a certain level of dematerialization of labor, and then demands the cultivation of those human qualities which traditional training does not always instill and correspond to the ability to establish stable and effective relationships between people (Ibid.).

The learning objective refers to donation of the self. What is decisive in work, and increasingly in the contemporary economy and society, is personal contribution, which includes initiative, innovation, risk-taking, etc. This personal dimension is crucial for human formation, and, therefore, teaching should be structured so as to promote the contribution of the learner.

- (c) *Learning to live together, learning to live with others*. Undoubtedly, this learning is one of the principal tasks of contemporary education (Delors 1996). We could add that this is so in past, future and all-time education, although perhaps it is more underlined in the present, due to the specific circumstances of modern society. Suggestions made by the report are twofold: assisting with the “discovery of the other” and the “participation in projects in common.”

The reference here is to coexistence between people. Human formation is carried out in a social environment, but this reference is not sufficient. It involves intentionally promoting sociability, and, even more, educating the affective powers, the operative nucleus of interpersonal relationships. Intellectual learnings train as well as character education. Feelings, emotions, and volitions are objects of education, just as much as concepts, opinions, and reasonings. Training in these entails opening to others and their development in interpersonal relationships, beginning with the teacher–student relationship, inter-student relationships, and their projection toward family and school and social relationships.

- (d) *Learning to be*. Strangely enough, this comes in fourth place, when it really should come first. Without specifically referring to the concept of person, it alludes to the global development of each person: mind and body, intelligence, sensitivity, aesthetic sense, individual responsibility, spirituality (Delors 1996). Thus, it affirms the consistency of the human being as a unit and,

simultaneously, as a whole; that is to say, as a person. This proposition is implicit in another earlier report: “aim of development is the complete fulfilment of man, in all the richness of his personality, the complexity of his forms of expression and his various commitments” (Faure 1972, 1987, p. 16). This is an appeal to intimacy, particularly as the nucleus of opening to reality. Human training, then, is not conceived as a closed process of assimilating information, but rather is an action, which is open to reality from the personal condition and is assisted by the educator. The priority of educational action is not given to tasks, but to the people who are learning; their fulfillment is a pedagogical challenge.

Human formation, in this way, is assisted personal growth. This assistance may be: (a) formally intentional or (b) indirect and spontaneous, not sought as such assistance, but given as a formative influence. In the former case, properly speaking, it is formative agents; the latter refers to formative environments. In both cases, the protagonist is always the learner, the free human being capable of the greatest nobility and the most profound wretchedness. This leads us to a final reflection on freedom.

27.4 Final Reflection

Freedom is the breeding ground for human excellence, but it is also a burden for those who practice it. The aspiration to absolute freedom and awareness of its fallibility are the most common confusions regarding freedom today. That is to say, the disavowal of its reality, its character as an illusory tale or existential sentence.

The human being experiences freedom as a possibility in the face of action, but this very action reveals a certain impossibility in practice due to the limitations of the circumstances. In these circumstances, the most optimistic response is the attempt to save the human being by attributing to him/her one single fundamental error, which must be corrected: the delusion of freedom, the erroneous belief that we are free when in reality we are the subjects of certain cosmic decisions. A person to clearly express this frustrating optimism is B. Espinosa; later A. Schopenhauer and F. Nietzsche would do so. The conclusion is the negation of the reality of freedom, under the pretense of saving human reality.

To this vision, we must add a currently very widespread consideration of freedom which Rousseau already recognized when he stated that social relationships are harmful to the human being. Social links, taken as restraints on freedom, must be minimized in order to lead character toward moral autonomy, which means, “my being able to will only what is suitable to me, or what I deem to be such, without anything external to me determining me” (Rousseau 1969, p. 586). Operative independence cannot be absolute, but the ego does have an absolute character for Rousseau; therefore, when it is pointed out that nothing external can determine for one, there is absolutely nothing new in this. Rousseau’s statement, decontextualized

from his thinking, could be admissible in a moral sense, as the motives and reasons for behaving are, effectively, proper to the subjects, and freedom is their self-determination. But when the absolute character of the ego is affirmed, independence becomes a barrier between the subject and others.

Recently, François-Xavier Bellamy, in his book *Les déshérités ou l'urgence de transmettre* (Bellamy 2014), clearly identified the problem when he refers to the need (for everyone, but particularly for young people) to have in-depth knowledge of the cultural tradition in an age when we have, to some extent, stopped passing it on to them.

This has occurred for several reasons. In his brief essay the author, to my mind, brilliantly explains how, by excluding culture, we are excluding our own humanity. The current radicalization and violence of some groups, including young people, in Western countries may be the result of the vacuum in which they find themselves as the cultural heritage which belonged to them has been excluded. They have not received something which would be of value to them.

We began by asking why education today is failing. We could say that it has abandoned communicating cultural tradition. The roots of this matter, which can be seen in many educational policies, are found by Bellamy in three French authors: R. Descartes (s. XVII), J.J. Rousseau (s. XVIII), and P. Bourdieu (s. XX) (cf. Bellamy 2014).

Descartes regretted—following Bellamy's argument—that the human being was not born as an adult with complete use of our reason. During the dependent childhood years, we are weighed down with the cultural tradition that complicates the development of our reason. Rousseau defends the argument that it would be desirable for the human being to be an eternal child, because the culture we receive corrupts us, by distancing us from nature. Both authors coincide that an education based on the transmission of a cultural tradition threatens the development of the individual.

Finally, Bourdieu claims that the key to social dominance is capital; but not merely economic capital, also a cultural one which is passed on in families, roots, and social media. For this sociologist, with such great influence on the educational policies at the end of the last century, the problem cannot be eased through grants and equality programs but only by eliminating the transmission of culture, because the true cause of the marginalization of the working class is the dominant value system of the political elites who control schooling in any given culture, together with the selection criteria.

We must hark back to the primitive Roman organization of the state to find the factually conducted, lived and exercised distinction; although it later declined in the Empire of Augustus. In the Roman Republic, “the authority informs and advises the powers, and in this effective recognition lies the greatest guarantee of social freedom. The Roman Republic gave a classical example of this recognition, as it distinguished between the power of the magistrates with the *imperium* and *auctoritas* of the advisory bodies, particularly that of the Senate, the *auctoritas patrum*” (D’Ors 1973, p. 95).

Whatever the case, and with no need to hark back to any faraway historical context, it is common knowledge that the wisest person is not necessarily the best governor; that excellent knowledge does not guarantee the success of the executive decisions of the government. In fact, the opposite seems to be true. As a logical consequence, the areas of authority and power should be separate. Above all, because, “if power is to be moderated by the prudence of authority, it is no less true that authority should renounce power. The greatest temptation for a man of authority is precisely the desire to command, the desire for power” (D’Ors 1973, p. 97). This is an invaluable concept to be meditated in the area of education; how this power and authority should be exercised to the advantage of the learner, and to foster his/her freedom: how to educate through love, helping to love, loving to learn.

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